FROM THE PRINCIPAL’S DESK

Good News

We were officially advised in a letter from the Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, that we were successful applicants in the third and final round of the Primary Schools for the 21st Century element of the Australian Government’s Building the Education Revolution (BER) program.

This means we will be able to proceed with plans to upgrade the school gym with funding of $850,000. We will be working closely with DECS appointed architects and DAIS to complete the project with a deadline of 31st March, 2011.

School Pride Funding from the Federal Government will enable work to begin soon on the upgrade of the school pool. It is to be tiled in time for the summer school program. In addition, quotes are being developed to upgrade the Tech studies and Home Economics buildings.

Stormy weather last week saw some damage to the roof of the school gym. The possibility of flying skylight panels and roof guttering meant that the students remained indoors almost all day. Our thanks to the Murray Bridge SES who were able to secure the section of roof late in the day when a suitable crane was brought down from Murray Bridge enabling the roof to be secured. The roof will be repaired as soon as ordered repair materials have arrived, and the builder can come to Meningie. In the mean time a section of the floor has been covered in plastic to catch water when it rains. There has been some minor disruption to school use, particularly for PE classes.

Show Time

Good luck to Mr Jurgs and the Agriculture Studies student show team. The team has been very active over the last few months preparing the steers for the show. This demands a lot of work and commitment on the part of everyone involved. The team will leave very early next Tuesday morning 8th September, and have been asked to assist in preparing the sheds. They will be at the show until Friday 11th. In addition, some of our students were invited to assist with the Ag Learning Centre, in helping younger students interact with the displays.

NEW SACE

It was great to see a large number of both students and parents of Year 9/10 attending the New SACE information evening organised and run by Senior School Manager, Ms Kathryn Hese. A lot of information was given about the changes, and the requirements of students as they move through the Senior School. As well, guest speaker, Ms Trudy Docking from Regional Skills Training, talked about how the organisation supports regional training and outlined ways in which students could get involved in a variety of pathways. This was an extremely worthwhile evening, the first of several sessions in supporting students to make subject choices that lead to potential career pathways. Thankyou in particular to Ms Hese for her organisation of the evening, Mrs Mason and the Home Ec. students for the supper, and all who attended the evening.

Year 12 Students

Year 12 students have only a few weeks left of their academic year. As Principal I can say that they have shown themselves to be an extremely focused and hard working
group and excellent role models for the other students in
the school. A diverse group of students, they have followed
different pathways. Some students are studying a full load of
subjects, others are part time, while some are engaged in part
time schooling and working on school based apprenticeships.
The outstanding feature has been the way in which the
students have pursued their studies with a high level of
commitment.

**Cyber Bullying**

Cyber Bullying can happen to anyone. Recently DECS sent
out information to schools about this. A useful copy for parents
and caregivers has been included in this edition.

Under regulations 40 & 41 of the Education Regulations 1997,
principals can suspend or exclude a student who acts in a
manner that threatens the safety or wellbeing of a student,
staff member or another person associated with the school.
This relates to acts that occur off site. When staff at school
reasonably suspect that a student has used a mobile phone to
record a crime, the phone is able to be confiscated and
handed to the police. These measures are designed to
support the implementation of the Keeping Safe Child
Protection Curriculum here at school.

As with all concerns regarding bullying please contact the
school as soon as possible so that we are able to deal with the
problems as they arise.

**AUSTRALIAN RURAL AND
OUTBACK AWARDS**

“Firstly, a big congratulations … for making it to the finals. On
behalf of Imparja Television and the Australian Defence Force,
I am delighted to extend to you…an invitation… to attend the
prestigious inaugural Australian Rural and Outback Awards
Gala Presentation Dinner.

**Venue:** Canberra Institute of Technology,
Reid Campus, Tourism & Hotel
Management Centre

**Date:** Saturday, 19th September 2009

**Finalist Rehearsal:** 6.30pm briefing

**Time:** 7.00pm for a 7.30 pm start

WOW!

Meningie Area School recently heard the fantastic news that
the Health Pathways programmes that have been successfully
operating within the senior school for almost 10 years has
been recognized by the Australian Rural and Outback Awards
2009 in the Business and Training category. The programme,
which includes Pathways to Nursing, Health Support Services
Cert II and more recently Allied Health Assistance Cert III has
been nominated in the top 3 from over 200 entries.

The success of this programme is due entirely to the
dedication of the students over the years and the strong
partnerships that have been made between the school and
health operators within the community. These not only
include the Meningie Hospital, but Jallarah Inc, Meningie
Pharmacy, Hospital Day Care, Lake Albert
Children’s Centre, the visiting services to the town; including
the dentist and physiotherapist, and TAFE SA.

To celebrate this achievement, and hopefully bring back the
top prize, Alana Butcher, Charlotte Wenske, Jo Orr
(representing the health services) and I will be attending the
Award ceremony in Canberra on September 19th. Both
students are very excited as neither has been to Canberra
and this will be Charlotte’s first flight. Alana and Charlotte
are great ambassadors for the programme both beginning
Health Support Services Cert 2 in Year 10, then in Year 11
completing this certificate, as well as moving to the
Pathways to Nursing programme. As with many students
before them, at this stage both see their future in the health
industry.

More news next newsletter!

Denice Mason
Health Pathways Teacher
Book Week erupted in week 6 this year, with the highlight of the week being the Dress Up Parade on Tuesday. Inclement weather and a missing roof sheet in the gym meant we crammed into the wet area in the junior school block for our celebrations.

Mrs Woolston’s class helped us unveil the theme “Book Safari” by turning over letters ‘Wheel of Fortune’ style. We then closely examined the costumes in the four younger classes as they paraded around. The teachers also entered the spirit of the day with 5 teachers dressing up, although Wally was very evasive and we were always looking for him. Mrs Hood the space captain and Mrs Starling the samurai shared the first prize.

Mrs Hood and Mrs Starling

It was so hard to pick the best dressed students. So many came dressed in such clever and original costumes. Bridie Blake-Burrows cleverly dressed with orange hair, purple dress and carried Glenda the wombat and daggy underpants to be Wanda-Linda from “The Terrible Underpants” by Kaz Cooke. She gave extensive instructions to mum afterwards on what to do with the offensive undies. Gena Mansfield came as the Queen of Hearts and Alex Brown came as a Bee Keeper complete with a smoker.

Destiny pictured with Chelsea and Dillan

There were many faces I didn’t recognize thanks to makeup and masks, and as you can see from the photos, it was a hard decision for the teachers to make. In the end, the best dressed girl was Destiny Rankine, who came as a homemade book which opened to show pages of dinosaurs. The best dressed boy, Corey Poulish also followed a book theme with his character of Mr Strong, complete with dumbbells made from balloons.

Corey pictured with other Book Week entrants

The winner of our colouring competition was Lochlie McPherson, and students are still taking advantage of the pre-loved book sale. We also had an activity afternoon with students in mixed age groups travelling from class to class to explore the shortlist titled books, including this year’s winner, Collecting Colour by Kylie Dunstan. A great time was had by all, and thank you to the parents who supported us so well with costumes and attending the Parade.

Margaret Clarke
Librarian

Year 8/9 Netball

The two 8/9 classes are combining to participate in a tournament of netball games as part of the PE curriculum. We all have a role to play! This includes:

Publicity officers
Sports Board members
First Aid officers
Presentation committee members
Equipment officers
Disputes Panel members

To achieve a successful outcome in this tournament we all have to work co-operatively and as a team. This is a great opportunity to have, as the two classes have never combined together to compete in a sport. The results of this competition will be in the Middle School corridor on the Netball board and also in the following newsletters.

Tamika Williams
Publicity Officer
the Staff of Meningie Area School would like to announce a fabulous new initiative just introduced into our mathematics teaching programs. We have registered all of our students to use the fabulous teaching/learning resource at www.mathsonline.com.au. You may have seen the recent TV advertisements by their sponsors McDonalds Australia, and it is through this sponsorship that the program, which previously cost its many thousands of satisfied clients $40 per month for access, is now FREE to our students.

Some of the features that this program has are as follows;

- Full lessons for each concept with a voice over and numerous examples of varying difficulty. Every lesson has a pause and rewind facility to help students grasp concepts at their own pace.
- Every lesson has an accompanying printable summary and worksheet to consolidate the concept, with full worked solutions provided also.
- A student’s ongoing use and progress in the program is stored for theirs and their teacher’s perusal at any time.
- The program can be accessed from any internet ready site, not just at school.
- The entire Year 7 to 12 program is available to every student, not just their particular year group or course.
- Parents may register to get weekly updates on their child’s program use and progress, by clicking on the “Parents area” tab within their child’s account.
- Many more features will also be made available online over coming months.

Given that the program covers most of the concepts that we teach, and as good as this resource is, the school wish to make it clear that it was never intended by its creators to replace the wonderful work that our mathematics teaching staff already do. This program is best used as a support/supplement to the classroom teaching/learning experience.

All students will be issued with their unique logins and passwords over the next few days by their maths teacher, and are encouraged to use this resource as directed by their own teacher.

Please ask your child about their log in or simply go into the site and try it out. You could be amazed.

Parent’s Lounge ...

A new concept for parents of teenagers

Murray Bridge will soon have a new service for parents of teenagers.

Many parents of adolescents worry about having to face the particular challenges their adolescents might present them at this age.

Dating, parties, drinking, easily accessible drugs as well as cyberspace exploration pose real risks to the safety of young people.

Previously undisputed daily matters like adhering to school rules, attending family outings or doing chores disintegrate and can lead to major arguments within a family.

Add to that a surge of hormones and the attendant physical and emotional changes a young person experiences, and it becomes understandable that parents might struggle at times, dealing with their adolescent.

Parent’s Lounge will be facilitated by Vina Hotich from ac-care/Reconnect and Frauke Hobbs from Murraylands headspace. Together Vina and Frauke found that a number of parenting programs are offered in Murray Bridge throughout the year, but none focus specifically on the challenges for parents of teenagers. The new Parent’s Lounge aims to address this gap in services.

Parent’s Lounge is a free community service and will provide information, ideas, support and space for discussions and to ask questions. Morning tea is provided.

Topics covered will include:

- How to keep teenagers safe
- How to maintain positive and constructive relationships
- How to negotiate important rules and boundaries
- How to deal with emotional issues like depression and anxiety
- How to deal with anger and conflict

The program will start on 25 August at 10.30 am – 12.30 pm, and continue on the following five Tuesday mornings with a provision for more meetings, depending on demand. Meetings will be held at the upstairs lounge, at Murraylands Headspace.

In order to more comprehensively deliver the needs and wishes of parents of teenagers, the facilitators also plan to conduct a survey about topics parents would like to have covered in future sessions.

"The next YMCA school holiday camp will be held at YMCA Glenhaven Park, home of the state’s greatest high and low ropes course and largest Giant Swing, from October 6 – 9 in the school holidays. The camp is open to children aged 7 – 14 and the cost is $320 per child. For information and bookings, please call 8528 2250, email lauren.cechi@ymca.org.au or visit www.sa.ymca.org.au.

The always elusive “Where’s Wally?”