FROM THE PRINCIPAL’S DESK

PREMIER’S VISIT

On Wednesday the 2nd November, The Premier, Mr. Jay Weatherill, and the Minister for Water and the River Murray, Mr Paul Caica visited the Meningie area to look at the impacts that the recent low water levels and the recent return of lake have had on the community. As part of their visit they walked along the new Pelican Path adjacent to the Lions Park. As members of the Friends of Meningie, the school has played a role in the development of this project, and some students were invited to show the visitors along the path. The students were Abbey Hood, Brianna Wilson, Jemma Williams, Brad Promnitz and Adele Pittendreigh. The students did a great job in talking about the features of the path, highlighting the roles that they played in its development and representing both our school and our community.

CHANGES TO THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

With the changes in State Government over the past two weeks, so too has there been many changes that relate to Education. The Minister for Education is now the Hon. Grace Portolesi.

There is a change from the Education Department known as DECS to DECD. This stands for Department for Education and Child Development. The new logo will appear on all school letterheads from now on.

GOVERNING COUNCIL

A submission has been lodged by the Meningie Area School Governing Council to DECD for consideration of new school facilities. The Education Brief written is the culmination of work begun by Governing Council during Term 3. At meetings as well as a workshop during the Term 3 holidays, members of Meningie Area School Governing Council and Meningie Kindy worked through criteria relevant to the submission. The focus of the submission was that consideration be given to collocation of Meningie Kindy to the Meningie Area School site. Other aspects featured in the submission were location of buildings so that we can make best use of sunlight, ventilation and water harvesting. The submission will be considered by a panel within DECD, and is a relevant brief for consideration over the next three years.

STUDENT FREE DAY

Governing Council endorsed an application for a Student Free Day on Friday 25th November. This has been approved by the Regional Director, Peter Chislett. Staff will focus on ‘Jolly Phonics’, Maths and The Australian Curriculum.

YEAR 12 STUDENT ASSEMBLY

Meningie Area School wishes to acknowledge the efforts of its Stage 2 students by having a small presentation at a whole school assembly on Friday 11/11/2011.

The assembly will be held in Lesson 3 and will incorporate a Remembrance Day ceremony. A morning tea for the Stage 2 students and their parents/families will follow the assembly.
VALIDATION

As advised in the last newsletter, I said that I would include aspects from the Validation Report in newsletters between now and the end of the school year. Starting with commendations, these include:

- There is a lot of use of data that is collected and analysed to inform school decisions and directions.
- The school showed a lot of pride in the presentation of student work, including a print rich environment.
- A whole school approach to the development of literacy and how to teach is evident.
- The targets in the school are aligned with the regional targets and directions.
- Implementation of the Friends for Life Program to support improved resilience, well being and personal problem solving has been reviewed and has had a positive impact on students engaged in the program.
- The strong progress of students from Year 7-9 in writing reflects staff learning through the Stephen Graham approach.
- The work that underpins student success in Senior School, including building understanding of modes of delivery through different ICT, access to VET, and creative ways of students completing the SACE.
- The way in which the school builds relationships and partnerships with the local community (Research Project, Sports Days, Friends of Meningie, school excursions, Connecting Spirits).

Monica Williams

SNAKES ALIVE IN MENINGIE

The Lakes Hub provided a live snake information session in the school hall for students from Meningie, Salt Creek and Raukkan schools on Thursday the 27th October. Over 160 students had the opportunity to learn about the physiology of snakes, effects of venom on the body and how to deal with a snake bite. Live snakes common to the lakes area such as the Common Brown, the Tiger and the Red Bellied Black snake were handled by the expert Peter Mirtschin with one snake being ‘milked’ for venom. This venom was then mixed with fresh blood (that of a sheep prepared earlier) which demonstrated the clotting effect of venom.

Many thanks to Peter Mirtschin, Venom Supplies Australia for the snakes and Lou Mawson and Andrew Dawes of the Lakes Hub for organising this event.

Photos : snake expert, Peter Mirtschin, behind assistant Wendy Conaghty with enthralled students.

DUTY OF CARE

A reminder to all parents and caregivers that students are NOT to be at school before 8.30 am when the school day commences. Before this time there is no staff member on duty in the yard areas.

2011 SCHOOL MAGAZINE

Last chance to pay for school Magazine!

If you have not paid for a 2011 School magazine and want one please pay $16 to the bookroom by Friday 9th November.

MATERIALS & SERVICES CHARGES 2012

The school community is invited to attend the next School Governing Council meeting to be held on the 14th November, 8.30pm in the school staff room.

The school Materials and Services Charges 2012 will be discussed.

If you have any queries you are invited to this meeting or address any queries in writing to the School Governing Council Chairperson.
STUDENT PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

An information pamphlet is enclosed with this newsletter of our unique Student Accident protection, offering a simple, low cost alternative to traditional insurance cover. Further information is available at www.studentpa.com.au

Lynda Slessor
Phone: 08 8418 0215
Website: www.jlta.com.au

TAX FILE NUMBER

The decorations are in the stores and it won’t be long before school holidays are here again. Many students will be thinking about part time work.

It takes up to 4 weeks to process an application, so if a students needs a TFN for the holidays, they need to apply fairly soon.

Please see the front office for an application form.

Sheree Johns
Client Education & Assistance
Australian Taxation Office

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

A free workshop for school volunteers or school mentors is to be held at the Murray Mallee Regional Office. This is an information workshop on “Responding to Abuse and Neglect”.

DECS accredited trainers will conduct this FREE 2 hour session at:

The Murray Mallee Regional Office
20 Beatty Terrace
Murray Bridge 5253

WHEN: Tuesday 15th November
TIME: 10am – 12 noon

Once volunteers or mentors have attended the training session they will be issued with a certificate that is valid for three years.

To make a booking to attend this session, please contact Luke Wilson on 0458 917171 or email luke.wilson4@sa.gov.au by Tuesday 8th November for venue and catering purposes.

STUDENT EXCHANGE

Southern Cross Cultural Exchange is urgently seeking families willing to host exchange students due to arrive in February 2012. As schools close in December, Southern Cross Cultural Exchange need to be able to place students before then. There are students from Germany, Italy, Austria and Japan who are looking for host families.

If you are interested in hosting a student or require further information please contact Jenny Hanson on 85562208 or email jeh1313@bigpond.net.au

As Marcel Proust, a late 19th century novelist, wrote: “The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes”. Host an international high school student in February 2012 through Southern Cross Cultural Exchange and prepare to be amazed at the way this unique opportunity helps your family to become closer, to understand themselves better and to see the world in a new light.

Carefully selected students will arrive in February for one or two semesters from France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Scandinavia, Japan and the U.S.A. They will attend a local secondary school, are fully insured and have their own spending money.

Call S.C.C.E now on 1800 500 501, email scceaust@scce.com.au or visit our website www.scce.com.au to be part of this rewarding experience.