

Bug hunt campaign

P7



Lack of consultation with firies

P3



Memory friendly book launch

P13



Horses helping mental health

A new mental health
training program using
horses will start in
Gidgegannup next month. **PG 11**



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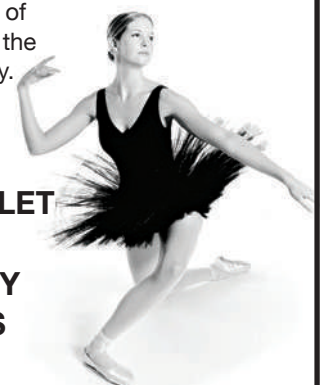
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ECHO

In Memoriam



Matthew Petch is remembered as a gentleman whose kind nature was reflected in the care he had for family, students and the safety of others.

Matthew Petch - teacher, firey and gentleman

A SERVICE in January remembered Kalamunda resident and volunteer firefighter Matthew Nigel Petch who community members say was a true gentleman.

Mr Petch was born on February 23, 1984 and died on January 11 this year.

The Kalamunda volunteer bush fire brigade said they remembered Mr Petch as a much loved son, brother, husband, father and giant to many in Kalamunda and beyond.

"Firstly, as a teacher to many children over the years, many parents at the brigade can attest to that as he taught our children and grandchildren (and) he was adored as a teacher," a brigade spokesperson said.

"The parents loved him because of his ability to nurture their child and to connect with the child and the parent through his calm and caring nature."

"He touched the lives of us at the Kalamunda volunteer fire and rescue team through his humble, caring, humorous nature."

"He had a high work ethic, willingness, very dedicated and happy to pass on this knowledge to newcomers."

Mr Petch received the Captain's Award in 2017 and served as the brigade's training coordinator for several years.

Three years after he joined, he volunteered to join a task force that was being sent to Queensland to fight fires in the region.

Mr Petch was considered experienced enough as he also had three years' experience prior to joining the Kalamunda volunteer bush fire brigade.

In 2021 he received a national emergency medal for his service in Queensland and also a five-year medal as a member of Kalamunda volunteer bush fire brigade.

After eight years' service and with great reluctance he decided to resign from the brigade, which was his passion, and selflessly devote more time to his own children who were his first consideration.

The spokesperson said the brigade was reluctant to see him go but completely understood his decision and fully supported him.

"He knew he would have been welcomed back with open arms when that time came," they said.

"The officers at the time considered him a future captain of the brigade as he had the

knowledge, acumen and the personality to be a good leader.

"We are all devastated at his passing and devastated for his family and bitterly disappointed that his illness wasn't recognised and supported just because he was a volunteer."

Mr Petch's brother Jonathan Petch said his brother led a life defined by quiet integrity, deep love for family, unwavering service to others, and a rare gentleness of spirit.

"Matthew was a gentleman in the truest sense of the word, not in a loud or performative way, but in the way he lived his life and treated people," he said.

"Helping others was his language of love."

"If something needed fixing, lifting, or sorting out, Matt was the first call, and the one who always turned up."

"He ran towards danger so that others could be safe, never for praise, but because it was the right thing to do."

Jonathan said his brother was a father who made his family proud through the merit of his character, outshining even his achievements, and exemplifying a life lived full of love in his heart for others.

"Matt's love for (his wife) Helen was steady and unwavering – a partnership built on respect, presence, and deep devotion," he said.

"His last conscious act was to lean towards his wife and kiss her goodbye."

"(He) didn't just teach lessons; he taught children how to feel seen, valued, and capable."

"Teaching wasn't just a job to him, it was a calling, and his kindness reached far beyond the classroom."

"As my brother, Matt was my constant (as) a steady presence, a calm voice, and a place of warmth and guidance."

"Although he was the youngest, in so many ways Matt was the one we all looked up to."

"When the system failed him, Matthew turned his experience into purpose."

"He became an advocate to ensure fairness and protection for others."

"In every role he held, son, husband, father, teacher, firefighter, friend, Matt was the same: principled, generous, and profoundly kind."

"When we ask what the word gentleman truly means, we no longer have to wonder."

"We knew one, we loved one, and his name was Matthew."



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Kalamunda vollies slam lack of consultation

GUANHAO CHENG

KALAMUNDA Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service (KVFRS) members say there is little confidence from the brigade in a Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) move to switch to a type 2 vehicle due to a lack of consultation, collaboration and transparency.

KVFRS captain Tony Moiler and lieutenant Stuart Buckett said the choice to replace the brigade's ageing type 1 appliance with a type 2 vehicle is incongruent with the area's risks increasing significantly over the past 25 years.

"The result is the community ends up with an appliance that is less than what we had before," Mr Moiler said.

"The type 2 is new (and) it won't be used anywhere else in the metropolitan area and for some reason they've decided to deploy it in Kalamunda even though we are a first response brigade and have had the equivalent of a type 1 for the past 40 years."

A DFES spokesperson said the agency will provide Kalamunda with a new Volvo urban pump type 2 appliance valued at approximately \$950,000.

"(This) meets operational requirements and provides an enhanced capability," they said.

"The new appliance type was designed with input from experienced volunteer and career firefighters to ensure it was fit for purpose, including the selection of the cab chassis."

However, the brigade said the decision creates a situation where residents on one side of Kalamunda Road would receive a type 1 response from Midland or Welshpool stations, while their neighbours across the street would receive a type 2 response from Kalamunda.

"You've got neighbours who look across at each other from their front door, but one's going to get one piece of life-saving fire appliance come in an emergency, and the other one's going to get something that was built differently and a bit cheaper and less," Mr Buckett said.

The brigade learned of the decision in December last year during a meeting about an unrelated matter.

"We were contacted sort of out of the blue and just told, 'Hey, let's catch up about something else,' and then in that meeting we got told, 'Oh yeah, elephant in the room, you



Kalamunda Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service members are first responders in the area.

guys need a new vehicle, we think it should be this'," Mr Buckett said.

"And pretty much in that meeting we were told there was no chance of anything else."

When the brigade requested further discussion, DFES presented data that "conveniently showed Covid (statistics)," demonstrating a dip in call numbers.

However, Mr Buckett said the brigade is more concerned with the severity and risk of fires rather than their frequency.

The brigade said there were significant increases in risk factors for firefighters in Kalamunda.

Commercial properties in their response area have more than doubled from 280 to 630 since their current vehicle was commissioned in 2001.

The area now included multiple high-rise buildings where previously there were none, and more than a dozen facilities requiring fire system boosting.

"We've now more than double the number of commercial properties, and commercial properties is probably one

of the leading causes for the difference between a type 1 and type 2," Mr Buckett said.

The DFES spokesperson said feedback from other VFRS brigades provided with urban pump type 2 appliances had been overwhelmingly positive and noted the new model could carry a crew of six, as opposed to five in the KVFRS' current appliance.

"Given the large membership of Kalamunda VFRS, this will mean more volunteers can respond to incidents," the spokesperson said.

"Additional response numbers will also enhance structural firefighting and breathing apparatus operations."

However, Mr Buckett said additional crew capacity was not the issue, as neighbouring stations could provide extra personnel within minutes if needed.

"It's not so much that we need more people at incidents, and if we do, within a few minutes, we'll have two other trucks from our neighbouring station with another anywhere from five to seven or so, maybe even 10," he said.

Cont. p6

Bullsbrook residents call for action on power outages

GUANHAO CHENG

BULLSBROOK residents are calling for urgent action to address chronic power outages that are impacting daily life, local businesses, and putting vulnerable community members at risk.

Bullsbrook resident Amy Silvestro said she purchased her Perth Hills home in May last year and experienced her first planned outage shortly after moving in.

"We were warned by many about frequent power outages, both planned and unplanned," she said.

"Our first planned power outage occurred shortly after we moved in."

The issue has become particularly pressing for Mrs Silvestro and her husband, who run an auto glass business from their property.

The outages have repeatedly disrupted their ability to work and serve customers.

"There have been so many times that this has prevented me from being able to do my day-to-day work," Mrs Silvestro said.

She said what made the outages especially challenging was their knock-on impact.

"Bullsbrook is a small, closeknit community, and even in the short time we've lived here, you get to know people," she said.

"You hear them in the chemist, supermarkets, service stations and on the community pages all voicing their concerns and how it affects them."

"Bullsbrook also has many older residents, parents with young families, etcetera, who may not be able to drive or have the means to leave their home on a hot day without electricity."

"It's left us feeling that no one is listening to our concerns and not knowing either who to speak to or how to address it to try and take it further."

The response to the reports of power outages has been mixed with some community members actively contacting the local government, news outlets and using social media to voice concerns, but others have learned to live with it.

Long-time residents often suggest buying a generator to cope with outages, although other residents have rejected this advice due to prohibitive costs.

"Many properties in the area, including mine, lose access to running water when the power goes out, as we rely on water pumps," Mrs Silvestro said.

"The outages affect local businesses, small businesses in the area, those who work from home and their abilities to earn an income."

"Food spoilage, fuel to run generators, driving to another area, family or friends, and having to eat out are all extra expenses associated with these outages, not to mention the stress of it all."

A Western Power spokesperson said they were aware of the community's frustrations and understand recent outages have been inconvenient.

"We always work to restore power as quickly as possible, with the safety of the community and our crews the priority," the spokesperson said.

Bullsbrook's widely dispersed population and fire-prone terrain present unique challenges.

Power lines traverse bushfire-risk areas, and during summer months, requiring Western Power to adjust network protection settings to reduce fire risk, which can extend restoration times as crews must patrol lines before restoring power.

"The cause of the outages has been varied including lightning, storms, vegetation impacting the network, and equipment damage," the spokesperson said.

Swan Hills MLA Michelle Maynard said she was also aware of the issue and confirms that she has been contacted by residents.

"I am working closely with the minister and relevant agencies to seek clarity on the cause of the outages and to ensure that steps are being taken to improve reliability and prevent further disruptions where possible," she said.

"I will continue to advocate strongly on behalf of the Bullsbrook community and keep residents informed as more information becomes available."

"I understand how frustrating and disruptive this has been for local residents and businesses."

Mrs Silvestro says more needs to be done as the suburb continues to expand.

"Bullsbrook is the picture of perfection, it's a beautiful place that's set to grow and grow, but if that's the case, something needs to be done."

City of Swan

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ECHO YOUR THOUGHTS

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YACWA Oz Day reflection

Dear Echo News,
YACWA does not observe January 26 as a celebration, but rather a day of reflection and mourning.

We stand with First Nations people and continue to work towards reconciliation this day and every day. We acknowledge

that for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, January 26 represents the ongoing impacts of colonisation, including the dispossession of land, loss of culture and language, and the profound grief associated with genocide and historical injustice.

We recognise these challenges continue today through inter-generational trauma, disproportionate rates of incarceration, the removal of children from their families, systemic health inequities, and the desecration of sacred sites and Country.

We also acknowledge the hurt First Nations people may feel at this time due to continued debate of the date.

In our ongoing commitment to reconciliation, YACWA continues to work to amplify the voices of, and advocate for the rights of First Nations young people.

We prioritise working alongside First Nations people to create a more culturally responsive and inclusive society.

We remain committed to listening, learning and advocating for change and are dedicated to walking alongside First Nations people in the ongoing journey toward accountability, justice, and equity.

WA Youth Affairs Council

Artificial turf debated

Dear Echo News,
I found the article on the push to get the City of Swan to ban synthetic turf very interesting, for several reasons.

We have synthetic turf in our back garden and natural grass in the front garden and I might add, in reference to the comment about houses with artificial grass almost always having no

Thought for the day

"Fools laugh at others. The wise laugh with others. The wisest laugh at themselves."

— Maxime Lagacé

trees, we probably have more trees than most people.

The main differences between synthetic and real lawns are that synthetic turf requires no maintenance, other than the occasional raking of debris, in other words, cost free, as against the real lawn requiring constant care and attention, from water through fertiliser to weeding and mowing.

Yet it still doesn't look as good as the fake stuff, to the point where we are giving serious thought to ripping the front lawn out and putting in synthetic.

I do agree that fake lawn by itself looks exactly what it is, but plant trees and shrubs and flowers around the borders, put pots and a fountain or something similar on the synthetic and it gets very hard to tell whether it's fake, or an exceptionally well-maintained real lawn.

We have no problems with the synthetic lawn getting too hot and smelling and we have a large dog, who is very happy to sunbath out on the fake turf, plus a plethora of birdlife living in our trees, or coming to visit, all feeding, resting and utilising the birdbaths and fountains.

I did have to smile at Mayor Richardson's suggestions regarding greening verges with native plants as a water-wise initiative — we've been wanting to do that with our verges as we're on a corner block.

However, when I rang the city seeking information on where utility services were buried, I was told that information wasn't available, but warned I needed to be careful of

where I dug.

When I asked if it would be possible to get some assistance in digging holes in the side verge, I was told a previous owner had requested the verge be compacted and there was nothing the city was prepared to do.

If the city has no interest in our planting native vegetation on the verges, I see no reason to consult them on whether I lay synthetic turf on my front lawn — is the city going to assist with the cost of water for a real lawn?

Which segues into the initial upkeep of a native garden.

There is no doubt a native garden is a brilliant way to go for verges and gardens alike — food for pollinators, birds and other mammals and a more natural WA look than the usual cottage gardens most of us plant.

However native plants and trees do require extensive watering for the first few years and gardeners are heavily penalised for anything deemed excessive water use.

I have no objection to paying for the water we use ('user pays' is a sound and just principle), but why should I pay a lot more for the necessary water, (penalty rates) if, as the mayor suggests, I'm "creating a cooling effect ... providing habitat for local wildlife ... being beneficial for human health and wellbeing and improving aesthetics"?

I'm not suggesting the use of water be carte blanche, but the state government should make allowances (not penalise) for people who wish to green the state.

That leaves (no pun intended), trees.

So, we put in trees, which everyone agrees is a wonderful initiative, for many reasons, but when they reach maturity, there's a \$1000 to \$2000 trimming cost every couple of years, as they get too close to power lines!

Here, it would be remiss of me not to compliment the City of Swan on their excellent provision of free green waste collection.

It's very easy to see there is no incentive to create or establish native verges, just by driving along almost every street — at this time of the year, everything is dead.

The lack of interest from the City of Swan is disheartening enough if you're an owner, there is absolutely no incentive for anyone renting to bother.

**G Ross
Swan View**

Thanks for market promo

Dear Echo News,
Thank you so much for helping to spread the word about our recent community event The Really Really Free Market.

We had so many of your readers attend our market.

A lot of stuff was diverted from landfill.

We appreciate all that you do in helping to promote our frugal event as we have no budget for advertising.

Many thanks and wishing you a fabulous 2026.

**Transition Town
Guildford**

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Partial Midland line closure to make way for new station



The long awaited and almost completed new Midland Train Station will be officially opened later next month. Pictures: Guan hao Cheng

PART of the Midland Line has been temporarily shut down to allow for critical finishing works to take place ahead of the opening of a brand-new, state-of-the-art Midland Station on Sunday, February 22.

Train replacement bus services are operating during the 31-day partial shutdown, stopping at all train stations between Bassendean and Midland. Trains will continue to operate between Bassendean and Perth.

The temporary closure will allow for the demolition of the existing Midland station and the connection of the new station to the rest of the rail network.

The new station has been built to the east of the current station and features a pedestrian overpass connecting the north and south sides of the rail corridor, a kiosk, passenger toilets, two bike shelters, and a new bus interchange.

Demolition of the existing station is expected to take place between now and January 31.

To help facilitate these works, the Morrison Road level crossing will also be closed for the length of the shutdown, with traffic management in place to help road users

navigate through the area.

A community celebration to mark the opening of the new Metronet Midland Station will be held on Sunday, February 22, with family-friendly activities including free sausage sizzles, food trucks, entertainment and music.

Midland MLA Steve Catania said the completion of the new Midland station will mark an exciting new chapter for the community.

"I look forward to celebrating this milestone with everyone on February 22. I'd like to thank the local community for their patience over the shutdown period whilst these critical works are completed.

"I encourage users of the Midland Line and Morrison Road level crossing to plan their trips in advance and allow for extra travel time."

Hasluck MP Tania Lawrence said the new Midland train station was another example of the investments that both federal and state Labor governments are making to ensure the community has the modern infrastructure needed in the growing corridor.

"The final works over the next month will ensure the new station opens ready to serve the community for decades to come, and I thank the community for their understanding.

"I look forward to celebrating another delivered commitment with locals in February."

Acting Transport Minister Dr Tony Buti said the opening of the brand-new Midland station was less than a month away.

"Before it can open, some essential final infrastructure works need to be completed, including demolition of the existing station.

"This temporary shutdown is necessary to complete this incredible project for Midland, and we thank commuters for their patience and understanding during this time."

The new Midland Station is the final Metronet rail project that was committed to at the 2017 election to be completed.

For more information or to plan your journey, visit the Transperth website or download the Transperth app.



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Backyard Buddies

Your monthly guide to pests, weeds and diseases

European wasp surveillance in full swing

The annual hunt to detect and eradicate European wasps (*Vespula germanica*) from WA is in full swing!

The European wasp is a declared pest and must be reported. The early detection of this species is critical to preventing its permanent establishment and spread. This 2025/26 season is heating up and there are nests being located and destroyed across the Perth Metro, Albany (Mira Mar/Spencer Park), and Napier. Active monitoring continues in Bunbury and Geraldton due to prior outbreaks.

These are huge areas to monitor, so please keep your eyes peeled and report anything suspect.

What to look for

There are similar looking black and yellow wasps in WA, so look for these key characteristics:

- Scavenging on human food and drinks, fruit like grapes, apples and stone fruit, pet food, and roadkill/dead rats etc.
- Nest underground - nests are HUGE, grow larger than a basketball in a single season, and have a small (golf ball sized) entrance hole.
- Completely black antenna.
- Legs up in flight (rear legs don't dangle).

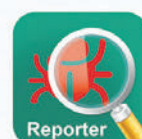


European wasps have been observed foraging for water at a public swimming pool and scavenging on a meat and vegetable stew.

Common detections

There are many everyday activities that take place where people have detected and reported European wasps. These include:

- Scooping the pool – finding drowned wasps.
- Cleaning fish – seeing scavenging wasps flying around fish cleaning stations.
- Barbecuing / picnicking / eating at outdoor café/ restaurants – seeing wasps land on food and drinks.
- Feeding pets – wasps often land on pet bowls or dog bones, often disrupting pets feeding.
- Drinking from a water fountain – seeing wasps foraging for water.



Learn more or report

For more information about the eradication program and how to differentiate visit www.dpir.wa.gov.au/businesses/pests-weeds-and-diseases/animal-pests-diseases/pest-insects/european-wasp/ or contact our Pest and Disease Information Service (PaDIS).

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Perth Film Studios a local boon or a big name exclusive?

PERTH Film Studios' completion has been announced by the state government but questions remain over whether the world class facility will benefit local independent filmmakers in the hills and Swan region, or primarily serve to attract major interstate and international productions.

Perth Hills based production company Playtime Motion Pictures director and producer Steven J Mihaljevich said while the Malaga facility will benefit crew and actors, the reality for independent filmmakers working with modest budgets remains uncertain.

"This is the million dollar question that has plagued us WA indie directors and producers for a while now," he said.

"The truth is we don't really know.

"We know that bigger scale productions will create great opportunities for WA crew and actors which is amazing.

"We know that big overseas productions will create buzz and excitement in our community, but what will it honestly do specifically for WA indie directors?"

Mr Mihaljevich said he was concerned the new arrival may possibly make things more difficult than they already were.

Mr Mihaljevich has produced *The Xcrossing* in 2020, *Violett* in 2023, and his newest film *Shed* which was shot entirely in the Perth Hills and currently screening at festivals.

He said the facility's high-end specifications suggest pricing will target bigger productions, potentially pricing out independent filmmakers.

"I would assume that because the Malaga studios are built up to Hollywood spec and standard and given such a facility was very costly to build, prices will be high - targeting higher end productions," he said.

A state government spokesperson said the facility represents a new chapter for the industry.

"The Perth Film studio is world-class and will welcome the first of many productions, including local productions, as a new era for the WA screen industry will begin," the spokesperson said.

"The construction of Perth Film Studios will provide real career pathways, provide work and training for actors, camera operators, costume and set designers, sound and lighting technicians, video editors, makeup artists and many other roles."

However, Mihaljevich said most independent films in Perth operate on budgets ranging from \$5000 to \$250,000, with the majority sitting under \$80,000 making high-end studio hire prices nearly impossible to afford.

"Most of us indie filmmakers write our scripts with budgets in mind; or that can be feasible to produce on a shoestring," he said.



The Perth Films Studios is ready for business but no scheduled productions at the facility have been announced. Picture: Guan hao Cheng

"Then, we somehow try to work magic to try and make it emulate the look of something with a million dollar budget or five."

Mr Mihaljevich said his film *Violett* had a fairly decent budget for an independent production but fell nowhere near the \$1 million mark, yet the team managed to create something that looks really good.

"Without a substantial budget, something always falls short," he said.

"No one except true indie filmmakers really understand just how difficult, and painfully excruciating this can be particularly when many 'cinegoers' or critics are unable to judge a film in the merit or context of how they were made."

The filmmaker said he was concerned about the challenges facing mid-career practitioners who have proven their ability to make quality films but struggle to secure ongoing support.

"Large scale productions are not going to hire a Perth director (as) they already have one in mind," he said.

"It will be more difficult for the mid-career practitioners I suspect, but believe me, I hope I am wrong."

Mihaljevich revealed that despite producing three internationally award-winning feature films that have obtained distributors, had limited theatrical releases, and sold out screenings with audiences returning multiple times, none of his films received government funding.

"We have been rejected by Screenwest close to 10 times, even after building a strong track record," he said.

"Every film I have directed; has been privately funded, and here's the clincher, 80 per cent of that funding was from interstate."

He said government institutions offer better incentives for first-time directors or veteran practitioners, leaving mid-career filmmakers in a funding gap.

"This is why so many indie filmmakers (who are) passionate and determined, take matters into their own hands, trying to make films for \$20,000," he said.

"It's ludicrous - out of these films come a stack that won't go past a local viewing for family and friends, but some are really

good, and disappear into exile."

The state government spokesperson emphasised the facility's benefits for the Swan and Perth Hills community.

"The north-east corridor of Perth is continuing to grow and major projects like the Perth Film Studios create great local job opportunities for the local community," they said.

Mr Mihaljevich said several changes could help independent filmmakers benefit from the new facility, including special rates, programs splitting funding across more projects with smaller amounts, and completion funding programs.

"As long as projects have a clear pathway to market and distributors in place, we could split the programs up so that there are more options but less funding for each," he said.

"Create more options for matched funding or completion funding programs.

"So many quality films just need that last piece of funding to complete their films in the best way, but the programs make it very difficult for filmmakers."

He warned that without proper support structures, the Malaga studios could create an even bigger division in funding and quality.

"There is zero sustainability for indie filmmakers, and if we continue down this path, the Malaga studios could create an even bigger division in funding and quality - possibly driving mid-career practitioners out of the industry altogether, or leaving their own state," he said.

Despite his concerns, Mr Mihaljevich said he acknowledged that Screenwest offers more opportunities than many overseas government institutions and expressed hope that officials are considering these issues.

"I am hopeful that our government is discussing some of these considerations," he said.

Mr Mihaljevich said the facility could help directors realise their visions if budgets allow and may provide opportunities for WA producers, particularly if overseas projects require Australian authenticity.

"It may even motivate government institutions to bring more support to well performing and proven mid-career filmmakers who have been working tirelessly for decades," he said.

"We can only hope and keep the faith.

"Good luck to all WA filmmakers and I wish them every chance of success."



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Kalamunda vollies slam lack of consultation

From p3

The DFES spokesperson said Kalamunda VFRS had requested a 10-year-old appliance as a replacement vehicle, but the brigade said they suggested this option only after being told a type 1 was not available.

"It doesn't have to be a new one," Mr Buckett said. "We said, 'You know, we don't mind if it's seven years old because we know that they were looking at trying to rotate them'."

Mr Moiler said a type 1 vehicle built specifically for Kalamunda two years ago has been sitting at the Forrestfield training academy and was never released to the brigade.

"All of a sudden, this vehicle that was built specifically for Kalamunda now suddenly isn't available for our brigade," he said.

The brigade said they were seriously concerned about maintaining consistent capability across the metropolitan area as risks increase and not the type 2 vehicle's quality.

"From our understanding this type 2 doesn't actually do that," Mr Buckett said.

"It doesn't increase our capability and capacity to match the increasing and growing risk."

The brigade said DFES has not brought a type 2 vehicle to Kalamunda to test whether it can handle the area's steep driveways and hilly terrain.

"It's inconceivable that they haven't even brought one up the hill to even see how it even runs or drives and pulls up some of the roads and hills in Kalamunda," Mr Moiler said.



Kalamunda Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service members are first responders in the area. Picture: Facebook

da," Mr Moiler said.

The Kalamunda brigade serves a gazetted fire district covering approximately 24,000 residents.

Mr Moiler said he definitely did not want the issue to become a debate about the actual vehicles themselves, but the process with which the decision was handled that sends out the message that lack of transparency and collaboration was acceptable.

"We just can't see the justification for the community of saying that all of a sudden it can be down spec'd while the risks have increased," he said.

"It just doesn't make sense."

A petition against the change from type 1 to type 2 can be accessed via bit.ly/KalaVFRS

Top silk joins fight to overturn Boyagerring Brook charges

KING'S Counsel Mark Trowell KC has joined the fight to overturn charges laid on Toodyay farmer Tony Maddox for repairing a creek crossing without knowing he had to apply for the minister's approval.

The appeal will be heard by the Supreme Court on February 20.

Mr Maddox said he is hoping Mr Trowell's experience will undo the precedent that could open the floodgates for hundreds of others to be charged for unknowingly breaching cultural heritage laws.

The charges were previously reported in *Toodyay heritage cases adjourned* (Echo News, Feb 29, 2024) and *Toodyay shire cops heritage charges* (Echo News, Feb 15, 2024).

The Shire of Toodyay had received four charges of excavated, damaged, and otherwise altered an Aboriginal site, alongside four charges of a person who excavated, destroyed, damaged, concealed or in any way altered any Aboriginal site.

Mr Maddox also faced a charge of a person who excavated, destroyed, damaged, concealed or in any way altered an Aboriginal site over a creek crossing which was built to cross Boyagerring Brook.

"This is a case of bureaucracy gone mad. I'm hoping Mr Trowell can help us put the whole thing to bed, so no other West Australian landowner has to suffer the same fate," Mr Maddox said.

"I got permission from everyone I knew to strengthen an existing creek crossing on my property.

"I had no idea the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage had drawn a line around the tributary on a map which effectively made it illegal to move a rock or even a fallen tree branch.

"When I became aware, I offered to undo the work but was told that would be illegal too!

"Like most landowners, I respect our cultural heritage and would never disturb historical remains or



Boyagerring Brook. Picture: Gera Kazakov

artifacts, but no one has ever suggested any exist on my farm.

"After I bought the property, the department decided that every tributary of the river is a cultural site and, without consulting - or even informing - any of the affected landowners, painted lines on a map.

"I haven't changed the watercourse or stopped its flow - in fact I've planted 2000 trees and improved the flow. Local elders told me the culvert doesn't offend them or interfere with the legendary Wagyl.

"It is good intentions gone very, very mad.

"We need all the help we can get to bring some common sense to the issue of balancing the protection of Australia's Cultural Heritage and landowners' use of their property," Mr Maddox said.

Mr Maddox has a website to raise awareness and help pay legal costs - please visit www.tonymaddox.info

WAFarmers and the PGA are also providing in-kind support to Mr Maddox to overturn the charges because they say the precedent represents a clear and present danger to all Western Australian landowners.

Australia Day honours for an emergency services' stalwart

MIKE PEETERS

CAREER emergency services' firefighter Daryl Clohessy of Malaga Fire Station has been awarded the Australian Fire Services Medal (AFSM) in recognition of his many years of dedicated service.

Despite being confronted by tragedy on many occasions, Mr Clohessy has turned these hard lessons into lifelong commitments to preparation and training.

Early experiences like calmly leading a rescue team through a triple-fatality scene have motivated him to earn 17 formal accreditations and coach thousands of career and volunteer firefighters.

Mr Clohessy comes from a firefighting family with his dad, two uncles, three cousins and son all involved with the WA Fire Brigade over the years.

"My uncle joined the service in 1937 and my dad and another uncle signed up in 1945, directly after WWII," Mr Clohessy said.

After nearly four decades in emergency services, Mr Clohessy has been active in overhauling training programs and updating critical equipment, ensuring every responder under his guidance is better equipped to face the toughest calls.

Beyond the station, Mr Clohessy's hard work and compassion is also evident in the Safer Seniors program he launched in 1999 with the Bedford/Morley Returned and Services League (RSL).

The program delivers fire safety checks, smoke alarm battery replacements and welfare visits to elderly veterans and widows.



Mr Clohessy is ready for action at the Malaga Fire Station.

Even now 26 years later he personally supports new participants, while safeguarding vulnerable seniors from fire risks.

As a station officer he continues to carry out the most difficult tasks, including asbestos cleanup after factory fires.

"I would also like to acknowledge the importance of the team effort as the involvement of the crew is paramount," Mr Clohessy said.

He said he remembered the tragic Boans Morley fire in 1986 before the Galleria shopping centre was built.

"On this occasion the entire shopping complex was razed to the ground despite the best efforts of fire crews."

Mr Clohessy's roles over the years include fire investigation, urban search and rescue, assisting academy instructors in their training, Juvenile and Family Fire Awareness (JAFFA), air operations, health and safety and peer support.



Invasive Species Council citizen science coordinator Jess Ward-Jones with a bug. Picture: Hayden Starr.

Invasive species driving decline in global insects

YOU might think of the bugs in your backyard - or the intruders in your home - as pests.

But for Australia's native insects, they are vital workers, playing an essential role in pollination, nutrient cycling and natural pest control.

New global research, the first of its kind, has confirmed what scientists and conservationists have long feared: invasive animals and plants are driving dramatic declines in insect populations worldwide.

The study found terrestrial insect abundance has dropped by around 31 per cent, while species richness has fallen by 26 per cent in areas affected by invasive species.

Groups such as bees, ants and true bugs are among the hardest hit - undermining the natural systems that support healthy landscapes and productive agriculture.

"Insects are the backbone of nature - they pollinate crops, recycle nutrients and keep ecosystems functioning - and this research shows invasive species are hollowing out that foundation," Invasive Species Council citizen science coordinator Jess Ward-Jones said.

"This is exactly what we're trying to highlight through our national Bug Hunt citizen science program, delivered in partnership with Invertebrates Australia and Australian Geographic.

"Bug Hunt encourages everyday Australians to look, snap and report the insects they see in their backyard, garden, schoolyard or local bushland using iNaturalist.

"Those observations provide critical information to scientists about how our native insects are doing, and they help us spot invasive species early - before they spread and cause more damage.

"Most people don't realise how powerful their observations can be - a single photo can help scientists track declines, understand pressures and identify new threats.

"The good news is people can be part of the solution by learning what's around them, reporting what they see, and supporting stronger action to stop invasive species.

"Protecting insects means protecting the systems we all rely on, and Bug Hunt is a simple way for Australians to help do that."

To join the bug hunt campaign go to www.bughunt.org.au

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Acts 16:31

Onfarm DPIRD data sharing program

A PICTURE is worth a thousand words is the premise of a new technology project to help farmers capture benefits and opportunities from sharing onfarm data.

Data capture has become a key component of the constantly evolving ag-tech sector, feeding data driven decision making aids, services and research.

Weather, crop performance, pest and disease surveillance and production efficiencies are just some of the data captured on farms through internet of things sensors, monitoring and devices, as well as high-tech modern farm machinery.

Farmers can supply this information in the data marketplace to data service providers, such as public and private sector research organisations and commercial services and consultants.

One of the greatest risks and impediments to data sharing is licence agreements, which can be long, complicated and difficult to understand – eroding ownership, transparency, trust and exposing farmers to legal liability.

A Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) project is underway, delivered by The University of Western Australia (UWA), seeking to overcome these barriers by creating simple licence agreements based on pictures.

Known as 'pictorial' or 'comic book' contracts, these agreements are distilled into a pictorial storyboard, making complex information more accessible and easier to understand and apply, without compromising the integrity of the contract.

The three-year project is part of DPIRD's eConnect+ project, which delivered the Extrata data sharing platform – a digital courier service that securely transfers data, encrypted end-to-end, from farmers to data service providers and researchers.

eConnect+ project manager Darren Gibbon said pictorial contracts were the next step in helping farmers to adopt data sharing and reaping the benefits.

"It is important for farmers, as data owners, to fully understand what they are signing up to when reviewing licence agreements with data service providers," he said.

"Pictorial contracts are a legally binding, practical tool to communicate complex information in a simple format, which is more accessible and less time-consuming and ambiguous.



UWA Professor Sharon Purchase, DPIRD project manager Darren Gibbon and UWA Professor Camilla Andersen discuss research to develop pictorial contracts to aid the adoption of data sharing.

mat, which is more accessible and less time-consuming and ambiguous.

"UWA will draw on leading experts in pictorial or comic book contracts, across legal and intellectual property, marketing and data governance to deliver a robust product to help farmers engage in data sharing."

The pictorial contracts will be developed in collaboration with industry focus groups, initially concentrating on mixed grain and sheep enterprises.

The contracts will be used by DPIRD's Extrata data sharing platform and available to farmers and data licensees.

Mr Gibbon said data collection and sharing had become integral to modern farming businesses.

"Advances in science and agriculture production are becoming increasingly reliant on data-driven information, captured by farmers, stored by data collectors and

processed by third party data service providers," he said. "Extrata securely transfers this data using the highest data security protocols, accredited under the National Farmers' Federation Farm Data Code.

"Unlike other data sharing services, Extrata does not retain the data at any point, merely couriating the information to a destination bound by a third party licence contract.

"This means farmers can take control of their data – who gets to use it, what for and for how long.

"Farmers can even bundle data using Extrata to send to multiple service providers, making their digital information work harder to support production decisions and strategies."

Farmers interested in participating in the Extrata early adopter program can visit the DPIRD website and search for 'extrata'.

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Swan Repair Café secures Railway Workshops home

BRAYDEN MOULD

THE Swan Repair Café has secured a permanent headquarters at the historical Midland Railway Workshops, marking a major milestone for the local waste-reduction initiative.

After years of operating through pop-up events and shared spaces, the volunteer-run repair hub has established a fixed base at the former Boiler House building.

The move, made possible through the generosity of the Machinery Preservation Club of WA, saw the space gifted to the group providing much needed stability for its operations.

Swan Repair Café administrator Evie Whitlock said the new home is a vital step in ensuring the group can continue to serve the public effectively.

"As much as we thoroughly enjoyed travelling around as a team, we found the biggest thing people needed was consistency," she said.

"The fact that we've now got a forever home, so the community knows where we are and when we are every single month is fantastic.

"We were also transporting all our equipment, supplies, and everything else we needed to each location.

"Being able to have a home we can store stuff has made things so much easier for our volunteers."

The café brings together skilled volunteers who help residents repair broken household items, including textiles, toys, electronics and furniture, keeping usable goods out of landfill and passing on practical skills.

The group's goal is to combat the growing waste produced by the population by teaching residents how to repair items and keep them in circulation.

"We are becoming more of a throwaway society; when something is broken, I can just throw it away and buy something really quite cheap," Ms Whitlock said.

"People are losing important skills that are transferable; you can learn how to repair one thing and those skills can be used to do other things in life as well."

While current volunteers specialise in textiles, mechanical gears, and tech troubleshooting, the group is calling out for new members to join the team.

"We'd love people to come and join and be a part of the Swan Repair Café; any skills are welcome, even if people just want to come down and be part of the community," Ms Whitlock said.

"In particular, we are calling out for sparkies or people who can do electronic fixes... we get a lot of people asking, 'can you fix a toaster?' or 'can you fix a kettle?' but we just don't have anybody to sign off on those repairs."

Interested residents can volunteer by contacting the group at swanrepaircafe@gmail.com or via their Facebook page ahead of their 2026 launch next month.



The group's goal is to reduce waste by passing on technical repair skills to help keep items out of landfill.



Kalamunda Inner Wheel works to eliminate gender-based violence

LATE last year members of Inner Wheel, a global women's volunteer organisation, came together to support the Orange the World campaign aimed at eliminating gender-based violence.

The United Nations' based campaign involves 16 days of activity carried out globally with Inner Wheel members wearing orange to help raise awareness and create safer environments for women and girls.

Members also participated in coffee mornings, walks, awareness programs, and events to educate communities and highlight the issue.

A breakfast function at Gracie's Cafe in Forrestfield was held on the second day of the Orange the World campaign to shine a light on domestic violence.

"The club also raised \$1620 at the Kalamunda artisan market as part of an annual event to raise money for the club's charity of choice, the Koolkuna Women's



In support of the Orange the World campaign, Kalamunda Inner Wheel members dressed in orange and attended a breakfast function at a local cafe.

Refuge," Kalamunda Inner Wheel club secretary Lesley Steinbeck said.

"This year we gave gift cards worth \$250 as Christmas presents for the teenagers in residence there.

"Teenagers often miss out at Christmas, being too old for the

toys and lollies often donated."

The club also ran a stall at the Kalamunda markets for Orange the World with orange balloons and signs.

They also held a raffle for a Christmas hamper to raise funds for the Koolkuna Women's Refuge in Midland.

eye on crime

Evade police incident through the suburbs

MIDLAND detectives have charged a 24-year-old Ellenbrook man with multiple offences following a police chase that occurred on Sunday, January 25.

WA Police say the accused allegedly stole a black Range Rover from a residence in Middle Swan between 12pm and 3.30pm on Sunday.

Officers later sighted the stolen car travelling on Toodyay Road in Middle Swan.

Police activated their emergency lights and sirens in an attempt to stop the vehicle, however, it is alleged the accused accelerated away.

A pursuit ensued as the man allegedly attempted to evade police through the suburbs of Herne Hill, Baskerville, Ellenbrook, Bennett Springs, Beechboro, and Morley.

It is further alleged the man drove recklessly by travelling at speed, on the wrong side of the road, and through red traffic control lights.

A tyre deflation device was deployed on Beechboro Road in Morley, after which the accused allegedly drove a short distance before colliding with a parked car on Mahogany Road.

The accused was located in the rear seat of the vehicle and arrested.

The Ellenbrook man has been charged with reckless driving, failing to comply with a direction, no authority to drive, possessing an edged weapon, and stealing a motor vehicle.

He appeared in Perth Magistrates Court on Monday, January 26, where he was remanded in custody and is scheduled to reappear on February 10.

Ellenbrook man charged with child offences

DETECTIVES from Child Exploitation Operations have charged a 51-year-old Ellenbrook man with seven alleged offences against children.

It will be alleged between November 2025 and January 2026, the accused recorded in an 'upskirt' style, female adults and children in public places in Ellenbrook, Burswood, Joondalup and Perth.

It is further alleged a forensic analysis of electronic devices belonging to the accused identified various images and vision of child exploitation material.

The 51-year-old man from Ellenbrook has been charged with three counts of indecent acts in public, two of indecent recording of a child under 16 years, and one each of indecently recording a child under 13 years and possessing child exploitation material.

Sex crime division detective inspector Eamon Flanagan said child exploitation operations em-

ploy every available strategy to lawfully and rigorously investigate individuals who commit online child sexual offences in Western Australia.

"This investigation demonstrates the team's unwavering commitment to protecting children and ensuring offenders are held accountable for their criminal actions.

"Everyone has the right to feel safe in our community, without being secretly and immorally recorded for another person's sexual gratification. This investigation remains ongoing, and I urge anyone with information relating to this matter, to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or via www.crimestopperswa.com.au

"The WA Police Force acknowledges that reports of offences against children are deeply distressing for the community. Protecting children and ensuring their safety is our highest priority.

"Child sexual abuse is one of the most horrific crimes imaginable. It destroys lives and leaves lasting trauma for victims and their families."

Ballajura illegal tobacco fire investigation

DETECTIVES from the serious and organised crime division are investigating a fire that occurred in Ballajura on Thursday, January 15 believed to be linked to the illicit tobacco trade in Western Australia.

About 4am, police received a report of a fire at a premises on Illawarra Crescent.

Department of Fire and Emergency Services attended and extinguished the fire, which caused minimal damage.

The investigation remains ongoing.

Anyone with any information regarding this incident is asked to contact Crime Stoppers online via www.crimestopperswa.com.au or by calling 1800 333 000.

Reports can be made anonymously.

This incident is being investigated by Taskforce Maverick, which was established by WA Police on November 24 in response to multiple criminal damage by fire incidents at premises.

Inquiries indicate these incidents are linked to the illicit tobacco trade in Western Australia.

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241 Lesmurdie Rd

Sanderson Road S/

Centre

Sanderson Rd

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243 Great Eastern

Hwy

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Midland Library

45 Helena Street

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Food Hall Entry

Real Estate Plus

Shop 2/5 Junction

Parade

Swan Valley Fresh

Markets

Cnr Morrison Rd &

Keane St

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Money lessons for any school age

GUANHAO CHENG

MONEY lessons that will shape children's financial futures often happen outside the classroom, according to a leading finance expert, with parents playing a crucial role in filling the gaps.

The SCSA 2026 curriculum showed financial literacy concepts covered from primary school to Year 10 included needs, wants, choices and consumer decisions.

Students were learning about opportunity cost and income flows by Year 7, work, income, markets, pricing by Year 8, risk, taxation, and redistribution of income by Year 9 and budgeting, planning, financial safety by Year 10.

Swan Christian College principal Darnelle Pretorius said students can benefit from practical involvement at home in areas such as deciding and opening a bank account based on interest rates and costs, buying a car, emotional and behavioural money skills, consumer traps and modern financial risks.

"At primary level, opening and managing a savings account, basic financial literacy, commitment to savings goals, managing pocket money, making wise purchasing decisions and understanding choices and sacrifices, coming to terms with needs versus wants, are the most important financial lessons parents can reinforce at home," she said.

"At secondary level, becoming aware of financial scams, personal financial privacy and identity protection, resume writing and part time job application process, tax effects and requirements, superannuation options and long-term consequences

are important lessons to complement what students learn at school."

RMIT University finance professor and deputy dean of research and innovation Angel Zhong said while schools cover foundational concepts like counting money, simple budgeting, and understanding bank accounts, the most important financial lessons come from real-world context.

"The curriculum is a starting point but lived experience, family conversations, and real money decisions fill the most important gaps," she said.

"Kids learn (the ability to wait for rewards) when they save for weeks to buy the toy they've been eyeing, or when their pocket money runs out mid-week (which are) experiences that help them understand that money doesn't appear magically and choices have consequences.

"A teenager needing school shoes but wanting the \$200 branded pair opens the door to discussions about value, priorities, and shared responsibility.

"Schools understandably try to avoid scenarios where students 'fail' at money, but at home, a \$5 mistake like blowing pocket money on stickers and regretting it becomes a powerful, safe lesson that can prevent a \$5000 mistake in adulthood."

In Years 1 to 4, students begin learning about Australian currency and calculations in math-ematics which give them the foundational skills needed to build financial literacy but the growing cashless model poses new problems to solve.

Dr Pretorius said children these days have less exposure to coins and notes with most exchanges being cashless and



RMIT finance professor Angel Zhong says finance lessons at home are important to fill the knowledge gaps in the curriculum.

many children accruing pocket money on debit cards.

"This then impacts how much practice they have building those fundamental money math skills," she said.

Schools may touch on interest, but Professor Zhong said young people often only grasp its meaning when they start using debit cards, encountering bank fees, or accessing credit for the first time.

"Parents are in the best position to explain that interest earned on savings is usually tiny, while interest paid on debt can be significant," she said.

Retirement savings and compound growth are among the most powerful fi-

nancial concepts impacting a young person's future but are surprisingly rarely covered in formal curriculum.

"Even small super contributions at age 18 can snowball into significant retirement balances because of compounding," Professor Zhong said.

"Start talking openly about money in simple, everyday terms.

"You don't need to be a finance expert.

"What matters most is making money a normal, ongoing part of family conversations.

"Kids learn from what they see and hear, not from perfectly structured lessons."

Hour of Power returns for 2026



Speakers Kylie Moore and Greg Chaine. Picture: Matt Biocich

BUSINESSES across Swan are invited to kick off 2026 with fresh insights from the health and wellness sector at February's Hour of Power event, featuring two accomplished local businesspeople.

The Swan Chamber's Hour of Power will showcase two guest speakers both bringing valuable perspectives on building sustainable businesses in the health industry.

Wellness Unleashed owner Kylie Moore has become a familiar face at Hour of Power events, regularly attending and building strong connections within the business community.

Her journey to establishing Wellness Unleashed is a lesson in resilience and entrepreneurial determination.

Growing up in remote Australia and facing learning challenges including dyslexia and ADD, Ms Moore spent years working in the mining industry operating heavy equipment before embarking on a complete career transformation.

After travelling around Australia with her children, she made pivotal decision to pursue a new direction, establishing Wellness Unleashed as a centre focused on personal transformation and holistic health.

Ms Moore's business offers services ranging from meridian work and meditation to wellness products and therapeutic treatments, creating a space for clients seeking respite from demanding lifestyles.

Her community-oriented approach and commitment to networking have made her a strong supporter of community business initiatives.

Joining her will be Manna Wellness director and clinical psychologist Greg Chaine who recently connected with the Swan Chamber and made his

mark as a 2025 Swan Business Awards winner in multiple categories.

With degrees in psychology and philosophy, Mr Chaine brings extensive experience from both hospital settings and private practice to his business venture, which he runs alongside his wife.

His professional background provides a unique lens on business operations, particularly around workplace wellbeing and sustainable practice management.

Mr Chaine's approach integrates scientific methodology with holistic health principles, informed by his background as an elite tennis player who briefly competed professionally.

This combination of athletic discipline and psychological expertise shapes Manna Wellness's philosophy on achieving overall health and performance.

February's Hour of Power will explore how the entrepreneurs have navigated health and wellness industry-specific hurdles including regulatory requirements, service delivery models, and building client trust.

The health industry perspective offers valuable lessons in customer relationships, service excellence, and community engagement that translate beyond the wellness space.

Both speakers are expected to share practical insights on business development, overcoming obstacles, and maintaining growth in competitive markets.

Hour of Power provides a regular platform for Swan region business owners to connect, share experiences, and learn from industry peers while building professional networks over breakfast.

The presentation will be held at 10.30am on February 11 at the Crooked Spire in Midland.

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Horses at centre of mental health program



A new mental health training program using horses will start in Gidgegannup next month.

STUDENTS will learn alongside horses in a new mental health training program starting in Gidgegannup next month.

Equine Assisted Therapy Australia (EATA), a Queensland-based registered training organisation, will launch its first WA cohort on February 17 offering counselling students a unique 19-month course that incorporates a nationally recognised counselling diploma with equine assisted therapy (EAT).

Qualified mental health practitioners, who are interested in the role of horses in the therapy space, can also study a specialised equine-assisted mental health course.

As part of their training, students study basic neuroscience, equine ethology, trauma theory and trauma-informed practice and different counselling modalities.

Students also participate in close to 300 hours of responsible and responsive equine interactions during workshops including, learning how horses communicate with their body language and the similarities between the human and horse's nervous system.

All interactions with the horses take place on the ground, with no riding involved prioritising the horses' natural behaviours, choice and wellbeing.

EATA director and founder Jane Faulkner established

the RTO in 2016 on the Gold Coast after she was approached by people who wanted to work in the equine assisted therapy field.

Ms Faulkner said she identified a lack of professional standards in Australia's unregulated equine assisted therapy sector and went down the path of becoming an RTO to offer nationally recognised and ACA-accredited training.

"We decided to bring EATA to WA because the demand is genuine, the need is strong, and we want to make sure local practitioners don't have to travel interstate to access the learning and support they deserve," she said.

Ms Faulkner said she hopes an EATA training program in WA will strengthen capability and confidence across the equine assisted therapy sector.

"It will give people practical tools they can use immediately to build a shared approach to best practice and create an ongoing network of support.

"Ultimately, it's about better outcomes for individuals and families, and a stronger, more connected workforce across the state," she said.

Equine assisted therapy has continued to grow in popularity as more people turn towards complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) for a wide range of mental health conditions - from high-functioning neurodiversity

to complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Ms Faulkner said there were many reasons why horses work so well in therapy.

"Horses are curious, they respond to us in the moment, and for some people horses provide a safer way to be in a relationship than people do," she said.

"They don't need you to talk, they don't need you to perform - they meet you exactly where you are.

"Horses are incredibly sensitive to our body language, breathing and emotional energy, and they give immediate feedback without judgement.

"For people who have experienced anxiety, trauma or difficulty trusting others, it can make connection feel possible again.

"It creates space to practise calm communication, boundaries and self-regulation in a way that feels natural and supportive.

"All our students complete supervised hands-on practice with horses and clients, which includes the facilitation of individual and group equine-assisted therapy sessions."

Final applications close on February 14 and for more information about EATA, please visit www.equineassistedtherapyaustralia.com.au

Pulse growers urged to take advantage of free seed tests

WA pulse growers are encouraged to take action now to protect their 2026 crops by taking advantage of an offer for seed testing at no cost for high risk viruses that could decrease yields, seed quality and profits.

The limited offer is available via the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) as part of a collaborative national project with the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC).

Up to 40 seed samples from WA will be tested for cucumber mosaic virus (CMV) in lupins or lentils and/or pea seed-borne mosaic virus (PSbMV) at no cost, with testing limited to two 400 gram seed lots per grower.

This national service is also available to growers in South Australia, Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales.

DPIRD project lead Ben Congdon said the testing initiative not only alerted growers to any virus risks but the data would support the surveillance component of the research project.

"Testing seed lots for key viruses provides growers with a strong understanding of yield loss risk from seedborne viruses," Dr Congdon said.

"It is also a really good way for us to assess the occurrence and degree of virus contamination across national seed stocks, allowing us identify future risks to crops impacted by these viruses."

Sowing pulse seed infected with CMV or PSbMV can result in infected seedlings being scattered randomly within the crop.

Aphids can then pick up the virus from the infected plants and spread it to nearby healthy plants, leading to reduced plant health and yields, as well as further virus infection in the harvested seed.

Previous DPIRD trials have shown viruses, like CMV and PSbMV, can cause major yield losses - sometimes exceeding 50 per cent.

Research has identified PSbMV losses in field peas can occur, despite a lack of visual crop symptoms.

"For seed-borne viruses, the most important management strategy is to sow clean seed - whether it is commercially produced seed or seed growers have grown themselves - because once the crop is sown, these viruses are almost impossible to manage," Dr Congdon said.



DPIRD research scientist Dr Nazanin Nazeri and technical officer Jonathan Baulch sample seed for pulse diseases.

"By measuring the percentage of infected seed, growers can make informed decisions about the seed lot to manage the risk."

In addition to the seed lot data, researchers on the project have tested hundreds of crops across the country, which will be used to understand the prevalence, genetic diversity and potential impact of viruses across different regions, crops and seasons.

The broad scope, five-year project also includes research to better understand the impact of different viruses and develop improved management tactics, including insecticide applications and durable host resistance.

"This project will expand our knowledge of grain crop viruses, which will ultimately enable us to develop improved strategies to manage them effectively," Dr Congdon said.

GRDC manager diseases Alan Little said Australian grain growers faced virus threats that could be invisible in their early stages and symptoms are often mistaken for other stresses.

"By delivering reliable data on virus prevalence, seed infection and insect movement, this project will give growers timely warning signals and practical control options so they can prevent infections, rather than chase them," Dr Little said.

To submit lupin, lentil and field pea samples email DPIRD research scientist Dr Nazanin Nazeri nazanin.nazeri@dpiird.wa.gov.au to request a seed testing form. Testing results will be confidential.

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On the trail

What's happening in the Shire

January 2026

From the President

As we welcome the new year, I hope you enjoyed special time with family and friends and have stepped into 2026 feeling refreshed. The Shire is gearing up for a significant year, delivering more community projects, local events and initiatives to support a sustainable, thriving community.

Summer in the Perth Hills brings its own challenges, with bushfire risk never far from our minds. Our volunteer bushfire brigades have already had a demanding start to the season, and their dedication to protecting our community is truly appreciated. I encourage everyone to review and practise their Bushfire Plan and stay informed by signing up for our SMS alerts and downloading the Emergency WA app.

On Australia Day we welcomed 30 new Australians and honoured outstanding volunteers at our Citizenship and Awards Ceremony. Congratulations to all the award nominees and a special thanks to our winners William Pether, Joan Quinn, Marjorie Moyle and Jane Brook Catchment Group for your invaluable volunteering contributions to our shire.

I also invite you to the Annual Electors' Meeting at 6.30pm on 2 February in the Council Chambers. This is your opportunity to ask questions and put forward motions for Council's consideration. Your participation helps shape the future of our Shire.

I hope to see you out enjoying the best of the Shire.

Paige McNeil
Shire President



Summer safety, fire, heat and community care



Don't get summer fatigue

- February still brings high bushfire risk, late summer fires are common, so it's important not to switch off.
- Make sure your emergency plan is up-to-date in the Emergency WA app.
- Encourage your community to keep checking Fire Danger Ratings and bushfire alerts through Emergency WA.

Stay connected

- Share local safety messages and look out for those who may need extra support.
- Reach out to older adults, isolated neighbours and anyone who might need help during a bushfire or heatwave.
- DFES have just launched a new People at Higher Risk page to support people who may face extra challenges during emergencies including older adults and people with disabilities.

And, for local tips and resources, visit the Engage Mundaring page or call 9290 6696 for a free personalised property inspection.



Name to be revealed

We received over 200 name submissions and over 1000 votes from the community to name the iconic Bilgoman Diving Lady. Join us at the Back to School: Wave Rave on 30 Jan where Shire President Paige McNeil will announce the winner.

Billie – By Cam from Swan View. Short for 'Bilgoman' and a homage to the aquatic centre.

Bindi – By Jannina from Mahogany Creek. Inspired by the Noongar word for 'butterfly'.

Hilda – By Dallas from Darlington. German for 'warrior' and a homage to the Hills.

30 January

Back to school: Wave Rave

4pm to 6pm • Bilgoman Aquatic Centre

End the holidays in style. This FREE event features a DJ, games, a youth chill-out zone, and the naming of the Bilgoman Diving Lady.



Scan QR code or visit
mundaring.wa.gov.au/events

02 February

Annual Electors' Meeting 2026

6:30pm • Shire Admin Building

An opportunity for our community to ask questions about Shire matters or propose motions for Councils' consideration.



Scan QR code or visit
mundaring.wa.gov.au/council-meetings

08 February

Brew with a crew

8:30am • White's Mill & Grind, Stoneville

Ask questions, discuss simple ways to prepare yourself and your home, get to know the people behind the uniforms.



Scan QR code or visit
engage.mundaring.wa.gov.au

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Perth Hills artist and photographer, herb-craft teacher, and keen gardener Georgia Efford is featured in a new book, along with images from the book.

Memory friendly book 'A garden in Gooseberry Hill' launched

'A GARDEN in Gooseberry Hill', the first book in a new dementia friendly 'Read and Chat' series, featuring seniors sharing their lifetime passions has been launched.

The book features Perth Hills artist and photographer, herb-craft teacher, and keen and creative gardener Georgia Efford (OAM).

In the book she shares her love of nature through her vibrant photographs, paired with her reflections on gardens and gardening – simply expressed, but profound.

Each page begins with a question, inviting chatting and reminiscence: How does your garden cope with the heat of summer? Are you a gloves gardener, or bare hands? What do you grow to give away? This design makes the book ide-

al for shared reading.

Mrs Efford's garden has seen many fund-raising events, and she received an OAM for service to the international community through humanitarian aid.

Proceeds from the book will go to the grassroots Uthando Project, where she was the former chief executive officer and coordinator.

She said there was a need for dementia-friendly books, as people living with dementia or other brain changes may have been avid readers all their lives, but now find it hard to focus, or to remember content from page to page.

Large print illustrated books, ideally used in shared reading, can help maintain reading skills, create meaningful

connection and celebrate the wisdom and experience of older adults.

They can also support stroke recovery and provide easy reading for anyone facing health challenges.

Book creators Mrs Efford and Clare Harris, who has a Master's degree in education, writes under the pen-name Unforgettable Notes, and is an adult education author at The Book Next Door, now creating accessible reading materials with input from professionals in the dementia field.

Other series include Illustrated Classic Poetry, Read and Reminisce, Fun Facts in Large Print, and Picture Books with Light Verse.

The full colour, 40-page book retails for \$20 and is available from library suppliers and Amazon.

Perth Hills planetary defence against asteroids lecture



Associate Professor David Coward's unique experiences positions him to best explain Earth's defence against asteroids. Picture: ESA/P.Carril

THE Perth Observatory in the hills is set to host a lecture on how experts find asteroids and defend the earth against impact before it happens.

The extraordinary evening under the stars on January 31 will bring one of Australia's most distinguished astronomers to the Perth community for a rare public lecture.

UWA Associate Professor David Coward will present Inside the Planetary Defence Frontier, tackling the question of how we find city destroyers before they find us.

Dr Coward's career spans some of astronomy's most groundbreaking discoveries, uniquely positioning him to explain the critical work of planetary defence.

He was part of the global team that first detected gravitational waves which was a discovery that revolutionised the understanding of the universe and earned him the prestigious breakthrough prize in physics.

His research portfolio includes gamma-ray bursts, black hole formation, and the development of cutting-edge robotic telescopes.

As project lead for the Zadko Telescope in Western Australia, Dr Coward helped transform the state into a world-class hub

for transient astronomy. The telescope has captured pivotal astronomical events, from the first light of colliding neutron stars to tracking satellites and high-velocity space debris streaking across Australian skies.

Most recently, Dr Coward was called upon by the NASA planetary defence office and the international asteroid warning network to help prepare for potential asteroid impact scenarios.

Through the Southern Hemisphere asteroid research consortium, he's working to detect dangerous 50–100m asteroids which are capable of striking Earth with catastrophic consequences and minimal warning.

The lecture will be held on the observatory's back lawn creating an atmospheric setting perfect for contemplating our cosmic neighbourhood.

Organisers recommend bringing outdoor chairs, picnic rugs, or bean bags, along with blankets and warm clothing to stay comfortable throughout the evening.

Doors open at 5pm, with the lecture commencing at 8pm.

Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$15 for concession and children aged five to 17 and can be purchased through the Perth Observatory website.

ENTERTAINMENT & GIG GUIDE

Your local Gig Guide

Fri January 30

Lyric's Bar
Furniture
From 7pm, Free
22 Lyric Lane Maylands

Woodbridge Hotel
Deadly Woodbines
From 8pm, Free
50 East St Guildford

Parkerville Tavern
Cush
From 6pm, Free
6 Owen Road
Parkerville

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
Ben Graham
6pm – 9pm, Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

Sunday Feb. 1 cont.

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
Brown Sugar
5pm-8pm, Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

Woodbridge Hotel
Ryan Mathew
From 3pm, Free
50 East St Guildford

Lyric's Bar
Merv Plays Folk
From 5pm, Free
22 Lyric Lane Maylands

Childlow Tavern
Live Music
12.30pm – 3.30pm
Free
4 Thomas St Chidlow

Sat January 31

Lyric's Bar
Empire Blues Duo
From 7pm, Free
22 Lyric Lane Maylands

Parkerville Tavern
Leslie Hinton
Entertainment
From 6pm,
Free
6 Owen Road
Parkerville

Woodbridge Hotel
Goodstock
From 8pm,
Free
50 East St Guildford

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
Nathan Gaunt & Howie Morgan
6pm-9pm,
Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

Sun February 1

Parkerville Tavern
Landslide
From 3pm,
Free
6 Owen Road
Parkerville

Tues February 3

Woodbridge Hotel
Ravenswing
From 6pm, Free
50 East St Guildford

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
Smooth Groove
6pm-8.30pm, Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

Wed February 4

Childlow Tavern
Muso Jam Night with Brett Hardwick
7.30pm till late, Free
4 Thomas St Chidlow

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
House Grooves
Presented by Fenton Wilde
6pm-9pm, Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

Thur February 5

Woodbridge Hotel
Ravenswing
From 7pm, Free
50 East St Guildford

Promote your event



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ENTERTAINMENT
& GIG GUIDE

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Linking directly to your website or ticketing outlet. \$100 p/w

OPTION 2 Half Display Banner

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OPTION 3 Free Text Listing

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- Low Income Card Claims.
- Home Equity Access Scheme Claim.
Use your home equity to increase your pension.
- Complex Claim management for people with companies, trusts, and self-managed super funds.

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Website: www.pensionmanager.com.au



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The clinic is a Medibank Private Members Choice Provider and an HBF Members Plus Provider.

Rebates are available from all other health funds and we also deal with Veterans Affairs and offer pensioner discounts.

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For a free quote call 9250 1733.

Specialist Support for Centrelink and Age Pension Matters

Dealing with Centrelink can be frustrating and time consuming and, in the last few months, wait times have increased substantially, that's if you can get through at all. There is a lot of misinformation about the Aged Pension and the circumstances which can affect your eligibility. We can often clear that up with a phone call.

Making a claim can be confusing and then you wait months for it to be granted. Pension Manager prepares the claim and then manages it throughout the process until finalization. We ensure your waiting time is as short as possible.

- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card claims
- Home Equity Access Scheme claims
- Centrelink account maintenance
- Experienced with customers who have businesses, trusts, or Self-Managed Super Funds

Pension Manager is a specialist consultancy dealing with Centrelink's Older Australians area. I spent years working inside the system so I know how it works. We also provide a nominee service to deal with Centrelink on your behalf and manage your account to keep it up to date and your payment correct.

Call or email Graham for an obligation free chat.



Pension Manager Graham Wilkins

- Age Pension claims

Seniors Card supporting older West Australians

THE WA Seniors Card is more than just a card - it is a state government initiative designed to support older Western Australians with practical savings and recognition for the contribution they make to the community.

Available at no cost to eligible seniors, the WA Seniors Card (through the Department of Communities) provides access to discounts across Western Australia, helping ease the cost of everyday expenses.

These include savings on groceries, dining, trades, professional services, travel, entertainment and lifestyle activities through local businesses that value and support seniors.

The full range of discounts is available at www.seniorscard.wa.gov.au/discounts/

In addition to the discounts, members receive access to the most generous range of state government funded concessions in Australia.

This includes free off-peak public transport, concessions on water service charges, local government rates and much more.

Members can also register to receive the Seniors Cost of Living Rebate, an annual payment made in late July each year to help with rising costs. For the 2025 Seniors Cost of Living Rebate payment, singles received \$110.07 and couples received \$165.10.

Another benefit of being a WA Seniors Card member is access to the Seniors Safety and Security Rebate, which assists members in keeping their homes safe and secure.

Members can claim up to \$400 after purchasing eligible safety or security items for their home, such as deadlocks, home alarm systems, security doors and mains-powered fire alarms (terms and conditions apply).

Beyond financial benefits, the WA Seniors Card keeps members informed and connected through activities such as member updates, competitions and community stories, ensuring seniors are not just saving money, but staying engaged.

For many, the WA Seniors Card represents recognition and practical support, helping seniors live well, stay connected and feel valued.

To learn more or apply, contact the WA Seniors Card Centre on 1800 671 233 or visit www.seniorscard.wa.gov.au

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Focus on Seniors

Learn to play bridge at Kalamunda District Bridge Club

Kalamunda District Bridge Club is your local place to learn or play bridge in a relaxed Hills environment and new members are always welcome!

So come down, keep your brain sharp and make new friends, beware though it can be addictive.

Bridge is played at our clubhouse in Ledger Road, Gooseberry Hill, 5 days of the week. We are a friendly club with players at all levels of bridge. We usually offer beginner lessons twice a year, the next one will start on Friday 6th February and conclude Friday 27th March 2026. We have occasional lectures from visiting experts and run a variety of competitions catering to all levels of bridge.

Monday evening supervised sessions are open to anyone wanting to practice their bridge skills. A partner is not necessary. It is a very popular evening where new players can gain experience in a very friendly atmosphere!

Please refer to our website for more information regarding days and times or phone Jenny on 0407 085 229 for information and to register.




KALAMUNDA DISTRICT BRIDGE CLUB

COME AND CHECK US OUT!

**Beginners Lessons
by Mark Goddard**
Friday 6th February 2026 9-11am
till Friday 27th March 2026

♠ ♥ ♣ ♦

For further details and to register
please phone Jenny on
0407 085 229
59 Ledger Road, Gooseberry Hill
www.kalamunda-district.bridge-club.org

Midland Markets and Chinese New Year

The Midland community is set to come alive once again as Swan Rotary and Chaos Theory Events present Midland Markets with the Chinese Dance Association of WA for a lovely community market and vibrant Chinese New Year Celebration at Weep Park. Held on 14 February, this free celebration of the Year of the Horse promises an evening of colour, culture, and connection, highlighted by traditional lion dancing, cultural performances and diverse food and market stalls.

Beyond the festivities, the event reflects the heart of Swan Rotary's work: strengthening community through service. Well known for initiatives such as the Bassendean Markets, Bullsbrook seniors' luncheon, community garden project and support for local hospitals, Swan Rotary continues to channel market proceeds back into meaningful programs. Their commitment extends globally too, through projects like ShelterBox, indigenous scholarships, polio eradication efforts and youth leadership opportunities.

The Midland market is more than a celebration—it's a reminder of what community can achieve when people come together with purpose. Swan Rotary's dedication ensures that every stall, every performance, and every shared moment contributes to a stronger, more supported community for all.



YEAR OF THE HORSE 2026

SWAN CHINESE NEW YEAR FESTIVAL & COMMUNITY MARKET

SATURDAY 14TH FEB 2026 | 4:30PM - 8:30PM

WEEP PARK | 35 THE CRESCENT, MIDLAND WA 6056

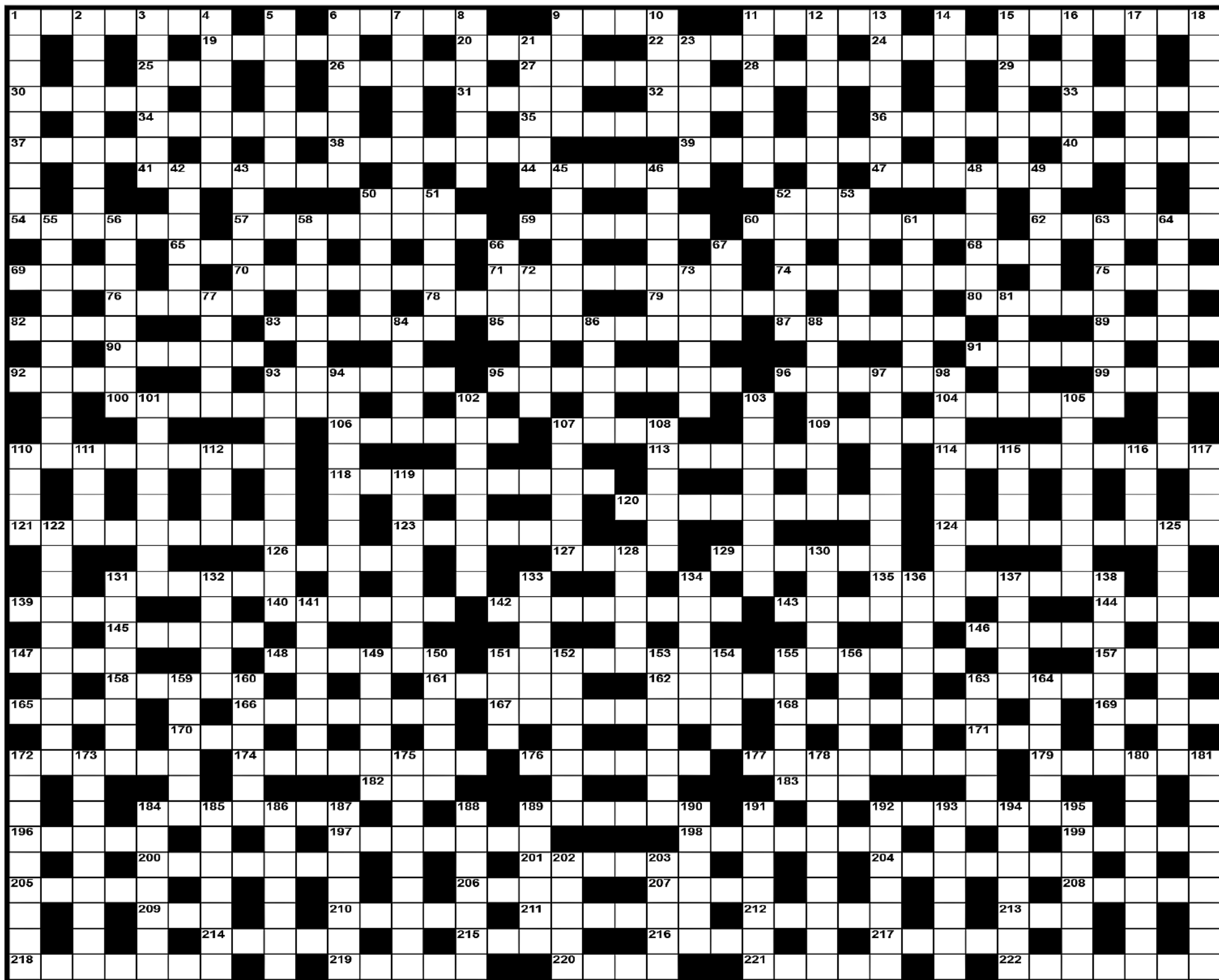
FREE EVENT

CULTURAL PERFORMANCES • LION DANCE
FOOD STALLS • MARKET STALLS

EVENT ORGANISED BY:

Chinese Dance Australia Inc. | Swan Rotary | Supported by City of Swan

1253



1	Controls legally
6	Sets of cards
9	Behind time
11	Caper
15	Visionary
19	Slight colouring
20	Otherwise
22	Little devils
24	Insult
25	Sheltered side
26	Group of nine
27	Public march
28	Perfect
29	Ventilate
30	Dig holes
31	Ripped
32	English school
33	Very pale
34	A pungent gas
35	Dress
36	Touching lightly
37	Intended
38	Place for children
39	Gives new title
40	Ban from home
41	Sincere
44	Outlays
47	Citrus fruit
50	Low sound
52	Type of antelope
54	Surprising
57	A revolving cannon
59	Painter
60	Spoke indistinct
62	Cute
65	Expression of disgust
68	Frozen water
69	Rim
70	Made into law
71	Following breeze
74	Satisfies

75 Eager
76 Amounts of
medicine
78 School tests
79 A sifter
80 Tribal emblem
82 Type of boat
83 Stashed away
85 Small axes
87 Want badly
89 Asian country
90 Painter's stand
91 Bad mark
92 Be afraid
93 A pamphlet
95 About word
meanings
96 Sword user
99 Dines
100 Conscious of things
104 Mistakes
106 Complete
107 Carry
109 Climbing bushes
110 Wine type
113 Type of llama
114 Put pressure on
118 Go out of sight
120 Stable attendants
121 A continent
123 Undid
124 Testing (6,3)
126 Chirping sound
127 Satisfy fully
129 Type of hound
131 Appreciate
135 A month
139 Wooden pins
140 Ran quickly
142 Counsellors
143 Wax light
144 A sign
145 Protrusion

146	Has a bet
147	Factual
148	Go against
151	Lessens
155	Celebratory meals
157	Mark of correction
158	Types
161	Looped rope
162	Farewell
163	Make amends
165	Touch on
166	Bends
167	One keeping stores
168	Starts again
169	Scan
170	Girls name
171	Slip on ice
172	List of population
174	Set free
176	Looking glass
177	Trade
179	Cruelty
182	Word of agreement
183	Very small
184	Slander
189	Aid
192	Putting in place
196	Skinflint
197	Tell a story
198	Set inside another
199	Memento
200	Vents
201	Preferably
204	Too big
205	A belief
206	Word of sorrow
207	Grassy area
208	Illegal burning
209	An alloy
210	Hard work
211	Made neater
212	Sag
213	Small drink

1 Widespread
2 epidemics
3 Caused to float in
4 air
5 Put together
6 Older ship
7 Tight
8 Hanging
9 Malignant
10 Pays in full
11 Leaned on
12 Type of duck
13 Stupid
14 Medical work
15 West Indian song
16 Indonesian island
17 Engaging in trade
18 Greatly annoys
19 Greatest
20 A simple song
21 Scatters around
22 Measuring devices
23 Declares void
24 Nooks
25 Keep trying
26 Hate
27 Naturist
28 Very clever
29 Animal chaser
30 Repaired
31 Drank greedily

53 Speaks
55 Lower down
56 River bed cleaners
58 Move in reply
61 Keep in store
63 Looks closely at
64 In three parts
66 US State
67 Verses
72 Astonished
73 A fool
77 Bring from body
81 Part of a target
84 Happening
86 Greatly desire
88 Give more energy to
93 Went through
94 Solid behaviour
97 Lower one's dignity
98 Separate
101 Checked new
country
102 Growers
103 Wrestled
105 Answer
107 Trade names
108 Metallic sound
110 Musical ending
111 Copies
112 A bird
115 See
116 Perform again
117 Skilful
119 Watchers for
trouble
122 Intolerable
125 The elite people
128 Sample
130 Stare fixedly
131 Toxic building
material
132 Lump of metal
133 Strangest

134 Animal types
136 A veteran
137 Get aboard
138 Put on work list
141 Normal garments
149 Type of street
150 Follows on
151 Sleep roughly
152 Flowers
153 Suit makers
154 Building position
155 Ploughed rut
156 Take for granted
159 One who awakens
others
160 Gave a fright to
163 State strongly
164 A prayer
172 Set to act
173 Pests

175 Separate races
178 Loudspeaker
180 Taking all in
181 Money-hungry
184 Type of racing
horse
185 Is present at
186 Handy tool
187 Small banners
188 Taste buds
189 Inflate with air
190 Angry speech
191 Rod for twisting
thread
192 Ceased
193 Adding up
194 Very foolish
195 More important
202 Private remark
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Read between the lines

by Pastor

Ian Kirk

The Disconnect

Our youngest daughter Heidi and her husband and their four kids are doing a lap around Australia. They'll be doing some work along the way, but mostly lots of sightseeing and adventures. We miss them already - but with technology, we can remain connected and follow them on their journey.

One thing, though, that wasn't connected was the power to their caravan via an 'Anderson plug' - this feeds power to the fridge when they're travelling. We happened to meet up with them in Denmark, just a few days into their trip. After explaining how their 'Anderson plug' wasn't working, I spent time trying to work out the problem. I found the reason for the 'disconnect' and fixed it. Now they can have the caravan fridge on while they are travelling - and that's been important where they are at present, as the temperature has been near 50 degrees Celsius.

This problem they had with their caravan reminds me of a 'disconnect' we can have in life - a 'disconnect' with God. What disconnects us from God is our sin. We cannot be in relationship with God because of it.

In His love for us, God's Son Jesus came and died for us on a cross, bearing the punishment of our sins, so that we could be forgiven and be re-connected to God - if we would put our faith in Jesus. Knowing Jesus also results in us having God's power to bless and empower our life.

ECHO NEWS

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When an individual or other legal entity ("the Customer") requests Echo Newspaper ("Echo") to place an advertisement in this Newspaper, they agree to be bound by the following terms and conditions:

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Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914

Western Australian Land Authority has made application for a temporary licence under s5C to take 150,000 kilolitres from the Perth-Superficial Swan aquifer for dewatering purposes to support construction of the Brabham sewer main in Brabham.

People who are interested in the application, may make a written submission within 15 days of this publication to:

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation,
7 Ellam Street, Victoria Park
Western Australia 6100,
quoting DWERVT7103.

If you object to the proposal, you must in your submission specify what actions, if any, would overcome your objections.

General enquiries to Ellam reception on 6250 8000



The Echo Newspaper is looking to fill the following positions

CADET JOURNALIST - DIGITAL CONTENT CREATOR

A part-time position Tuesday-Thursday, with hours negotiable, now exists for an innovative, self-confident, reliable Journalist to join the Echo News editorial team.

Essential criteria includes:

- A formal journalism qualification or equivalent grading.
- Photographic skills.
- Ability to build relationships with industry sources and communicate effectively with people from grass roots level through to senior industry management.
- Be able to write and post social media content.

The suitable applicant must:

- Be a team player with a friendly personality.
- Be capable of writing a full range of articles, from news stories, feature profiles, advertorials and through to all types of reviews.
- Have the ability to source their own stories and get to the heart of the local area so local knowledge of our distribution areas would be an advantage.

- Have good communication skills, creativity and knowledge of media law is strongly desired.
- Attend 'out of hours' council/shire meetings, industry events and business functions.
- Have a valid driver's licence and a reliable vehicle.
- Be capable of working to tight weekly deadlines is an essential component of this position.

Desired but not essential:

- Knowledge of 'InDesign' would be advantageous.
- A background in suburban newspapers would be viewed favorably.

In return the successful candidate will be offered:

- A salary commensurate with experience.
- Excellent working environment.

The closing date for all applications is 5pm, Wednesday 11th February 2026 with the successful applicant to start ASAP.

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- Strong negotiation verbal and written skills with excellent presentation and a professional phone manner is a must.
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General Manager / Editor Peter Lewis

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All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

ECHO Notice Board

A free service for non-profit organisations

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Upcoming Events

• **The Kalamunda Ladies Probus Club** meets on the second Thursday of each month at St Barnabas Church Hall, Railway Road, Kalamunda (entry off Spring Road) at 9am for 9.30am start. They have morning tea and a guest speaker at each meeting and a monthly bus outing to different interesting places. Socially they meet for coffee monthly and lunch also monthly at differ-

ent venues in the area. Probus is a social club for retirees who enjoy life. For more information call Trish on 0468 309 823 or Juliette on 9293 4438.

• **CWA Kalamunda** meets on the second Friday of each month at 10am on Central Road, Kalamunda behind Aldi, look for the blue tree. Go along to join in the fun and meet new friends.

• **Mundaring Garden Club** meets every second Tuesday of the month at Mundaring Church of Christ, 1470 Stoneville Road, Mundaring. The annual program

includes guest speakers who present on a variety of topics, workshops and outings to nurseries and gardens. Presentations are followed by morning tea in the club café. For more information call membership on 0413 358 085.

• **The Mundaring Country Women's Association** meets every second Wednesday at 1pm at the CWA Centre (Sculpture Park) in Jacoby Street, Mundaring for a craft and social afternoon. Take your craft ideas to share on your favourite craft

or hobby. Visitors are always welcome anytime to have a cuppa and a chat. For more information call Marg on 0417 956 628.

• **Midland Ascension Craft Group** meets in the parish hall 17 Spring Park Road, Midland every Tuesday of school term from 1pm to 3pm. All most welcome to join for a chat, cuppa, any craft and sometimes a guest speaker. For more information call 0433 265 683.

• **The Swan Guildford Historical Society** will host speaker Celia Miller at St

Matthew's Hall, Stirling Square, Guildford on February 9 at 7pm. She will be speaking on the saga of Captain Francis Whitfield, a resident magistrate and veteran of the Napoleonic Wars who accepted land grants in the Swan River Colony in lieu of a military pension in 1836.

Noticeboard is for non-profits and community groups advertising free/low cost events/programs. Entries must be emailed to editorial@echo-news.com two weeks before the event.

Woofers of the week



Bingo is a seven-month-old labrador cross great dane. He still has some growing to do and needs plenty of room to exercise. Bingo is great with kids and is sterilised, micro-chipped, and vaccinated. Costs Apply. Contact Bakers Hill Dog Sanctuary on 9574 1438.

A winning weekend for Midland Guildford

JOSHUA MCKENZIE

IT was an action-packed weekend for Midland Guildford Cricket Club with a number of superb performances to help provide strong results.

The male 1st grade side played against Joondalup in their two-day match.

The side batted first and posted 156 all out with Nathan Barnwell, with 61 runs not out from 119 balls, and Lennon Brookes, with 40 from 116, being the standout batters.

They could only limit their opponents to 6-231 in the second innings as they were defeated.

Against the same opponents, the male 2nd grade side bowled first in their two-day match.

Josh Chitty, with 3-42 from 16 overs, and Kelly Jones, with 3-65 from 17.3 overs, were the main contributors with the ball as the opposition posted a total of 292 all out.

After a strong start to the run chase with a 64-run opening partnership, the side fell to 6-117 in pursuit of the target.

Harrison Giancono, with 88 from 149, and Mitchell Pivac, with 79 from 100, combined for a 167-run partnership for the seventh wicket as the side won the match in a thrilling finish by two wickets.

The male 3rd grade and male 4th grade sides both played one-day matches against Joondalup.

It was an impressive run chase from the male 3rd grade side which was led

by Hunter Wills, with 61 from 62, and Lucas Walker, with 76 not out from 98.

They won the match by seven wickets with 35 balls remaining.

It was a similarly strong outing for the male 4th grade in their nine-run victory over the same opponents.

Oliver Voorn scored 65 from 108 in the first innings, with four bowlers taking two wickets each in a good team display.

It was a one-day match for the female A grade against Melville.

A clinical bowling performance saw the side dismiss their opponents for 142 all out, with Makayla Hendry taking 5-27 from seven overs in an impressive effort.

They managed to chase down the target with two wickets to spare and more than 20 overs remaining.

The male U17 and male U15 concluded their two-day matches against Joondalup this weekend.

After their opponents posted 8-211 in the first innings, the run chase was dominated by Cooper Forsyth scoring 117 not out from 141 to lead the team to 6-230 in the victory.

It was a narrow victory for the male U15 in their pursuit of the target of 228.

Lachie Flux top scored with 53 from 81, leading the side in a three-wicket victory as they surpassed the total with seven balls remaining.

With more sides for Midland Guildford Cricket Club returning to action this weekend, the teams will be aiming to continue their good form towards the end of the season.



It was a dominant weekend for the club with five wins out of six games.

Local Real Estate

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Middle Swan villa with value



NESTLED in a quiet, established villa complex, this three-bedroom home at Middle Swan presents an excellent opportunity for first-home buyers and investors alike.

The property sits in a prime location just minutes from Midland CBD, with public transport and main roadways close by, making commuting a breeze.

Families will appreciate the proximity to La Salle College, ideal for households with school-aged children.

A wide pathway leads into the property, creating an inviting sense of arrival and easy access for residents and visitors alike.

Upon entry, a welcoming lounge area greets visitors before flowing through to the kitchen and meals area, which opens out to a generous outdoor courtyard.

The rear courtyard opens up to a beautiful view of trees and surrounding nature, perfect for those who enjoy sitting outdoors with a morning coffee or evening glass of wine while breathing in the fresh air and listening to the sounds of birdlife.

The courtyard can also be a private space for alfresco dining or weekend relaxation, with room for entertaining guests in the open.

Inside, the home features neutral grey décor throughout, providing a versatile canvas that makes decorating effortless, whether owners prefer contemporary styling, classic furnishings or something in between.

The home features unique character touches, including a striking wall adorned with line art wallpaper depicting European-style buildings, adding a touch of continental charm to the interior.

Three bedrooms are accessible via the passageway, with the main bedroom equipped with built-in robes for convenient storage.

The three bedrooms are also fitted with carpet flooring, offering warmth and comfort underfoot, ideal for year-round cosiness and a soft, quiet feel that's perfect for restful sleeping spaces.

The home has a single bathroom while a separate laundry and storage room provide practical everyday functionality.

The property includes a single carport for secure parking and a gas hot water system for efficient year-round comfort.

While the villa requires some finishing touches to personalise and modernise, it represents exceptional value in today's competitive market.

The current owner is willing to arrange a rent-back agreement for investors, though owner-occupiers are equally welcome to make this property their own from settlement.

With its convenient location, character features and affordable price point, this Middle Swan villa offers a rare chance to enter the property market or expand an investment portfolio.

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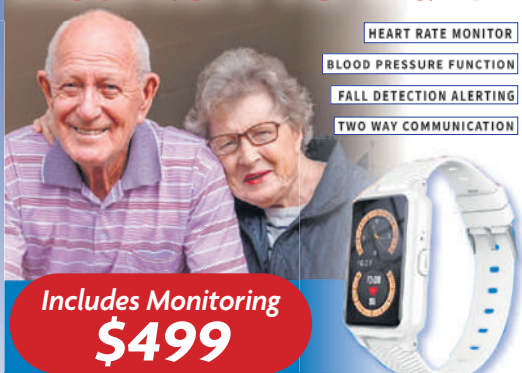
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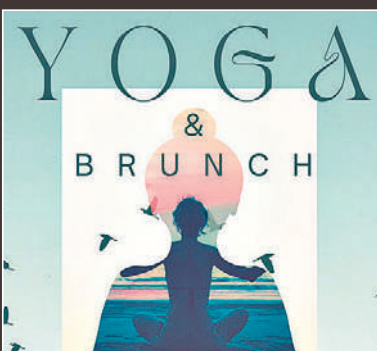


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