

ECHO NEWS

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VOL.43 NO.1961

Young achiever works hard to create change

P11



Lease finalised for the 'Harry Potter Experience'

P6



Turtle event draws crowds to Coal Dam Park

P8



Tamanna Khanum (the Y) and Atlas with Jasmine Burgess (ECU). Photo: Tegan Taudigani

Engaging ECU students


Children at Y WA's Yappara House Early Learning Centre in South Guildford are benefiting from a partnership with Edith Cowan University. **P11**

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Read between the lines



By Pastor Ian Kirk

Change of Seasons

A few weeks ago, we were down south enjoying the Busselton/Margaret River area. One of the things that was most enjoyable was seeing the autumn leaves. The vineyards were changing colour from vibrant green to the beautiful yellow, orange and reds of autumn.

On our way back, we took the long way home and drove along the picturesque Nannup to Balingup scenic drive, observing trees and vineyards going through their autumn transformation. At Balingup, we went to the nearby Golden Valley tree park and saw heaps of deciduous trees displaying their vibrant autumn colours.

Soon autumn will end, and the grape vines and the deciduous trees will have no leaves. They will even appear lifeless during the cold winter months. But after winter, new fresh green leaves will appear, as we enter spring. Then, during summer, there will be many green leaves to bring shade.

In life, I believe, we have seasons too. There is "springtime" where we experience new opportunities. There is "summertime" where life is full of so much. There is "autumntime" where things are changing and declining, and there is "wintertime" where things are dark and depressing.

But in all the seasons of life, there is one who never changes, and who is there to comfort us. He created the seasons; He created life. The greatest thing in all of life is to be right with Him and to know Him personally by turning to His Son Jesus Christ and trusting in Him.

ECHO Celebrations

Pictures: Muriel celebrating her birthday with daughters Lesley and Carole.



Muriel McGrath celebrates her 100th birthday

BRAYDEN MOULD

KALAMUNDA officially welcomed a new centenarian to its ranks last Tuesday as long-time local resident Muriel McGrath marked her 100th birthday, reaching the milestone with the same wit and independence that have defined her seven decades living in the hills.

Born Muriel Lumsden McGeachy in Galashiels, Scotland, she attended school in Kilmartin where she graduated as the top student.

In 1956, Muriel, her first husband, David Wright, and her two daughters Lesley and Carole moved from Scotland to the Perth Hills, beginning a residency in the area that has now spanned 70 years.

Ms McGrath said her involvement in the community began all those years ago after picking up work as a dispenser at Len Rowe's Pharmacy in Kalamunda and continued after it was purchased by Matt Companti.

"During that time, I also became very proficient in cosmetics and worked at the pharmacy for a number of years," she said.

Following the loss of her husband David in 1975, Muriel continued her pharmacy work in East Victoria Park, before retiring to go to Curtin University to complete a degree in Social Sciences.

"Back then it was called WAIT... the Western Australian Institute of Technology," she said.

Muriel enjoys dancing and credits meeting her second husband at a dancing group in Perth.

"I met Frank there, and we spent many enjoyable years travelling and enjoying cruises," she said.

Known by many of her friends as a prolific knitter, she has spent many of her evenings crafting jumpers for herself and blankets for most of her family.

"She never watched TV without a knitting needle in her hand," her daughter Lesley said.

"She would even knit blankets for the charity Wheelchairs for Kids Australia, knitting hundreds of metres of square blankets.

"Even spinning some of the wool she used, many of the blankets she made were a shag material, by cutting strands of wool, knotting them back together in a colourful line and then knitting the lines into a shaggy textured blanket."



Knitting isn't the only thing she enjoys doing as she often completes crossword puzzles her family said sharpens her mind.

"When she wasn't focused on knitting, she often switched the needles for a pen to complete cryptic crosswords, she never needed a pencil because there was never a mistake," Lesley said.

Ms McGrath credits her long life, to a dedicated fitness routine she maintained well into her nineties.

"After my second husband died and I went visiting my youngest in America, I needed a hip replacement," she said.

"This led me to a new exercise routine I needed to keep up, doing the Live Long Live Strong program at Walliston gym, then at 96 I started a more specialised gym and physio."

Today Ms McGrath remains fiercely independent and still loves the challenge of any word quiz or puzzle.

As she enters her second century, Muriel stands proof the wonders of staying active, keeping the mind sharp, and the importance of keeping busy.

Muriel spent her birthday last week, enjoying a party with friends and alongside her two daughters.



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Northam data centre development concerns remain

GUANHAO CHENG

DURING the April Northam ordinary council meeting, questions were sent in on notice putting the spotlight on the approved Northam data centre development and its potential impacts.

Northam resident Amber Balfour-Cunningham said the Shire of Northam defined light industry as an industry which will not adversely affect the amenity of the locality and will not impose an undue load on any existing or proposed essential services or utilities.

Ms Balfour-Cunningham questioned if this definition was appropriate for a 9m tall data centre stated as being for cryptocurrency mining.

"Data centres are known to need significant amounts of electricity and water to run high intensity computing and cooling systems, and can make persistent low-frequency humming," she said.

"Why was this 9m tall data centre to be built at Avon West Transport Hub on Yilgarn Ave approved without being advertised for public consultation?"

A Shire of Northam spokesperson said the application met the shire's criteria to be approved as a warehouse land use which was a permitted use under their planning scheme.

"This development, along with the other future premises in the locality, will be serviced by approved subdivisional roads and reticulated services."

The spokesperson said that this included power, water, sewerage, communications and more which was normally required in a light industrial estate.

"The staged process for developing the subdivision focuses on the detailed design of services to ensure that they have sufficient capacity to service the proposed development within the subdivision," they said.

Turning to the matter of transparency, the spokesperson said as the class of land use was 'P', it was permitted as of right by the scheme without the need for advertising, providing the use complies with the relevant development standards and the requirements of the scheme.

"In this case the proposal accorded with the built form, scale and activity of a contemporary warehousing development," they said.

"The use warehouse is defined in Local Planning Scheme No 6 as 'warehouse/storage' means premises including indoor or outdoor facilities used for: (a) the storage of goods, equipment, plant or materials; or (b) the display or the sale by wholesale of goods."



Northam Environmental Hub shared photos of cleared eucalyptus trees across the road from where the data centre would be built on Yilgarn Ave.

Echo News put questions to the Shire of Northam about how the shire is satisfied that existing or planned infrastructure can accommodate the energy and water demands typically associated with data centres.

The shire spokesperson said energy and water were the responsibility of respective utility providers to consider and that ongoing monitoring of infrastructure load as development progressed was not a consideration in the planning process.

"It is a matter for the developer and relevant utility providers to consider," they said.

"With regards to Transport infrastructure, we have requested a Traffic Impact Assessment as part of the DA approval."

Echo News asked the shire if they saw any merit in reviewing consultation thresholds for emerging industries such as data centres, especially with the need for AI data centres on the rise.

"The Shire of Northam is conscious of keeping the community informed and involved on relevant matters, but we also run the risk of over-consulting if we request involvement on every development in emerging industries in the current ever-changing development climate, particularly if these uses

are permitted under an existing zoning," the spokesperson said.

"We are committed to following the lead of the local government sector generally and will continue to adhere to all required consultation requirements on future developments."

The spokesperson said the shire was committed to preserving the country lifestyle of the Shire of Northam but was aware community sentiment was overwhelmingly to advance economic development in the area.

"This was evidenced in the most recent community survey conducted in December 2025 that attracted nearly 950 responses," they said.

"Economic development scored very high on the list of community priorities."

"While it is impossible to satisfy all parties all of the time, every development is considered individually based on a careful weighing of the above factors (among others)."

Ms Balfour-Cunningham said questions and concerns about transparency still remained.

"I personally feel it's not reasonable to classify a data centre as a warehouse, due to likely differences in water and power use, and noise," she said. **Cont. p18.**

Wind in the Willows continue operations

THE Town of Bassendean council has confirmed it will continue to operate its two Wind in the Willows (WITW) early childhood education and care services until at least July 2027.

Council's decision provides certainty for families and staff, with no changes in the provision of quality service or operating model during this period, whilst longer term options are explored.

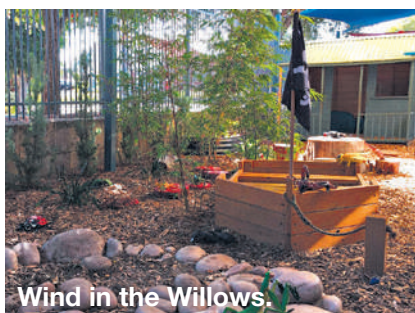
As reported in *Childcare site sale scrapped after buyer withdraws* (*Echo News*, April 3) Bassendean stopped the Wind in the Willows site sale after community backlash and the buyer's withdrawal prompting council to explore future alternatives.

"Our immediate priority is stability for children, families and staff, while we work carefully and transparently with the community to secure a sustainable long-term future for Wind in the Willows," Mayor Kath Hamilton said.

To support operational sustainability, council also endorsed preparation of the 2026/27 WITW budget with the aim of delivering financially sustainable childcare services, while retaining care standards.

Noting the feedback from parents and community members, the town will undertake a publicly advertised expression of interest (EOI) process to explore transitioning the facility to a suitable not-for-profit provider of early childhood education and childcare, to operate and manage the two WITW services from July 2027.

This EOI process will be supported by independent advice and community engagement to ensure full transparency throughout the process, while maintaining service delivery



Wind in the Willows.

standards at the current sites.

Once the EOI process is complete, the town will prepare a briefing for the consideration of council and the community, before proceeding further.

The town has also commenced discussions with state and federal governments seeking in-principle funding support for the future development of a new Wind in the Willows facility.

As part of longer-term planning, council will explore options to work with a preferred not-for-profit provider to consolidate the two existing Wind in the Willows services into one new fit-for-purpose childcare facility to be located on Crown land.

Operating two separate services from older facilities with limited licensing capacity of 35 places in Ashfield and 55 places in Bassendean is recognised as inefficient.

A consolidated new facility of at least 80 places would improve scale, efficiency and long-term viability.

Exploring development on Crown land would ensure no disruption to current operations, allowing for an orderly future transfer of licences and child placements if a new facility is approved and developed.

Cont. p18.

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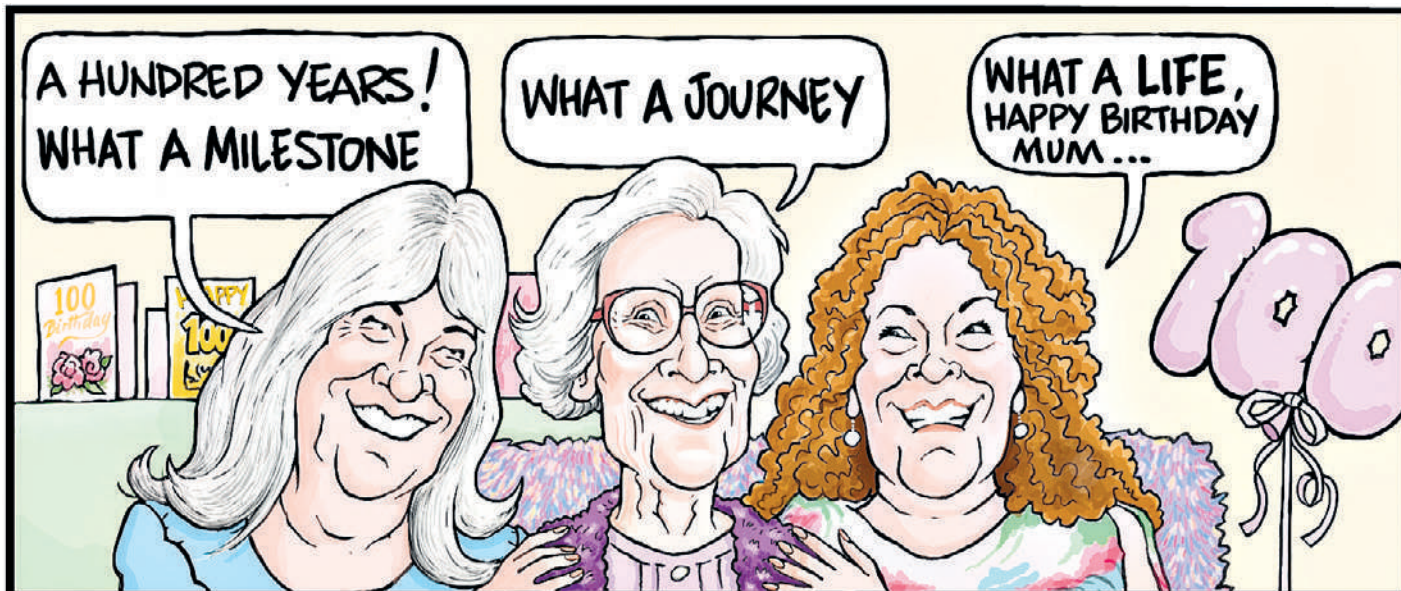
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KALAMUNDA RESIDENT MURIEL MCGRATH CELEBRATED HER 100TH BIRTHDAY REACHING THE MILESTONE WITH HER WIT AND INDEPENDENCE THAT HAS DEFINED HER SEVENTY YEARS LIVING IN THE HILLS.

ECHO YOUR THOUGHTS

Have your say:
editorial@echo-news.com

Thought for the day

“Things that have never happened before happen all the time.”

– Morgan Housel

Jorgensen Park not explained

Dear Echo News,
I went to the residents meeting at Kalamunda City Council Centre on April 16.

It was extraordinary the mayor said there would be no questions taken by councillors.

A brief response followed from the mayor, and later the CEO and another bloke we could see on a projected image from the other room where the councillors meet.

The only explanation of the planned ‘Harry Potter’ event of sound and lights and exhibits in the park was by one of the one hundred people in attendance.

And he was in the other room presumably with the silenced councillors.

There was no explanation by the mayor, CEO or councillors of the five-month residency for this commercial event that would close off over half the park and impact on many residents living nearby.

I expected a proponent of the event would provide an explanation but there wasn't one.

An attendee gave us some insight of what was pending and had acquired images from the event in Mornington Peninsula, Victoria.

Lights that could be seen 8km away for five months, audio heard for 2km or more.

A number of residents asked questions and made statements on environmental impacts but there were no responses in explanation.

It was a pathetic lack of response by the city

council.

I recall reading the pamphlet prior to the last council elections.

I was surprised that only one of them mentioned the environment! That's why we live here and have lived here for 40 years.

I expect most of the one hundred in attendance are similarly environmentally focussed.

I went along because Jorgensen Park is on the three species of black cockatoos' flight path.

Such an event would most likely have significant impact on the cockies and other wildlife, plants and animals in Jorgensen Park and the adjoining Kalamunda National Park.

Makes me think the Kalamunda City council is way out of touch with its constituents and the local natural environment.

When is the next election?

**G Field
Kalamunda**

Kalamunda out of touch

Dear Echo News,
Thanks to H Lill of Kalamunda for highlighting the out of touch decision made by the City of Kalamunda regarding the entertainment earmarked for Jorgensen Park.

It's about time councils and governments started taking into consideration the expectations of the community in regards to our beautiful wildlife.

Our native animals and birds are constantly under pressure because of human intervention, and I suggest in future

the council does the right thing by rate payers and consults them before going ahead with anything detrimental to our wildlife and environment.

**R Le Serve
Gooseberry Hill**

Old 'burbs need new amenities

Dear Echo News,
I write as a resident aghast at the City of Swan's obvious lack of interest in providing new amenities in older suburbs, whether it's footpaths, dog parks or even just giving matters of concern to residents, detailed consideration.

I find it galling to observe the concentration and abundance of facilities constantly provided to the new developing areas of the city (as they should be I hasten to add), against what can only be taken as a deliberate apathy to providing anything to the older suburbs.

My belief is that we have two councillors, Ian Johnson and Sarah Howlett, who are genuinely interested in and work for our ward, countered by a larger group of councillors, including the mayor, who have little or no interest, plus an administration that appears to operate in spite of residents' needs, or direction by councillors.

And there is little if anything we residents can do.

I was fascinated, attending the recent electors' meeting, at the wonderful new community facility in Ellenbrook, to find there is wide dissatisfaction across almost all wards in the community and that the dissatisfaction was aimed at the city's administration, rather than individual councillors.

The city, in my opinion, has become too big, the requirements of new suburbs and centres take precedence over anything residents in older suburbs might need or wish for.

Unfortunately, the state Labor government, as did the previous state Liberal government, has a policy of pursuing larger local governments, using the tool of amalgamations, along with a quiet determination to target councillors.

There does not appear to be any avenue for assessing administration, in effect, shire and city administrations are quarantined, while their bosses, (councillors) are under increasing observation.

I'm not suggesting illegal activity, but as residents, we are faced with a situation where councillors may wish for an event or facility to be investigated and perhaps introduced, but if the administration is not interested, it won't happen, despite the wishes of residents conveyed to councillors.

However, residents can start the procedure to have a shire split and I've come to believe that is the best way forward for residents in the neglected suburbs of the City of Swan.

It would be foolish to think the state government would be supportive of such a move, given their wish to have less shires, however if enough people express the wish to have the city split, then things may gather momentum.

We need a minimum of 250 people, and I'm hoping that there are knowledgeable residents who are willing to help get the ball rolling, or perhaps there are already groups thinking the same way.

Hence, I'm writing this to gauge interest.

I'm very willing to work towards achieving it, as I feel it is the only way to get proper care and attention to the neglected older areas of Swan.

**G Ross
Swan View**

VIEW to support appeal

Dear Echo News,
VIEW (Voice, Interest and Education of Women) is a national women's organisation and support network, bringing together women to enjoy social activities, develop skills, and make connections - all while supporting Australian children experiencing disadvantage.

VIEW is also the largest community sponsor of students of The Smith Family's Learning for Life program.

VIEW clubs across WA are urging the local community to give generously to The Smith Family's Winter Appeal this year, to support thousands of children and young people experiencing disadvantage with their education.

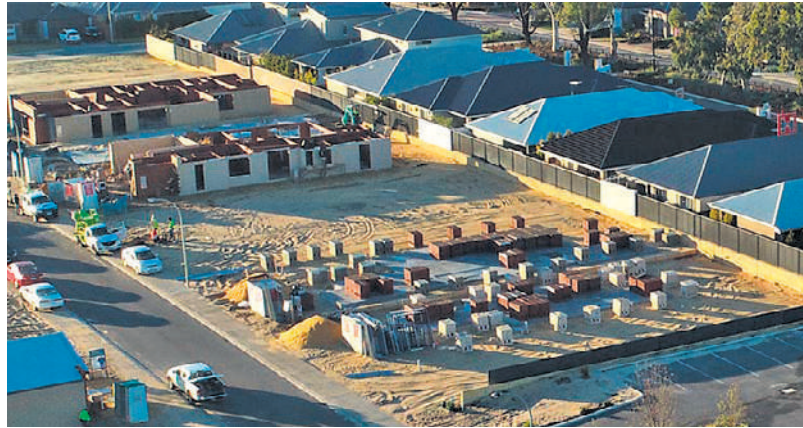
The Winter Appeal aims to raise almost \$8 million by the end of June 2026 to support students experiencing disadvantage by providing access to proven out-of-school educational programs.

Donations can be made online at www.thesmithfamily.com.au/appeal or by calling 1800 633 622.

**J Hancock
VIEW**

The Echo reserves the right to edit letters for length, legal reasons or clarity. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Echo. All letters must contain the author's full name, address and phone number for verification purposes.

Viveash rezoning gets EPA tick



EPA Chairman Darren Walsh's (above) determination was released late last month and decided not to assess the move to rezone Viveash lots.

GUANHAO CHENG

THE Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has chosen not to halt the move to rezone lots in Viveash for residential development.

The amendment seeks to rezone various lots in Viveash from general industrial zoning to residential development zoning.

The EPA outlined social surroundings, air quality, flora and vegetation, terrestrial fauna, inland waters and terrestrial environmental quality as preliminary factors to consider.

The potential significant effects of implementing the amendment include impacts to future sensitive land uses from existing and nearby industrial land uses, from noise, dust and odour emissions and reduced air quality.

Vegetation clearing, local hydrology from future water run-off and Aboriginal heritage are also listed as being potentially impacted.

City of Swan staff said the amendment was still in a very early stage with only the EPA response being returned.

Echo News put questions to staff about whether the amendment formed part of the action to achieve aged-care outcomes.

According to the City of Swan website, the city is seeking to increase aged care services in Swan.

Both Paradise Quays in Ballajura and the over-55s village on Elvire Street in Viveash formed part of the city's efforts to achieve an increase in services.

"At this stage it's too early to confirm whether the zoning would go toward an aged care outcome,"

City of Swan staff said.

"It will take some time before the external land uses are outlined.

"As it progresses, the City of Swan will advertise the new amendment and the related applications."

The EPA chairman's determination was released on April 24, deciding not to assess the scheme under part four of the Environmental Protection Act.

The EPA assessed a metropolitan regional scheme (MRS) amendment from the City of Swan recently and said the Viveash amendment reflected the EPA's advice on that previous amendment.

Therefore, given the previous approval of the larger MRS amendment, the EPA considered potential impacts manageable through existing and future statutory processes.



DPIRD's collaborative FEED365 project at Katanning Research Station.

FEED365 project delivers a year-round feed option

RESEARCH has revealed the optimal combination of forage species to establish a year-round feed supply for sheep and cattle – helping livestock producers improve carrying capacity, cut supplementary feeding costs and boost margins.

The five-year FEED365 research project is led by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) with co-investment from Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA).

Four suitable forage systems were identified, after evaluating 49 forage mixtures, including annual and perennial grasses, legumes and herbs, winter and summer crops and shrubs.

The optimal combination was comprised of strategically grazing crops and perennial and annual pastures – providing sufficient feed for 12 months, without the need for supplementary feeding.

The strategy increased carrying capacity from the typical nine dry sheep equivalent

per hectare during winter and spring – requiring supplementary feeding and available crop stubbles over summer and autumn – to 10 DSE/ha all year round, without the need for additional feed.

DPIRD research scientist Daniel Real said the research would assist producers to align forage supplies with livestock nutrition requirements.

This will reduce feed gaps during high-risk periods of the year.

"The recommended sequence involved grazing a green cereal crop for three to four weeks in June and July, depending on rainfall, then a mixture of annual forages from August to October," Dr Real said.

"This was followed by perennial pasture mixtures from November to mid-December, an unharvested cereal crop from mid-December to April and finishing the cycle by grazing the same perennial pasture mixtures again in April to May.

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Kingfish ceviche, pickled radish, avocado, grapes, ponzu dressing GF, DF, NF
Confit duck rillettes, dijon mustard, giardiniera, toasted ciabatta GFO, DF, NF

MAIN

Harissa braised lamb shoulder, hummus, salsa verde, crispy chickpeas GF, NF, DF
Baked Barramundi, chermoula, almonds, pomegranate NFO, GF
Roast cauliflower, macadamia crumb, warrigal greens, labneh, native pepperberry GF, NFO, VGO, V

DESSERT

Baked chocolate tart, Miso banana, Peanut brittle GF, NFO
Rum baba, creme chantilly NF, DFO
Brown sugar pavlova, whipped white chocolate, mandarin & pistachio GF, DFO, NFO

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Children over 10 years old allowed in The Lounge only.

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MOTHER'S DAY BREAKFAST

EGGS ON TOAST ~ GFO/DFO/NF/VO
BUTTERMILK PANNA COTTA ~ V
BELGIAN WAFFLE ~ NF/V
SMASHED AVOCADO BENEDICT ~ NF/VO
AMAROO BIG BREAKFAST ~ NF/DFO/GFO
BIRCHER MUESLI ~ DF/VG/NF
SHAKSHUKA ~ V/NF/GFO/DFO/VGO
BREAKFAST GNOCCHI ~ VO/VGO/NF
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Quokka monitoring expands in Perth Hills



Footage of a quokka in the Perth Hills during monitoring efforts in the BoorYul-Bah-Bilya program. Picture: Bibbul Ngarma Aboriginal Association

GUANHAO CHENG

EFFORTS to better understand and protect a rare mainland quokka population in the Perth Hills have expanded as conservationists increase monitoring across the region.

Mundaring's Bibbul Ngarma Aboriginal Association (BNAA) is continuing to track the Perth Hills quokkas through a growing network of fauna cameras as part of its BoorYul-Bah-Bilya (BBB) program.

The work builds on the earlier discovery of quokkas in the Perth Hills, with the program now focused on understanding their behaviour, population dynamics and response to environmental pressures in the Mandoon Bilya (Helena River) catchment.

BNAA executive director and environmental scientist Francesca Flynn said the monitoring had become one of the organisation's most exciting citizen science initiatives. "It is an absolute joy to be monitoring the Perth Hills quokkas and learning as much as we can about these in-

credible creatures," she said.

"Their survival in the forests outside of Perth, despite the many challenges they face, is truly extraordinary."

Quokkas were once widespread across south-west WA but have declined significantly since the early 20th century due to land clearing, fire and introduced predators such as foxes and cats.

Today, mainland populations remain fragmented and are rarely seen by the wider community, with most people still associating the species with Wadjemup-Rottnest Island.

Through the BBB program, BNAA is using a network of 10 monitoring cameras to capture data, with recent funding from Bendigo Community Bank Mundaring allowing the program to expand into new areas.

Ms Flynn said the additional monitoring would help inform future conservation efforts.

"It's really exciting to be able to expand our monitoring program thanks to a grant from Community Bank Mundaring," she said.

"We hope our work enables stronger protection for

mainland quokkas and other threatened native species facing constant pressures from land clearing, fire, feral predators and a changing climate."

BNAA chairperson and Noongar Traditional Owner Walter McGuire said the program also reflected the importance of community-led conservation grounded in cultural knowledge.

"The Noongar people, my people, have lived on this land for millennia," he said.

"It is our role and responsibility to care for this environment, including the Mandoon Bilya and these little quokkas, as the First People of this land."

BNAA is working with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions to support ongoing research and management, with the data expected to contribute to broader recovery efforts for the threatened species.

The organisation is also encouraging community involvement through citizen science, including biodiversity surveys and the use of platforms such as iNaturalist to record wildlife observations.

Kalamunda finalises lease for the 'Harry Potter Experience'

BRAYDEN MOULD

THE City of Kalamunda has officially executed a lease agreement for an immersive Harry Potter-themed attraction at Jorgensen Park, advancing the project despite resolute opposition from residents who argue the deal lacks transparent environmental and community safeguards.

For Russel and Wendy Thom, who have resided on the park's perimeter for 21 years, the planned lights, sounds, and foot traffic expected will likely disrupt their quality of life.

"It is the most beautiful and quiet place to live," Mr Thom said.

"But to turn around and have this event run for five months is going to be terrible for us; we have basically had all our agency and ability to have any influence over our well-being stripped away."

Public scrutiny has intensified over the city's administrative timeline, which saw the project fast-tracked based on an environmental report provided by the proponent, Kzemos Australia.

During last Tuesday's ordinary meeting, it was revealed that the binding lease had been finalised and signed by both the city and state government after reviewing the proponents environmental report.

Challenged by an increasingly vocal public, city officials have now commissioned an independent environmental consultant to peer review the proponents' original ecological findings.

"It's just been done completely back to front. They were supposed to have a management plan and an environmental assessment in place before signing the lease... nothing has been done in the order that it's supposed to be done," Mr Thom said.

City of Kalamunda Mayor Margaret Thomas defended the procedural timeline, characterising the lease execution and the independent review as separate but related steps.

"A detailed environmental assessment has been undertaken by the proponent, which is standard practice for proposals of this nature," she said.

"The proponent's report concluded that, subject to the implementation of a number of recommended mitigation measures and ongoing monitoring, the proposal is unlikely to result in significant long-term environmental impacts.



Newly installed fencing around Jorgensen Park. Picture: Brayden Mould

"In response to the level of community interest and questions raised regarding independence, the city has also elected to commission an additional independent review and seek input from suitable qualified specialists, including expertise in black cockatoo habitat and behaviour.

"This is not due to a lack of confidence in the initial assessment, but rather to provide an additional layer of assurance and transparency as part of the overall decision-making process."

Documents recently released to Kalamunda residents under Freedom of Information laws and seen by *Echo News* revealed the main entrance of the event route is currently planned directly behind residential properties.

"We know now from the mapping that's been released that the main entrance is right behind our house," Ms Thom said.

"There will be cycles of between 150 and 180 people every fifteen minutes going past that area... and it will go until between 9pm and 11pm every night.

"We have next door neighbours with a nine-month-old baby... and other neighbours further down from us have two young kids that go to school... Not to mention pretty much every resident along the boundary line owns a dog.

"We can only imagine how they are going to handle this event with the expected lights, sounds, and foot traffic."

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Lack of progress concerns over idle Swan District Hospital site

PETER W LEWIS

GUILDFORD-based MLC Anthony Spagnolo has accused the state government of a lack of progress in developing the former Swan District Hospital site.

He said the Cook Labor government had spent almost \$4.9 million maintaining the former hospital site since its closure in 2015, including \$4.6m on security.

“A further \$1.4m has now been committed for security through to 2029, adding to the ongoing cost of a site that still sits unused. The ongoing spend, with no clear outcome in sight, highlights the Cook government’s failure to act on housing in Midland,” Mr Spagnolo said.

“For nearly a decade, the Labor government has left this site idle while costs to taxpayers climb into the millions and a clear opportunity to boost housing supply in Midland is missed.

“At a time of acute housing pressure, people in Midland know this land should be put to use, and they’re right.”

Mr Spagnolo said the pathway to development was already in place.

“The City of Swan has already zoned the site for housing, including over-55s living, and we support that direction,” he said.

“Our view is that if the site were taken to market, there would be strong interest from private developers to deliver that outcome, putting the land to productive use and helping address local housing demand in Midland.

“It would also bring an end to the outrageous ongoing cost of providing security guards for derelict buildings.

“The land is already zoned for housing, the City of Swan supports it, and the community supports it – what’s missing is action from the state government. This doesn’t require a complex solution. It requires leadership and a decision to get on with it.

“After nine years, there is nothing to show but a growing bill for taxpayers. Residents want to see this site revitalised and contributing to the Midland area again – not sitting vacant year after year.

“The government can’t claim to be pulling every lever in tackling the housing crisis while holding back a prime housing site, in the heart of Midland,” he said.

Planning and Lands Minister John Carey said the former Swan Districts Hospital was decommissioned in 2015 and remains offered for inclusion in the South West Native Title Settlement - an historic agreement with the Noongar people.

“It recognises the historical dispossession and removal of Noongar people from their land. The state will continue to respectfully engage with Whadjuk Aboriginal Corporation (WAC) as the relevant Noongar Regional Corporation,” Mr Carey said.

“The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage continues to work with WAC in relation to the offer, noting the site is complex, will require extensive remediation and covers many land parcels.”



The former Swan District Hospital site. Picture: Guanhao Cheng

Regarding the ongoing costs for security the minister told *Echo News* that departments take necessary measures to mitigate unauthorised access, vandalism and antisocial behaviour at sites, as required.

He said the Cook government was supporting the delivery of thousands of new homes through major urban renewal projects and is also partnering with industry to unlock thousands of hectares of land for new housing estates.

“We are also partnering with the federal government to deliver more affordable rentals in Woodbridge and Midland as part of an historic program of works,” Mr Carey said.

He said Woodbridge was set to deliver 56 apartments, 44 affordable and 12 social homes while Midland was set to deliver 120 apartments, 96 affordable and 24 social homes.



\$1.2m to boost mobile coverage in Perth Hills

THE Albanese government will provide up to \$1.2 million in funding to upgrade up to 23 mobile tower sites across the Perth Hills region to improve the reliability of mobile telecommunications for local communities.

With applications for a targeted new round of the Mobile Network Hardening Program (MNHP) the investment is particularly important for the Perth Hills, which has faced significant bushfires, including the

Extra federal funding will improve mobile coverage in the Perth Hills.

2021 Woorloo fires that destroyed more than 80 homes.

Funding will support upgrades to extend battery back up power at mobile sites and install automatic transfer switches to keep services running if the main power fails.

These upgrades will help ensure local residents and visitors to the area can continue to access mobile services during power outages and natural disasters.

Bullwinkel MP Trish Cook said local residents in the Perth Hills know too well the importance of being able to call for help in an emergency.

“I’m proud to be part of a govern-

ment that is delivering this election commitment which is helping ensure the community has better access to reliable telecommunications services,” she said.

“This \$1.2m investment in mobile resilience will deliver vital infrastructure upgrades that will help to keep our community safer and more connected in times of power failure or emergencies.”

Federal Communications Minister Anika Wells said the Albanese government was working to ensure no community was left behind when it comes to connectivity by building more resilience into mobile phone


networks.

“This \$1.2m investment will deliver critical resilience upgrades to the Perth Hills communities, who can face bushfires and severe weather events,” she said.

“With grant applications now open, this is a great opportunity for residents, councils and telcos to work together to identify potential projects that will deliver the best outcomes for the community.”

Applications close at 5pm AEST on Wednesday, June 10.

The program guidelines are available on GrantConnect at www.grants.gov.au




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Turtle event draws crowds to Coal Dam Park

GUANHAO CHENG

A WOODBRIDGE citizen science event at Coal Dam Park generated dozens of turtle sightings and gave families the opportunity to witness rare basking behaviours and learn more about conservation.

Citizen scientist Ian Barlow cohosted the Turtles in Celebration, Turtles in Love walk at the wetland on Sunday with Walliabup Wildlife Warriors, giving visitors the chance to witness the breeding behaviours of oblong turtles in one of the region's most unique urban habitats.

Mr Barlow said the event achieved exactly what it set out to do.

"We accomplished the goal of the event, which was to showcase a breeding congregation," he said.

While the breeding activity was not in full swing, visitors still observed six turtles engaging in mating rituals, including males pursuing females, gentle nose-touching and attempts to clasp onto the females' shells.

The day also featured an unusually high amount of basking behaviour, with eight turtles spotted out of the water.

"To see one turtle basking is incredibly rare," Mr Barlow said.

"They won't leave the water unless they feel 100 per cent safe."

Mr Barlow described Coal Dam Park as "turtle heaven", saying the enclosed lake, steep banks and abandoned railway infrastructure created ideal basking conditions protected from predators.

The first group through the walk reportedly saw between 19 and 21 turtles within 50 minutes, with turtles appearing almost immediately after the tour began.

"By the time they hit the first viewing platform, they were already at eight turtles," he said.

Mr Barlow said Coal Dam Park's location near bushland and the former Helena Riv-

er corridor also provided important nesting habitat, though many questions remained unanswered about predation and turtle survival rates.

"We just don't have enough data," he said. "If there are fatalities or predation, we can't physically see it, so we can't record it."

Despite the gaps in knowledge, Mr Barlow said signs of younger turtles reaching maturity suggested the population was reproducing successfully.

Beyond showcasing turtles, the event also aimed to inspire public interest in citizen science and conservation.

Mr Barlow said focussing on one species at a time made environmental care feel less overwhelming for the public.

"A lot of the time, people think it's a big commitment where you need to heal the waters and all the trees but when you start small, it can still go on to have a big impact," he said.

"If you look after the turtles, the turtles look after the water and the land and the trees."

"They help clean the waterways and contribute to the ecosystem to keep trees healthy too."

The event also drew laughs from families, with children repeatedly asking parents whether the turtles were "cuddling".

"That's always the best question," Mr Barlow said.

"Some parents answer it then and there and others whisk their children aside somewhere a bit more private to explain to them how it all works."

Mr Barlow said events like this also provided families a lasting memory and showed citizen science did not have a prohibitive barrier for entry.

"Citizen science could be as easy as logging a sighting on TurtleSAT," he said.

"It's not very different from taking a picture and, say, putting it up on social media.



Citizen scientist Ian Barlow says a little goes a long way in citizen science and encouraged more people to get involved.

"Often times, you need to think of a caption for that as well, and TurtleSAT is the same, and you're contributing to the science needed to keep these wonderful turtles safe and healthy."

The event was supported by Emerald Acres Wildlife Rehabilitation, Walliabup Wildlife Warriors and Wildlife Allies Australia, with organisers encouraging more people to log turtle sightings through the TurtleSAT citizen science platform.



An oblong turtle sighted at the park.

How Your City Works

The City of Kalamunda is lifting the lid on how local government works.



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Notice of Meeting - Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee

In accordance with section 5.25(1)(g) of the *Local Government Act 1995* and regulation 12 of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, notice is given that a meeting of the City of Kalamunda Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee will be held in the Council Chambers at the City of Kalamunda Administration Centre located at 2 Railway Road Kalamunda, on:

Tuesday 19 May 2026 commencing at 5:30pm

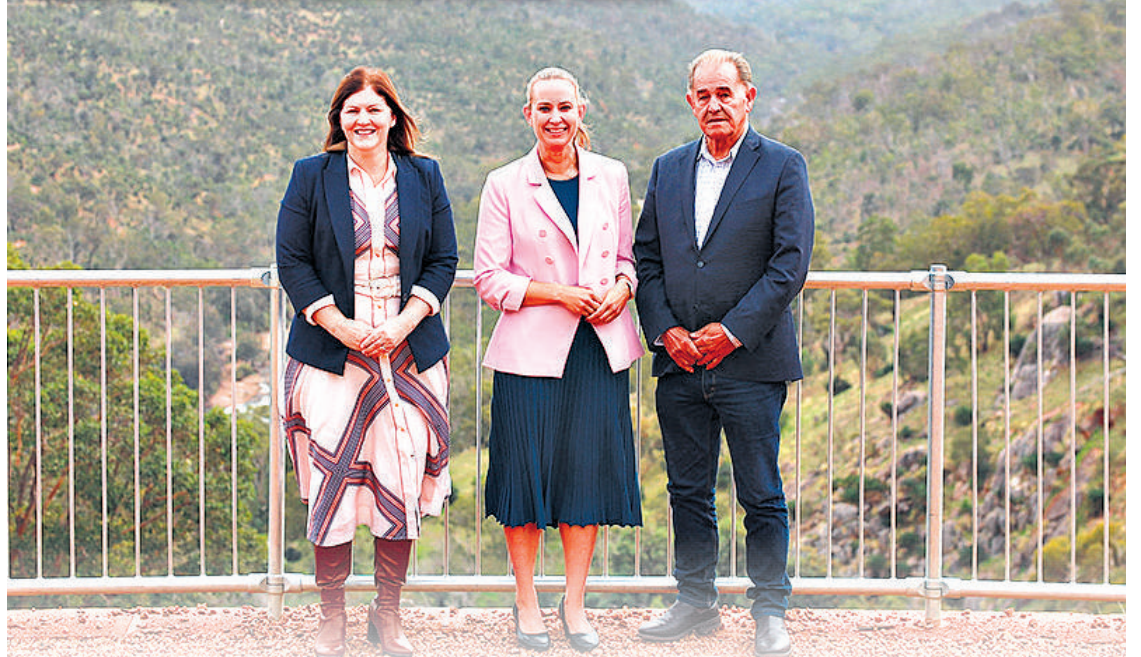
The Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee meeting is open to the public unless otherwise specified in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Anthony Vuleta
Chief Executive Officer



kalamunda.wa.gov.au

City of Swan Mayor Tanya Richardson, Swan Hills MLA Michelle Maynard and Swan deputy Mayor Charlie Zannino at the Bells Lookout.



Million-dollar makeover for a million-dollar view

A MAJOR overhaul of the iconic Bells Lookout vantage point has reinforced its status as one of the region's 'must-see' attractions.

Located at 911 Campersic Road, Brigadoon, the lookout's improvements have been designed around increasing accessibility and improved family-friendly facilities.

For locals and visitors, the new lookout provides the perfect spot to enjoy the amazing views from one of Perth's most famous hiking destinations.

The \$1.068 million project was funded by \$800,000 from the West Australian Planning Commission with the remainder provided by the City of Swan.

Site improvements include a rebuilt platform and shade structure, new parking area with extra off-street parking, installation of footpaths and kerbing, and landscaping works.

A coffee van area has also been constructed along with the installation of park furniture including picnic tables and seating.

"Community feedback was sought and taken into consideration before the final concept was approved," a spokesperson said.

Swan Hills MLA Michelle Maynard said the project has given a new lease of life to one of Perth's most treasured vistas.

"We're blessed with one of Perth's best views and now have a lookout facility to match its splendour."

City of Swan Mayor Tanya Richardson said the new lookout would now prove even more popular with hikers and families looking for a unique spot for a picnic.

"Its improved accessibility, including new footpaths, parking and landscaping, make it an outstanding choice for visitors of all ages."

Citizen science plays vital role in biosecurity

GUANHAO CHENG

CITIZEN science aids the work of expert surveillance and is an important part of pest prevention says the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD).

“Citizen science plays a vital role in Western Australia’s biosecurity system, helping early detection of pests and diseases to support DPIRD surveillance efforts,” a spokesperson said.

“Public reports of any unusual insect, plant or animal observations are encouraged via DPIRD’s MyPestGuide Reporter app, for which they will an identification report from a department expert.

“DPIRD’s annual Biosecurity Blitz and Bee Pest Blitz attracts strong community participation across the state, highlighting this collective effort.

“Working together –government, industry and community –strengthens WA’s biosecurity defences, while supporting export market access and protecting WA’s agriculture, environment and way of life.”

DPIRD Plant Biosecurity Technical Area Manager Nichole Hammond said citizen science reporting was a vital part of the state’s biosecurity defences.

She said the contributions helped the state maintain and expand market access and since launching Biosecurity Blitz and a suite of MyPestGuide digital tools in 2015, more than 9500 reports have been made.

Farmers, agronomists and the community using the MyPestGuide Reporter app helped identify new spider and insect species.

“The more eyes we have out there the better and early detection is the key to being able to contain and eradicate unwanted pests and diseases before they can establish.”

Pests such as the Qfly can spread rapidly if left unchecked and citizen science plays a vital role in keeping files on records for sightings and building a map of their potential presence.



Three children using the MyPestGuide Reporter app to log a report. Picture: DPIRD

As reported in *Lone Ofly extends quarantine* (Echo News, November 17, 2023) even a single pest can lead to the extension of a quarantine area.

As in the case of the polyphagous shot-hole borer, careful management of a single pest could result in a whole area of trees being preserved from infection and removal.

The MyPestGuide Reporter app can be downloaded for free from Google Play and Apple App Store and can be an easy way for citizens to get involved in science that helps protect state biosecurity.

Leaders with local government backgrounds to speak

GUANHAO CHENG

THE Swan Chamber of Commerce’s Hour of Power returns next week with two speakers experienced in business and local government.

Former City of Swan mayor Kevin Bailey and current Shire of Mundaring councillor Ben Heptinstall will share insights into their lives and outlooks.

Mr Heptinstall will speak about his journey from school into the workforce and into business ownership, having purchased his first business at 26 years old.

He has since grown that into four supermarkets and a liquor store, and will share how he got there, including the obstacles and challenges he had to overcome along the way.

A key turning point in his journey was shifting from working in the business to having the business work for him.

Achieving that transition took several years and required building strong management teams across each store, allowing him to step back and focus on overseeing operations rather than the day-to-day running of the stores.

That shift also gave Mr Heptinstall the freedom to give back to his community, including supporting several local charities through his businesses.

It ultimately led him into public life, where he was elected unopposed as a councillor for the Shire of Mundaring motivated by a long-held belief that people have been ignored at all levels of govern-



Supermarket leader and Mundaring councillor Ben Heptinstall and businessman and former City of Swan mayor Kevin Bailey will share insights into their life and experiences at the upcoming Hour of Power.

“Rather than wait for someone else to step up, I decided I may as well do it myself,” he said.

Mr Bailey is a business owner and Swan resident who was first elected to council at the City of Swan in 2005.

He was recognised through the WA Local Government Association’s honours program for his devotion to the council and went on to be elected mayor in 2019.

He has represented the council on over 20 committees and remains an active participant and organiser in the City of Swan community.

The event will run from 10.30am to 11.30am on May 13 at the Crooked Spire in Midland.

Shire of Northam recognised for fiscal excellence

GUANHAO CHENG

THE Shire of Northam has been recognised by the Office of the Auditor General as one of its 2025 best practice entities for financial reporting and controls.

The recognition reflects the shire’s performance across several areas including timely preparation of financial reports, strong working papers and effective financial management controls.

A total of 138 local government entities were audited by the Auditor General last year, with the findings released in a recently published report.

“Of continuing concern is the quality of financial reports submitted for audit,” Auditor General Caroline Spencer said.

“The value of current year errors and the number of prior period errors increased largely as a result of issues linked to property and infrastructure assets.”

About 33 per cent of local governments provided five or more versions of their financial report to the audit team, with one unnamed council submitting 19 versions.

“As I’ve said before, this signals a need for greater care and capability in financial reporting,” Ms Spencer said.

“Multiple revisions create delays, cost time and resources and reflect gaps in quality assurance processes.”

In contrast, the Shire of Northam was highlighted among a select group of councils recognised for best practice outcomes.

A Shire of Northam spokesperson said the shire was pleased to receive the recognition, noting Northam was among the top 10 Band 1 and 2 entities recognised in the report and one of only four regional local governments to achieve the result.

The recognition places Northam among the stronger performers in the sector at a time when financial reporting standards continue to face scrutiny across Western Australia.

The Auditor General’s report noted that councils achieving best practice outcomes typically demonstrated robust financial controls, effective internal review systems and well-prepared supporting documentation before audit submission.

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Free lung checks offered

WESTERN Australians are being urged to take a simple step that could protect their health, with a free lung health check offered in Perth as more than 30 landmarks across the state light up blue this May.

The blue lights mark Lung Health Awareness Month and aim to bring lung health into everyday conversation, with a clear message: Your Lungs Matter.

In Western Australia, an estimated one in three people live with chronic lung conditions. Many people do not recognise the early signs or wait until symptoms become more serious before seeking help.

In Perth, the Institute for Respiratory Health will host a free lung health check event on Thursday, May 14 at Sir Charles Gaird-

ner Hospital, Watling Walk, G Block, from 9am to 4pm.

Nurses will run the check and give people a quick snapshot of their lung health and will also recommend next steps if needed.

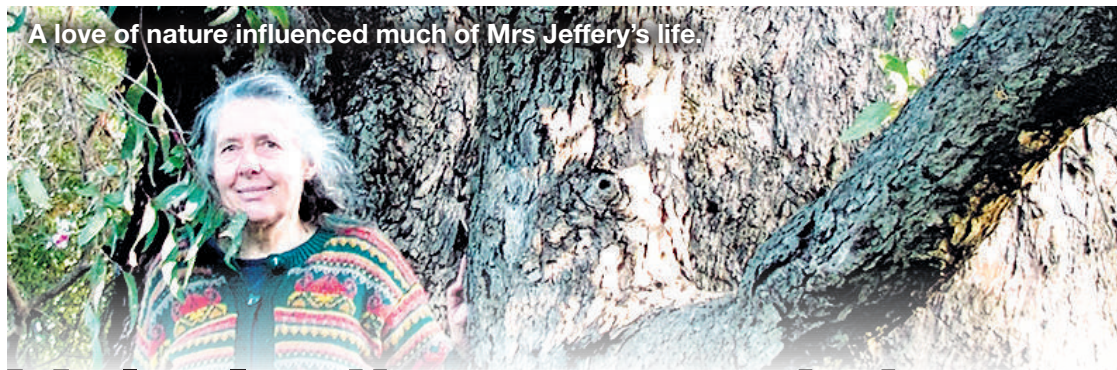
People attending the free lung health check can register their expression of interest online and learn more about the Institute's clinical trials program, which includes asthma, COPD, bronchiectasis and other lung diseases.

Those who cannot attend are encouraged to learn the signs, speak with their doctor if they have concerns and start a conversation with family and friends.

To book a test go to https://www.resphealth.org.au/lung-health-matters/lung_check_registration.html or visit www.resphealth.org.au/lung-health-matters



Free lung checks are being offered in May.



A love of nature influenced much of Mrs Jeffery's life.

Vale Indigenous rights activist Margaret Jeffery

LONGTIME Guildford resident and Indigenous rights activist Margaret Jeffery (nee Blair) passed away last month.

Mrs Jeffery is remembered for her tireless work over the years in the fields of Aboriginal rights, the environment and heritage as well as fighting injustice and racism in society.

"Margaret graduated as a psychologist and gave her life to Indigenous people," her son Mark Jeffery said.

"She did this at all levels: personal, local, state, federal and international and was involved in many issues over more than 50 years.

"Her home sometimes resembled a very busy welfare centre or community office with people from all walks of life who were down on their luck or in trouble coming for help, which she would never refuse.

"She provided food, somewhere safe to stay, office facilities, advocacy and support. Mum also wrote heaps of letters on behalf of many people and their concerns."

Mr Jeffery said his mother was always on the phone or at meetings and had an extensive network of contacts and supporters in government, the media, law, health, the religious community

and the Aboriginal community.

"Mum also helped with people's legal problems, health, transport, money, funerals, family issues, homelessness, employment, personal distress and many other things."

Mrs Jeffery is remembered for her kind and gentle nature along with her lifelong and tenacious commitment to righting the injustices suffered by First Nation's peoples.

She was buried at Guildford Cemetery with the funeral cortege driving past Mrs Jeffery's old house in Helena Street and the old auction tree which stands on floodplain near the back of her property.

The funeral was well attended by many members of the local community, Noongar Elders and the Guildford Association, of which Mrs Jeffery was a member.

A short graveside burial service was conducted by the former mayor of Bassendean Bevan Carter and accompanied by a smoking ceremony.

The funeral reception was held at the home of her brother David Blair.

Mrs Jeffery died in Melbourne on April 2 and leaves behind former husband Peter and three children: Sonya, Mark and Daniel.



Mrs Jeffery was a strong campaigner for Indigenous rights. Inset: Mrs Jeffery as a young woman.



Mrs Jeffery with her oldest grandchild Marco Holden Jeffery.

Volunteer Day grants program open

COMMUNITY groups, not-for-profit organisations and local governments can apply for grant funding to support local events and activities to help celebrate volunteers as part of International Volunteer Day.

Grants of up to \$1000 are available to support local events that celebrate and strengthen volunteering across Western Australian communities.

Funding is available for a wide range of activities, such as awards, ceremonies, workshops, seminars, and initiatives that promote inclusion and accessibility in volunteering.

Organisations are encouraged to develop creative and meaningful events that highlight the impact of volunteers and inspire others to get involved.

In 2025, the state government awarded \$70,000 across 74 organisations throughout WA, supporting a diverse range of volunteer activities including community barbeques, volunteers' sundowners,

and community lunches and team building days.

Volunteering Minister Hannah Beazley said the International Volunteer Day Grants celebrate the amazing work done by local heroes who make a difference in our communities each and every day.

"By supporting volunteer recognition events across Western Australia, we are investing in stronger, safer, and more inclusive communities, where every contribution is valued and acknowledged."

"I want to thank all our amazing volunteers for the work they do, and I look forward to officially recognising their service on International Volunteer Day."

Applications for the International Volunteer Day Grants program close on Tuesday, June 2.

For more information on eligibility criteria and how to apply, visit www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments-of-communities/departments-of-communities-grants-programs



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- 21 Cort Way, **Rockingham**

Young achiever works hard to create change

MIKE PEETERS

SWAN View Noongar woman Keisha Reed (20) has been nominated for the Department of Communities young women leader award.

The award is part of the Channel 7NEWS young achievers award and acknowledges and celebrates the commitment of young women in initiating and instilling change in the lives of women and girls locally, nationally and internationally.

Ms Reed has helped create change through her work as a student support officer at Midland Learning Academy where she provided cultural support and advocacy for Aboriginal students, particularly young girls.

“What inspired me was to show the young girls that anything and everything is achievable when you say yes,” Ms Reed said.

“The thing that most stands out about me is that I have and always will be a big sister to young girls who need that person in their life.

“I have always been the type of person to help others but also to teach others.”

She said her culture influenced everything she does and she would always teach and learn about her culture.

Drawing on her experiences with programs like the Aurora Foundation and Girls Academy, Ms Reed now supports the next generation by helping them build confidence, connect with their culture and feel proud of who they are.

Through her involvement with the Miss NAIDOC program last year, Ms Reed said she was also using her platform to help inspire young Indigenous girls to take up opportunities, strengthen their identity and see themselves as future leaders within their community.

“I have achieved many skills and leadership roles within the community, becoming a role model for young girls and women in our communities,” Ms Reed said.

“As I worked at Curtin University in my first job, I was able to go to Darwin for a conference with some of the young students talking about our program



Keisha Reed says her culture is a big influence on everything she does.

teaching culture in schools.

“I have also run my own programs with Koya Aboriginal Corporation for young girls and my program at Midland Learning Academy helped teach culture and create a culturally safe environment for youth to express themselves.”

Ms Reed said through these experiences her confidence had grown and she was now able to do Welcome to Country ceremonies and acknowledgements in front of crowds.

She said if she was successful in the awards competition she would use the victory to help young girls as she was once in their shoes.

“Being a coach has helped me be who I am and while working with Koya I became a big sister to so many young girls who I still look out for and teach them the lessons they need to be good role models for their little sisters or their daughters of their own,” Ms Reed said.



Members of the Friends of Bindaring Wetland planting in the area.

Bindaring Park forest boost

THE Town of Bassendean has secured \$83,454 in grant funding to deliver a revegetation and weed control project in Bindaring Park north over three years.

The funding was received through the state government’s Swan Canning riverpark urban forest program delivered by the DBCA (Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions).

Friends of Bindaring Wetland Bassendean volunteer Val Humphrey said the planting would not only help revegetate the area but also increase the dense shrubs, which in turn offered greater protection for the local wildlife such as quendas.

“The quendas do a great job of turning over the soil and suppressing weeds as they hunt for bugs and fungi,” Ms Humphrey said.

“The planting planned for June and July will extend the area where these small marsupials can shelter with greater safety and extend their population.

“We are also grateful to people who are keeping their cats at home so that these helpful animals can flourish.”

A Town of Bassendean spokesperson said the project would enhance the Bindaring Park’s urban forest eco-

system by reducing weeds, improving water quality and planting native species to provide a habitat for local wildlife, including quendas, brushtail possums and many bird species.

“It will build upon the town’s previous improvements in the area and will be supported by Friends of Bindaring Wetland Bassendean and La Salle College’s volunteer planting and weeding events,” they said.

“Works will commence with weed control in autumn this year and conclude in 2029 after ongoing weed control and three years of selective winter planting of species to increase canopy, habitat and diversity.”

The project aligns with the priorities identified in the town’s 2023/33 council plan to conserve, protect and enhance the Swan River foreshore, nature reserves and waterways.

“These projects build on the strong results from earlier rounds, restoring degraded areas and expanding urban canopy with hundreds of thousands of native plants,” Environment Minister Matthew Swinbourn said.

“The Cook Labor government’s continued investment in this program reflects our commitment to protecting and enhancing Perth’s natural assets for future generations.”

ECU speech pathology students bring help to early learning kids



ECU student Kym Jefferies, Lola and fellow student Vanessa O'Shea. Photo: Tegan Taudigani

CHILDREN at the Y WA’s Yappara House Early Learning Centre (ELC) in South Guildford are benefiting from an innovative partnership with Edith Cowan University School of Medical and Health Sciences (ECU) and speech pathology students.

The ECU students have begun placements aimed at strengthening early language development during the most critical years of learning.

The program sees third-year ECU speech pathology students working directly with children at the Y WA Yappara House ELC as part of their clinical placement, delivering targeted support while gaining valuable, real-world experience.

The students are supervised by a qualified clinical educator and attend the centre weekly over a 12-week period, supporting children identified as needing additional help with speech and language skills.

This initiative, was first trialled at the Y WA’s Baldivis ELC in March 2025, before expanding to Brabham and Westminster centres from August to October 2025, and builds on the proven success of this partnership.

The continued rollout to the Y WA’s Yappara House ELC marks the next phase in strengthening early intervention support across the Y WA’s network.

Centre director Leanne Coombes said the pro-

gram is already making a meaningful difference for children, families and educators.

“With increasing demand for speech therapy services and long wait times for families, having ECU students working alongside our educators provides timely and valuable support right here in the early learning environment,” Ms Coombes said.

“Early childhood is such a critical time for language development. By embedding this support into our centre, we can identify and respond to children’s needs sooner, while also creating a rich learning environment where communication skills can flourish.”

The partnership complements the Y WA’s School Ready Program, which is delivered across all its Early Learning Centres and focuses on three key developmental areas: literacy and language, social and emotional wellbeing, and numeracy.

As part of this program, children complete a language screen to identify those who may benefit from additional support.

“At Yappara House, we’re passionate about creating a sense of belonging where children feel confident to express themselves,” Ms Coombes said.

“This collaboration not only supports children who need extra help but also builds the confidence and capability of our educators and provides families with practical strategies they can use at home.”

Cont. p18

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Time to get your flu jab

WESTERN Australians are being encouraged to protect themselves this winter with the launch of the state government's 'Be wise, Immunise' free flu vaccination program.

Last year, WA experienced one of the worst flu seasons on record, resulting in hospitals treating thousands of seriously ill patients of all ages.

Getting vaccinated this winter is one of the best ways to protect the community.

The state government is working to strengthen winter preparedness, increase vaccination coverage and reduce hospitalisations associated with influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

This includes new initiatives, including in a WA first, pop-up vaccination clinics at AFL games at Optus Stadium.

The immunisation targets are 30 per cent of infants and children under 12, 65 per cent of adults aged 65 and over and 40 per cent of all eligible Western Australians.

Young children and older adults have been prioritised because they are most at risk of serious illness.

In 2025, adults aged 65 years and

older had the highest rate of influenza-related hospitalisations, followed by children aged 6 months to 4 years.

Progress towards the targets will be available weekly over winter.

The expanded program is designed to increase immunisation coverage, reduce the impact of winter respiratory illness and ease pressure on hospitals and health services across the state.

The National Asthma Council Australia is also reminding the 2.8 million Australians with asthma to get their annual flu vaccination.

Clinical Associate Professor Debbie Rigby said the new, fast-moving strain of influenza dubbed 'Super-K' is circulating and this could have significant implications for people with asthma.

"The National Asthma Council Australia is recommending that people with asthma get a flu shot to provide the best possible protection before the peak winter season from June to September," she said.

While the vaccine is free, individual providers may charge a consultation or service fee.

For more information go to www.access.health.wa.gov.au/immunisation



The latest in Vinnies fashion on show. Photos: James Burton Photography

Vinnies fashion parade fundraiser for struggling Ellenbrook families

A FASHION parade showcasing a curated range of on-trend winter looks sourced from racks at the Vinnies Ellenbrook retail shop went off without a hitch last Sunday.

Held at Holy Cross College, the sold-out event was a resounding success.

Models were dressed head to toe in a range of handpicked preloved outfits and accessories,

with a pop-up Vinnies shop at the event also popular among guests.

Proceeds from the event tickets, along with \$365 in sales from the pop-up shop, will go towards St Vincent de Paul Society of WA's Ellenbrook Conference, which provides immediate support to local families doing it tough through Vinnies' Emergency Relief program.

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eye on crime

Caversham serious assault investigation

MIDLAND detectives are seeking public assistance as they investigate a serious assault and criminal damage incident in Caversham on Sunday, March 22.

About 9.30pm, the victim, a man aged in his 30s, was sitting in his car at Lilac Hill Reserve North Pavilion on West Swan Road when he was disturbed by three unknown individuals.

When the victim exited his vehicle to investigate, he was assaulted and his car badly damaged, including multiple smashed windows.

The group fled the area in a new model white four-wheel drive or SUV with no further description.

The victim was conveyed by ambulance to St John of God Hospital in Midland for treatment of serious but non-life-threatening injuries, including a broken shoulder.

Investigators are urging anyone with CCTV, dash cam or mobile phone vision from Lilac Hill Reserve, the surrounding car park, or West Swan Road around the time of the incident to come forward.

Vision can be via the following link: <https://wapf.au.evidence.com/axon/communityrequest/public/seriousassaultcaversham220326215018962>

Anyone with information is urged to contact Crime Stoppers via www.crimestopperswa.com.au or by calling 1800 333 000.

Reports made to Crime Stoppers can be made anonymously.

Viveash serious crash now fatal investigation

MAJOR crash investigation section officers continue to seek the public's assistance for information relating to a fatal crash that occurred in Viveash on Friday, April 17.

About 2.25pm, a silver Ford Territory was travelling east on Muriel Street, near Cranwood Crescent, when it left the road and collided with a tree.

A four-year-old female child and a three-year-old female child were conveyed by ambulance to Perth Children's Hospital for treatment of life-threatening injuries.

Sadly, late on Sunday evening, April 26,

both children passed away from their injuries.

The 24-year-old male driver of the vehicle and a 24-year-old female passenger were conveyed by ambulance to Royal Perth Hospital for treatment of serious injuries.

Officers urge anyone with information relating to this crash to contact Crime Stoppers online at www.crimestopperswa.com.au or by calling 1800 333 000.

Anyone with dash-cam or mobile phone vision relating to this crash can upload the footage directly to investigators via the following link: <https://wapf.au.evidence.com/axon/communityrequest/public/mcis2026-088>

Police want anyone with information regarding the above incidents to call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or you can make a report online at www.crimestopperswa.com.au



ARTS ENTERTAINMENT

Gran Fondo fundraiser is on again in Perth hills



Herb Boltong gets ready for the Perth Hills Gran Fondo.



Some of the riders in training in the Perth hills.

THE third edition of the Perth Hills Gran Fondo charity ride starts in Gooseberry Hill at 7am on Sunday, May 24 and spectators are welcome.

According to organisers there will be many vantage points along the way with the ride starting and finishing at the Gooseberry Hill Hall on Ledger Road, Gooseberry Hill.

"Rider hydration stops include the IGA supermarket in Rooth Road, Lesmurdie and the Bean 2 Brook Coffee Company on Pickering Brook Road, Pickering Brook," event organiser Ian Wee said.

"Some of the best vantage points include the top and bottom of the Zig Zag scenic drive in Kalamunda and Patterson Road before the Perth Observatory in Bickley.

"The ride will also take in Walliston, Boya, Darlington, Mundaring, Carmel and Pickering Brook, among others."

He said the ride once again offered the choice of three distances: the Piccolo (approximately 45-50km), the Medio (85-90km) and the Gran (135-140km).

The Gran Fondo cycling fundraiser first began as the City of Armadale Gran Fondo in 2014 and over the years other Gran Fondos have been held in Victoria, the ACT and the Northern Territory.

Baskerville man Herb Boltong (82) said he is looking forward to the challenge.

Mr Boltong may be one of the oldest competitors on the ride but he is no stranger to cycling fundraisers.

He completed 1469 kilometres last year in the Great Cycle Challenge raising \$3624 for kids' cancer research: *Great Cycle Challenge raises funds for kids with cancer*, (Echo News October 2).

Mr Boltong also completed a round-Australia bike ride with his dog Snotty back in 2018.

"I have always had what you might call a sense of adventure, something that first brought me to Australia from the Netherlands back in 1956," Mr Boltong said.

City of Kalamunda Mayor Margaret Thomas said the city was proud to sup-

port the event through a \$5000 sponsorship and local promotion.

"The event showcases the Perth Hills as a premier cycling destination and highlights the city's ongoing support for community sporting events," Mrs Thomas said.

The Perth Hills Gran Fondo ride charity partner is Street Friends WA in Malaga which assists the homeless in the community with clothing and bedding throughout the year.

A Street Friends' spokesperson said the level of homelessness in our local community was on the rise.

"The cost of living and economic and social impacts on homes and homelessness is being felt across all demographics in Australian culture, which we need to help reduce," they said.

The event will run from 7am to approximately 1.30pm on May 24 with event support provided during official event hours.

For more information or to donate go to: <https://piet.com.au/perth-hills-gran-fondo>

ENTERTAINMENT & GIG GUIDE

Your local Gig Guide

Fri May 8

Settlers House York
John Sloper
From 5.30pm, Free
125 Avon Terrace York

Woodbridge Hotel
Jamm'n
From 8pm, Free
50 East St, Guildford

Parkerville Tavern
Matt Sofoulis
From 5.30pm, Free
6 Owen Road
Parkerville

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
Table for Two
6pm-9pm, Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

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

Sat May 9

Settlers House York
Jukes of York
From 5.30pm, Free
125 Avon Terrace, York

Parkerville Tavern
Charlie Scotts' Honkey
Tonk band
From 5.30pm, Free
6 Owen Road
Parkerville

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

Woodbridge Hotel
She Said
From 8pm, Free
50 East St, Guildford

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
Shane Turner
6pm-9pm, Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

Sun May 10

Settlers House York
Rozzi & Gabi
12pm-3pm, Free
125 Avon Terrace York

Sun May 10 Cont.

Woodbridge Hotel
John Gaughan
From 1pm
Kane Cahill
From 5pm, Free
50 East St, Guildford

Parkerville Tavern
Coastal Drift
From 12pm, Free
6 Owen Road
Parkerville

Lyric's Bar
Long Play Sunday Vinyl
From 4pm, Free
22 Lyric Lane
Maylands

Chidlow Tavern
Adele and John
12.30pm-3.30pm, Free
4 Thomas St Chidlow

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
Ben Graham and
Matt Sofoulis
4pm-7pm, Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

Tues May 12

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

Wed May 13

Chidlow Tavern
Muso Jam Night
7.30pm till late, Free
4 Thomas St, Chidlow

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
Acoustic Open
Mic Night
Presented by Fenton
and Friends
6pm-9pm, Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

Thur May 14

Mahogany Inn & Distillery
Neil Adams
5.30pm-8.30pm, Free
4260 Great Eastern Hwy
Mahogany Creek

Horsepower, history and food at classic speedway

THE WA classic speedway show is on at the Swan Settlers Market on Sunday, May 10 from 9am - 3pm.

With free entry this will be a popular event showcasing classic speedway bikes, high-energy cars and racing history brought back to life.

Organisers said to expect polished chrome, restored legends and serious nostalgia for motor-sport lovers.

"There will also be live music, an international food hall, wine, gin and cold drinks and unique artisan stalls to explore," they said.

"Indoor axe-throwing will provide something different for a great day out in the Swan Valley so bring your family and friends and settle in for an unforgettable Sunday."

The Swan Settlers Market is at 124 Lennard St, Herne Hill.

For more information call 0456 821 133 or go to www.swanvalley.com.au/products/swan-settlers-market-wa-classic-speedway-showcase



Classic speedway motorbikes will be on display this Sunday.

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Authorised by Tania Lawrence, Labor Party, 2/57 Great Eastern Highway, Midland WA 6056



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Labor is also making the largest investment in bulk billing to GPs our country has ever seen.

By increasing the bulk billing incentive and boosting payments to GP clinics that bulk bill every patient, more locals can see a doctor without paying out of pocket fees.

That makes a real difference to families, older Australians, and anyone doing it tough.

Plus, PBS scripts are now capped at \$25, making essential medicines affordable and predictable for families everywhere.

Protecting and strengthening Medicare matters.

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rimenopause and menopause, can affect hydration, elasticity, breakouts and even hair thinning. That's why Kapurn also offers dedicated women's health consultations, providing a safe and professional space to discuss concerns that are often overlooked or dismissed.

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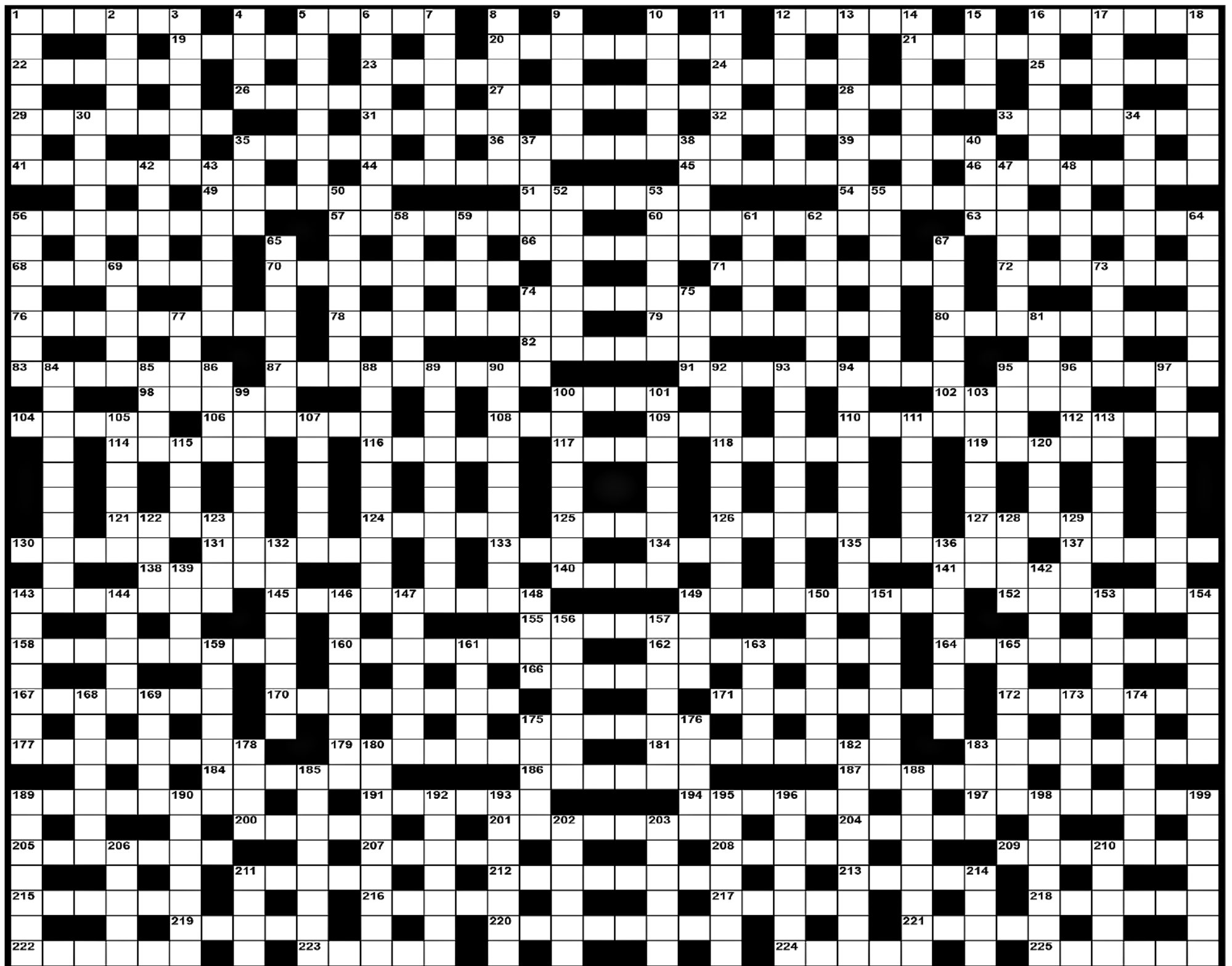


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Mind Boggler Crossword

1267



ACROSS

- 1 Unequaled
- 5 Serious
- 12 Speedy
- 16 Very good
- 19 Young person
- 20 Make lean by wasting
- 21 Rig out
- 22 Japanese unarmed self-defence
- 23 Screw
- 24 Two times
- 25 Selfishness
- 26 Deeper blue
- 27 Sensitive to the touch
- 28 Long for
- 29 European wind
- 31 Proof of innocence
- 32 Sharp ridge
- 33 Mixes with
- 35 Strangely
- 36 Pertaining to a nymph
- 39 Belief in a god
- 41 All as one
- 44 Hire
- 45 Middle
- 46 Noticed
- 49 Closer
- 51 Aid
- 54 Make invalid
- 56 Wins out
- 57 Small star on text
- 60 Perseverance
- 63 Fence of bushes
- 66 Cultivated
- 68 Fighter
- 70 Short musical work
- 71 Remarkable
- 72 Person with special advantage
- 74 Ancient Greek geometrician
- 76 Unfavourable

- 78 Occlusion of a blood vessel
- 79 Age in teens
- 80 Say too much
- 82 Washer
- 83 Horse's gear
- 87 Previously encountered (3,6)
- 91 Shop without assistants (4-5)
- 95 Tricky puzzles
- 98 Sharpen again
- 100 Set of clothes
- 102 Burning fluids
- 104 Old philosopher
- 106 Not counted
- 108 Vigour
- 109 Hearing organ
- 110 Pale
- 112 Self-righteous types
- 114 As single unit (2,3)
- 116 Gladden
- 117 Musical study
- 118 Bring on oneself
- 119 Taut
- 121 Residence
- 124 Supple
- 125 Way out
- 126 Tempers
- 127 Consumed
- 130 Headwear
- 131 Hard trial
- 133 Animal hair
- 134 Poem
- 135 Mean
- 137 Takes a break
- 138 Silly (coll)
- 140 Egg on
- 141 From Asia
- 143 Creates
- 145 According to the evidence
- 149 State of being vapid
- 152 Table support
- 155 Country holdings
- 158 Food seasoning

- 160 Use badly
- 162 Warm up a meal (4,4)
- 164 Great
- 166 Having rank smell
- 167 Fabricates (5,2)
- 170 Believer in fate
- 171 Funny tune (5,3)
- 172 Part of saddle
- 175 Ventilating
- 177 Ingests
- 179 Foolhardy act
- 181 Regal manner
- 183 Outlaw
- 184 Musical-practice parts
- 186 Hamper
- 187 Be beside
- 189 Valuable article
- 191 Brownd
- 194 Steep climb
- 197 Long paper decoration
- 200 Grass cutter
- 201 Flowing back
- 204 Timepiece
- 205 Any person
- 207 On the outside
- 208 Time in history
- 209 Gripped
- 211 Japanese sweet rice wine
- 212 Tasting of alkali
- 213 Complains
- 215 Malignant disease
- 216 Very pale
- 217 Cost
- 218 Not clear of dross
- 219 Gathering
- 220 Scornful
- 221 Move to music
- 222 Early Japanese religion
- 223 Positions
- 224 Suitably
- 225 Pushes forwards

DOWN

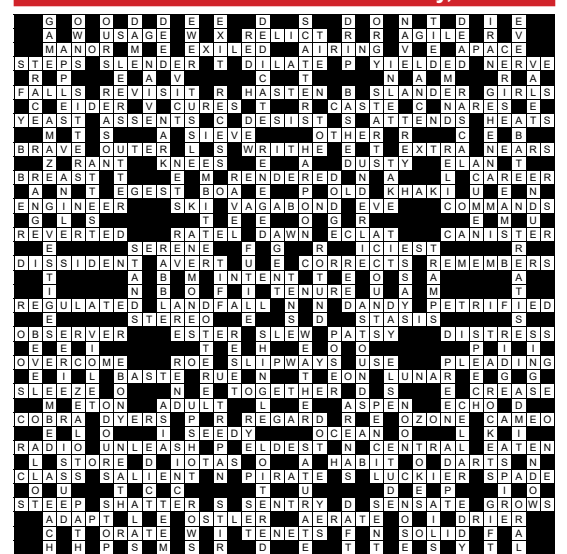
- 1 Not well kept
- 2 Old liquid measure
- 3 Eye hair
- 4 Hold in
- 5 Body part
- 6 Type of powder
- 7 Bombing
- 8 Wagering
- 9 Type of powder
- 10 Denoting a case
- 11 Type of gas
- 12 Dress
- 13 Thing going before
- 14 Discussing
- 15 Trick
- 16 Breed
- 17 Tine
- 18 Perplexed
- 30 Bring up
- 34 Prised
- 35 Mineral aggregates
- 37 Fermenting agent
- 38 Took a part
- 40 Insect
- 42 Track
- 43 Make bigger
- 47 Honey gatherer's home
- 48 Rims
- 50 A convenience
- 52 Ramp for skiers (3-4)
- 53 Cooking
- 55 Cosmetic pencil
- 56 Make public in print
- 58 Shiver
- 59 Beaver-like animal
- 61 Light in movement
- 62 Right of going in
- 64 Keepers
- 65 Disparagement
- 67 Pertaining to trees
- 69 Claw
- 73 Pathologically a fit

- 74 Essential of life
- 75 Passes away
- 77 Ponder
- 81 Water grass
- 84 Allotment
- 85 God of love
- 86 Amaze
- 88 Tormented
- 89 Ragged and flea-infested (4-6)
- 90 Wanting revenge
- 92 Making richer
- 93 Comprising a part of
- 94 Way of speaking
- 95 Movement of the sea
- 96 Snakes
- 97 Being in uniform manner
- 99 Not skilful
- 100 Suffocates
- 101 One who makes a will
- 103 Residents of a city
- 105 Savage person
- 107 Citrus fruit
- 111 Grieve over
- 113 Fret
- 115 Capital of Norway
- 120 One following
- 122 Farm shed
- 123 Small marks
- 128 Mine entrance
- 129 Sea bird
- 132 Colouring material
- 136 Towards the east
- 139 Tiny part
- 142 Very dry
- 143 Wages earnt
- 144 Endow with gift
- 146 Not fully developed
- 147 Preserves fodder
- 148 Period of time
- 149 Grain

- 150 Intense feeling
- 151 Made dearer
- 153 More certain
- 154 A plane curve
- 156 Belief in state control
- 157 Slimmed down
- 159 Give power to
- 161 Varnish ingredient
- 163 Leather strap
- 165 Beginning to develop
- 168 Roguish behaviour
- 169 Preserves meat
- 173 Girl's name
- 174 Highway printed guide
- 175 On one side
- 176 Gather slowly
- 178 Stalk
- 180 Rocket pilot

- 182 Drainage area for river
- 183 Chance
- 185 Night moisture
- 188 Danger
- 189 Comas
- 190 Endure
- 192 Nicks
- 193 Messages
- 195 Rising more abruptly
- 196 Sexual literature
- 198 Smartens up
- 199 Atone for wrong
- 202 Religious ascetics
- 203 Bring out
- 206 Pig meat
- 210 Overseer (abb)
- 211 Earth's satellite
- 214 Chant

Crossword Solution 1266 from 1 May, 2026



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Northam data centre development concerns remain

From p3.
 "The shire or developer hasn't put any statement out about it yet, and the Avon West transport and logistics hub website has expired so is no longer displaying general info about the site."

"Seeing discussion in the community, there is some confusion over what the data centre will be used for."
 "Other Northam environmental hub members are frustrated with the lack of transparency and are concerned that despite promises to the contrary, town power and water supplies will be used."

On May 3, Northam Environmental Hub posted on Facebook about a clearing of Eucalyptus woodland on the road verge of Yilgarn Ave, across the road from where the data centre is being built.

Residents now say they want to know if the clearing was in relation to power supply needs for the data centre.

Wind in the Willows continue operations

From p3.
 Council noted that not-for-profit providers typically have greater access to capital and grant funding than local governments, increasing the opportunities to form a partnership for the development of a new facility, potentially supported by long-term leasing arrangements.

Several preliminary expressions of interest from not-for-profit and community-based providers have already been received and will be included in a future extensive public EOI process.

"Council acknowledges community feedback outlining strong support for the Wind in the Willows services, a clear preference for not-for-profit or community-based management, a willingness to pay higher fees to retain service quality and calls for greater transparency and engagement," a spokesperson said.

"Council confirms that processes going forward will align with newly introduced governance requirements (under the Local Government Act 1995) and improved consultation practices."

Alongside the town's customer service charter, council requested the development of a transparency statement that provides the new reforms in a clear, accessible format and to articulate the town's commitment to open and transparent community engagement.

ECU speech pathology students bring help to early learning kids

From p11.
 The ECU students also contribute by developing resources that can be shared across the Y WA's centres, helping extend the impact of the program beyond the placement period.

Y WA chief executive officer Tim McDonald said the partnership is a powerful example of how collaboration can deliver real outcomes for children and families.

"Collaborating with ECU speech pathology students bolsters our capacity to intervene early if children are having language difficulties," Dr McDonald said.

"Our aim is to ensure children do not start school behind, as we know that research shows it is much harder to remediate a learning difficulty the longer it is left. The Y WA is proud to be nurturing the next generation of allied health professionals while delivering meaningful, early support for children, families and educators."

With demand for early intervention services continuing to rise across Western Australia, the collaboration represents an important step in improving access to support, ensuring more children can develop the communication skills they need to thrive at school and beyond.

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Upcoming Events

- Midland CWA** meets at the Midland Railway Yards Blacksmith Lane (West) Midland on the third Wednesday of each month at 10am. CWA flags are displayed on Yelverton Drive, Midland on meeting days. CWA offers a diverse range of interests and each branch works to meet local community needs. Call Cathy on 0460 777 557 or email cwa.midland@outlook.com
- Mahogany Creek Art and Craft Group** meets weekly on Wednesdays 9.30am to 12.30pm during school terms at the Mahogany Creek Hall on Jacoby Street. Everyone brings along their art or craft to work on in a friendly social group with tea and coffee provided. For more information call Mary on 0431 201 814 or Jan on 6279 4031.
- The Rosehill Ladies Golf Club** meets each Tuesday at 8am at Hillview Public Golf Club, Kalamunda Road, Maida Vale. The season runs from March to November. For more information call Roz on 0419 915 623 or Julia on 0419 954 106.
- The Kalamunda Lapidary Club** at 3 Recreation Road, Kalamunda is a club dedicated to collecting, polishing and creating jewellery from natural gem stones and Australian minerals and crystals which they collect in the field. They have an open day on the first Saturday of each month where possible with examples for sale. You can check their Facebook page for current

- events. For more information call Richard on 0422 181 200.
- The Swan Guildford Historical Society** will host a guest speaker, Monday, May 11, at 7.30pm at St Matthew's Hall, Stirling Square, Guildford. The speaker will be teacher, author, and IT enthusiast James Cassidy, who will explain his research into the Swan Valley settlers' competition for the land and resources of the Whadjuk people and the traces of cooperation and conflict.
- The Kalamunda Combined Probus Club** will meet on Wednesday, May 13 at 10am at St Swithuns Church Hall, 195 Lesmurdie Road, Lesmurdie. Our guest speaker will be Mr Tierney McPartland who will give an enlightening talk on understanding your use of energy within your household and how to control it. All members and walk ins are welcome. For more information call Don on 0439 970 038.
- The Kalamunda Ladies Probus Club** meet monthly on the second Thursday of each month at the Jack Healey Centre, Mead Street, Kalamunda at 9am for a 9.30am start. We have morning tea and a guest speaker at each meeting and a monthly bus outing to different interesting places. Socially we meet for coffee once a month and lunch also monthly at different venues in the area. For more information call Trish on 0468 309 823 or Juliette on 0492 934 438.

- Midland Friendly Garden Club** meets at 9.30am on alternate Thursdays at Bruce Douglas Pavillion, Brown Park, Salisbury Road, Swan View. The next meeting will take place on May 14. Our guest speaker will be Marjorie Judge, Life Member of the Herb Society of WA who will tell us why to grow herbs. For more information call Jenny on 0424 553 002 or Barbara on 0482 935 686.
 - Hills Mature Age Social Group** meet fortnightly on Wednesday at Woodbridge Hotel for an 11.30am lunch. The next meeting is on May 13, with subsequent meetings on May 27, June 10, and June 24. It's a fun day out where you can meet a friend, companion, or travel partner. For more information call Mike on 0467 526 078.
 - Kalamunda Speakers Rostrum Club** have moved their weekly meetings to Wednesday evenings. Meetings will be held at the Zig Zag Cultural Centre Seminar Room at 6.15pm for a 6.30pm start. Visitors are welcome to come along to see how we can improve our confidence and develop our presentation skills with expert feedback. Find your voice at Kalamunda's Speakers Club. For more information call Mary on 0429 497 957.
- 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



Gypsy is a three-year old staffy cross bull terrier. She is good with kids but not much of a watchdog. Gypsy would happily lay on a couch all day watching movies. Her only fault is that she likes stealing soft toys to play with. She is sterilised, vaccinated, and microchipped. Costs Apply. Contact Bakers Hill Dog Sanctuary on 9574 1438.

Mt Helena Lions pounce to victory against Hawks

BRIAN PALLISTER

A VERY good crowd turned up in perfect weather conditions to watch the Mt Helena Lions face off against the Pickering Brook Hawks.

The Hawks were first to score a goal through Riley Thompson.

Unfortunately due to a knee injury he could take no further part in the game.

The Lions came back strongly with two goals kicked by Ryan Watters and Michael Hine.

Hamish Duncan had the ruck duties against the in-form Jackson Shilling.

The Hawks won several contests from the ruck duels but their forward moves were being cut off across their half forward line by Ryan Schwagereit and Brendon Agnew.

They kicked the ball back into the Lions attacking area, Michael Hine converted with an ugly floating flourbag punt, which raised laughter among his team mates.

The Lions went into the first break holding a 10-point lead.

Both teams had accuracy problems during the second quarter with only three goals between them from 14 shots.

Lions captain Charlie Read led by example with a lot of hard running, picking possessions around the ground.

Bo Read came out of his normal defensive role to offer some ruck relief.

This paid dividends as he may

have found a new part time role.

Mitchell Johnson has changed ends in recent weeks and now finds himself as a focus up forward, after his 10 goal haul last week he found things a lot more difficult being subject to some tight checking.

The Lions backline functioned well repelling most of the Hawks' forward entries.

Mt Helena went into the long break holding a 19 point lead.

The Hawks were put under pressure after the break.

The Lions had several forward entries and Ryan Watters picked up a couple of goals while Jess Cartwright also joined in for one of his own.

Ben Bowness has found himself as playing coach over recent weeks due to a string of injuries.

He worked hard around the mid-field offering his team forward drive.

Jon Vecchio managed to deliver the ball forward where Jackson Shilling had found space to mark and kick accurately for a much-needed goal.

Mt Helena had opened up a 43-point lead heading into the last quarter and this proved far too big a lead for the Hawks to overcome with the Lions ending up winners by 53 points.

Ryan Watters finished the game with six goals while also passing the ball off to teammates in better scoring positions.

The game ended with the Lions winning 14.17 (101) to the Hawks' 6.12 (48).



The Sawyers Valley Oval game was played in perfect weather conditions with the Lions seizing the win in round four.



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Property listings increased in April

PERTH'S property market eased slightly in April with active listings rising to 4185 at the end of the month.

This was 28.9 per cent higher than March, but still 10.2 per cent lower than at the same time last year.

REIWA President Suzanne Brown said the increase in listings was a positive sign but said it was too soon to determine if the market had peaked.

"We've recorded over 1000 new listings per week most weeks since mid-March, which is very positive, however, we usually see this from mid-February," she said.

"The increase in new listings has given buyers more choice and our members report they are taking more time to make a decision.

"This is reflected in the slight increase in the median selling times for houses and units.

"Sales activity also eased in April, with members reporting lower attendance at home opens and fewer offers, and this has contributed to the increase in active listings.

"I will note that fewer offers is relative, with many agents still receiving multiple offers for appealing properties, just not quite as many as they might have done a few months ago."

Ms Brown said the decline in sales activity was a result of the time of year and the ongoing climate of uncertainty caused by the conflict in the Middle East.

"It is typical to see sales activity decline in April,"

she said.

"This is due to the number of public holidays and school holidays.

"The number of weekly sales did increase in the last full week of the month."

Ms Brown said buyers were more cautious now due to the broader impacts of the Middle East conflict.

"Inflation is increasing and interest rates are rising, which reduces buyers' borrowing capacity and affects their budgets once they get a loan," she said.

"The increase in fuel prices and the flow-on to other costs is also impacting budgets and seeing potential buyers weigh their options carefully."

Despite this dip in actual sales activity, prices continued to grow in the Perth sales market which Ms Brown said reflected the ongoing demand for housing.

"Sales activity may have declined in April but demand is still strong," she said.

"If the Middle East conflict makes building a new home more expensive, we could see the level of demand for established homes remain high for some time."

Brabham was named as a suburb that saw the most median house sale price growth in April, increasing 2.9 per cent to \$836,500.

REIWA data shows among the fastest selling suburbs for houses in April were Lesmurdie and Aveley, which on average sold within a week of listing.



REIWA President Suzanne Brown (inset) says the climate of uncertainty caused by ongoing global conflict played a part in sales slowing down.

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