

# More rail funds coming

A multi-million-dollar upgrade to train services on the North East line can now begin with the Federal Government pledging an additional \$135 million in funding.

As part of the Regional Rail Revival program, a joint Victorian Government and Federal Government steering committee was established to look at what was needed to upgrade the line.

The committee resolved the \$100 million was not enough to run new modern trains, paving the way for the Federal Government to announce the additional funding to upgrade the track to at least a class two standard.

Victorian Transport Minister Jacinta Allan said the government had committed to purchasing new trains for the corridor once works on the track were complete.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes said design work was already under way on modifications necessary to run VLocity trains on the North East line, to inform a future train order to replace the ageing fleet of carriages.

"We're getting on with delivering exactly what north-east passengers need — better



**Funding boost:** Public Transport Minister Jacinta Allan and Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes on their way to Seymour to announce the funding boost for the North East line.

train services to get them where they need to go," Ms Symes said.

"I'm proud to have been part of the community's fight for better services, and to know that these services will be delivered.

"This upgrade will deliver better train services to get passengers to their destination sooner — whether that's to work, school, medical appointments or to visit family and friends."

Member for Euroa Steph Ryan said she had been campaigning for rolling stock and track improvements since before her election in 2014 and the investment was welcome news for many rail users in the north-east.

"I commend this investment from the Federal Nationals. With proper oversight and planning, it will go a very long way to getting our train service back on track," Ms Ryan said.

"At a state level, the Nationals have promised to replace all the trains on both the north-east line and Shepparton lines with a new, long haul variation on the VLocity within our first term of government, if we are elected to government later this year.

"While these trains will be able to run at 130 km/h on the current track, the improvements that can now be made to the track from the Federal Government's commitment will only make the service better."

The North East line runs from Melbourne to Albury via Seymour, Benalla, Wangaratta and Wodonga.



**Stepping up:** Amanda McClaren will soon take over the management of Nagambie Farmers' Market.

## Managing market

The Nagambie Farmers' Market held at Tahlilk Winery is seeing some changes.

After 18 months at the helm the March Nagambie Farmers' Market will be the last for managers Cynthia Lim and Nick Bray.

Ms Lim and Mr Bray will be focusing on their own business as hosts for their bed-and-breakfast and blueberry farm and will remain heavily connected to their locavore attitude.

The Nagambie Farmers' Market will now be handed over to Amanda McClaren, who has many years' experience as a smallholder running her own business.

Mrs McClaren, who is also Strathbogie Shire Mayor, said she was delighted to take on the role of market manager.

"My husband Ian and I have been selling our Yapunyah Meadow Grazed Chickens at farmers' markets for over eight years," she said.

"We are members of Victorian Farmers' Markets Association and we attend farmers' markets each Saturday and Sunday in both Melbourne and regional Victoria. I am passionate about the local food movement and supporting our farmers, chefs and growers in being able to be price-makers and not price-takers with their produce.

"We produce some amazing produce in regional Victoria and I want to see that produce supported and the efforts of our farmers, growers and food producers appreciated."

● The Nagambie Farmers' Market is held on the fourth Sunday of each month at Tahlilk Winery, 254 O'Neils Rd, Nagambie. The market runs from 10 am to 2 pm. Visit the market's Facebook page or [www.nagambiefarmersmarket.com.au](http://www.nagambiefarmersmarket.com.au) for more details.

## Garry gets going on grocery grab

By Gus McCubbing

When Garry Sutton's two minutes of free shopping at O'Keefe's IGA began yesterday morning, coffee was the only thing on his mind.

As the owner of the winning ticket in the Goulburn Options 'grocery grab' raffle, Garry's prize was everything he could fit into a shopping trolley within the time limit.

Garry said while he was not as nimble as he used to be, he was well-assisted by Megan Hill from Goulburn Options.

"She got the sort of things I wouldn't even think about," he said.

"My priority was just coffee. I've got a dog, but she only eats chicken . . . so I'm not sure if I got anything for her. I really won't know too much about the haul until I get home and sort it all out.

"But right now I've just got to find a way of getting it home!"

Goulburn Options volunteer Margaret Sheppard said the purpose of the raffle was to raise funds for the new centre in High St.

"We ran the raffle over three months and sold \$3100 worth of tickets, so it's been very successful and all the Seymour community got behind it . . . and Garry has been a longtime supporter of



**Ready to grab goods:** Garry Sutton (middle) and Goulburn Options chief executive officer Rosey Panelli with O'Keefe's IGA staff before the grocery grab gets under way.

Goulburn Options, so it's pleasing that he won it," she said.

Goulburn Options chief executive officer Rosey Panelli said she enjoyed the event and was grateful towards all those involved.

"I'd really like to thank Sue and Peter O'Keefe and IGA's support of the raffle — they've always been good and loyal supporters of Goulburn Options," she said.

"We should also thank the

volunteers who spent hours in the streets selling the tickets. It was a lot of fun and Garry had a really good attitude towards it."

Garry ended up grabbing about \$350 worth of groceries, with O'Keefe's IGA donating \$100.

**In action:** Garry's grocery grab assistant Megan Hill on the hunt for some coffee and walnuts.



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