FROM THE PRINCIPAL’S DESK

It was wonderful to see so many parents and families attend the Parent/Teacher Acquaintance evening last Tuesday 8th February. I have had so many positive comments made to me about it being a worthwhile and enjoyable evening. Not only was it an opportunity to meet new teachers or teachers new to your child / children, but a way to connect with other parents and families as well. Thankyou very much for your support. As was talked about briefly on the evening, parents and care givers have an important part to play in education. As a school we want you involved and to have connection with us. When there are issues of concern, or you think we might not have the correct information in relation to your child or children, please let us know first. In this way we can work toward a positive outcome for all concerned.

Swimming Carnival

In what turned out to be quite hot conditions, the 2011 Swimming Carnival / Splash Day was held at the Coonalpyn Pool on Wednesday 16th February. It did not go unnoticed that there were a lot of students missing from what is a school day. Our records show that indeed 66 students did not turn up. This is extremely disappointing, given that this has been a traditional school calendar event for at least the last 30 years.

For the students at the carnival there were lots of opportunities to be involved and it was great to see several records broken. Always popular, the Kick Board race in which the Junior school students get to try a lap of the pool supported by an older student, proved to be a winner and a real highlight for the spectators and swimmers alike.

I was impressed with the house captains’ support and encouragement. To the parents and community members thankyou for your support, particularly those who filled much needed jobs, especially the time keeping. Much work goes into making the day a success and great experience for students. Brent Rowe has been taking swimming classes across the school these past weeks, and has been working on improving student techniques and skills. She will continue to do so in some capacity for much of this term, particularly at SACE level. Former student Josh Wright made himself available to be a referee and Mrs Judy Appelkamp once again drove the bus. Many thanks to these people.

With this his first carnival, new HPE teacher Jack Rowe can be well pleased with the first sporting event of the year under his belt. Thanks Jack!

Congratulations to all students who participated in any way. Special congratulations to Albert who won the day, as well as all the Medal winners and runner ups. More detail with regard to this is included in this edition.

Interschool Swimming Carnival

Please note. Next Tuesday 22nd February is Interschool Swimming Carnival at the Coonalpyn pool. This is a day carnival beginning at 10am. Only the swimming team will go to Coonalpyn. There are a total of 40 students from Years 3-12 participating in the carnival. For all other students this is a regular school day. Classes will proceed as per students’ timetables. I make this point so that all parents and caregivers have the right information. As has too often happened in the past, students take the day off because some students are missing from class, participating in the event. We seek your support in sending your child or children not in the swimming team to school. Teachers prepare ahead of time for class, and it is most frustrating when students do not show. When this happens, learning programs get behind.
**School Uniform**
Correct school uniform for summer includes an option of longer line black school shorts. Wearing short shorts is inappropriate. Additionally, students wearing trousers and/or shorts that are too low and/or keep falling down to expose underwear will be asked to wear a belt. Students who are not in correct school uniform will be spoken to as a 1st warning. The next step will be a letter sent home to parents/carers with further actions.

We seek parent/caregiver support in students being in uniform as endorsed by the Governing Council.

Meningie Area School is a workplace environment. We seek to keep dress standards high in terms of personal safety.

Monica Williams

**Mercedes Puyo: Introduction to the School Community**

My name is Mercedes Puyo. I am from a beautiful coastal town called Las Arenas, Bilbao in the Basque Country, north of Spain. I come from a big and close family.

After I completed my university studies I travelled in Europe and America and eventually I settled down with my partner Simon in England, where I did further studies to become a teacher.

I worked in London as a teacher for six years and I greatly enjoyed it.

The first time I came to Meningie was back in 2001 and ever since Simon and I have been coming regularly.

We have two beautiful children and in our short time living in Meningie we have been made to feel at home.

I feel very lucky that my first teaching experience in Australia has been with a fantastic year 2/3 class.

**Meningie Area School PaCSS**

PaCSS (Parent and Carers School Support) is a very small group within the school achieving some important things for our students, parents and caregivers. We would like to encourage any parent/caregivers to come along and join our group so we are able to continue the rewarding things we do for our students.

Some of our achievements for 2010 were:
- Uniforms are now available from the school
- Organised school photos
- Provide sunscreen throughout junior school
- Catered for teacher training days
- Donated a bucket hat to each student within Rec-Year 4 classes - this was to help work in with the Sun Safe Policy. Any child starting school within these classes throughout the year will also receive a free hat.
- Donated $20 voucher toward 1 white school polo top for each Year 10
- Sponsored the Junior School end of year Achievement Award.

Goals for 2011:
- Continuation of promoting school uniform & introduction of Uniform Policy
- Support construction of junior school sand pit
- Organise school photos (March 16th)
- Cater for T&D days to raise money to support above projects
- Encourage more people to join our group.

We are a little unsure whether we will be able to continue after this year if we do not receive support in helping to achieve the above goals, so please give some serious consideration in coming along. We like to try and hold a meeting once a month depending what project we are involved with at the time. Keep an eye on the newsletter for dates, time & place of meetings. Our meetings are informal and mainly held as a discussion to help encourage everyone to have a say. Important issues are always minuted.

Enquiries: ph 85 751106 (School Front Office)

Our FIRST meeting for the year will be held on MONDAY 21st FEBRUARY at 1.30pm in the meeting room. If you are unsure where the meeting room is come to the front office and the staff will help you.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

**River Murray Youth Council**

The SA Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resource Management Board would like to invite students in years 8-12 to join the River Murray Youth Council for 2011.

The RMYC provides students with an opportunity to learn about the environment in a hands-on way, to attend field trips and conferences, to have their voice heard on environmental issues and is a great way to meet some fantastic like-minded people and to have fun whilst making a real difference. There are also meetings every 4-6 weeks, the first of which will be an information session next Monday the 21st February, from 4.30 – 6.30 at the Natural Resources Centre, Mannum Road, Murray Bridge.
In 2010, the River Murray Youth Council was fortunate to have Meningie Area School student Bethany Jurgs preside as Chairperson of this group.

For more information please call Jodie Sommerville (NRM Education Coordinator) on 8532 1432 or talk to Mal Jurgs at the school. Mal is willing to transport students to the venue for most meetings.

**SWAMP 333 UPDATE**

It has been over 7 years since the bird hide on the swamp adjacent to the school was completed and late last year some timely repair and update work was undertaken by the students in Year 8. This included retyping and printing the bird information boards and replacing the perspex that covered them. The hide and surrounding area was also cleaned and tidied up. During this process the students involved showed that they could work well independently, use their initiative and follow instructions without fuss. A big thank you for all the effort that they put into this. We also need to thank the local NRM board who put money toward the project through the River Murray Youth Forum’s funding for local action.

The first week of this year saw the celebrations of World Wetlands Day which saw a number of activities in the local area. Andrew Dawes of the Meningie chapter of the Lakes Hub invited the students who worked on the bird hide to join other interested community members for a pancake breakfast adjacent to Swamp 333. During this breakfast David Dadd talked about the local birdlife and the many changes that he has seen in his time in the area. I also outlined the history of the Swamp 333 development and the revegetation in the surrounding area.

**GOVERNING COUNCIL**

On behalf of Governing Council we welcome students, parents and staff to the Meningie Area School community for 2011.

For our students the support of parents/carers and families plays an important role in our children successfully completing their education at Meningie Area.

The Governing Council committee will hold its first meeting for 2011 this Monday 21st February at 7.30 pm. At this meeting parents, staff and community representatives will reflect on our school’s successes and how we can continue to improve all aspects of learning for all students at Meningie Area School.

We, as a Council, endorse and encourage all students to wear school uniform, as this builds pride, a sense of belonging and safety for our students.

We invite parents to consider nomination for Governing Council (nomination forms are included within this article). This gives you the opportunity to work with other parents and staff who strive continually to improve and make Meningie Area School a great and positive Public Education Centre for the whole of our Meningie Community.

Please note that the Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 21st March 2011.

Judy Appelkamp
(Governing Council Chairperson)

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**MENINGIE AREA SCHOOL GOVERNING COUNCIL**

**NOMINATION FOR ELECTION FORM**

I…………………………………………………of (full name)
…………………………………………………..
(address)

Nominate:…………………………………………………..
of (full name)
………………………………
……………………
(address)

Signed:…………………………………………
Date:………………………………..

(Please note that parents/carers may self-nominate)

PLEASE RETURN TO THE FRONT OFFICE BY FRIDAY 18th MARCH 2011

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**AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADETS**

622 SQUADRON
19 CAROLINE STREET MURRAY BRIDGE, SA, 5253

**INTEREST NIGHT**

Friday 4th March 2011
7.30 – 9.30 pm

Multi User Depot
19 Caroline Street
Murray Bridge
Phone 0417 203196 for further information
Coonalpyn Lifelong Learning HUB, is seeking an enthusiastic and motivated individual to fill the position of Coordinator.

The successful applicant will help support the delivery of Community Education and collaborate with various groups and persons from the wider community to deliver these Services and Activities. The position is to be for a minimum of 12 hours/week, with the possibility of increased hours subject to successful grant funding.

The position will be based at Coonalpyn and Tintinara. Drivers licence essential.

Strong computer, communication and general administrative skills are necessary.

Experience in the Community Services or Adult Education sector is desirable.

Ongoing study and upskilling will be required for this position.

For full job description, email mcamac@ruralco.com.au or phone 0488975900.

To apply, please send your resume and letter of application to:

The HUB Board,
Coonalpyn Communication Network Inc.,
P.O. Box 2,
Coonalpyn S.A. 5265

Or email resume to mcamac@ruralco.com.au

Applications close 8th March 2011

MAS SWIMMING CARNIVAL

On Wednesday 16th February Meningie Area School held their combined Swimming Carnival/Splash Day. Again it was a fantastic start to the year with students travelling to Coonalpyn and participating in a variety of swimming races, novelty events and water activities. Despite the obvious lack of student numbers, those who participated did so in an appropriate manner and it was fantastic to see the support the students gave each other throughout the day. It was also pleasing to see the enthusiasm, encouragement and support that our senior students, particularly the House Captains, gave to our junior school students. Albert was our eventual house winner on 302 points, just ahead of Bonney on 249 with Coorong in third on 116.

The following students were successful in their age group:

**Sub-junior girls U10**
- Winner: Melissa Brown (Albert)
- Runner-up: Bridie Blake-Burrows (Albert)

**Sub-junior boys U10**
- Winner: Kobie Hood (Bonney)
- Runner-up: Jai Ling (Coorong)

**Junior Girls U12**
- Winner: Holly Vandenbrink (Albert)
- Runner-up: Aleisha Williams (Coorong)

**Junior Boys U12**
- Winner: Lachlan Brown (Albert)
- Runner-up: Lachlan Waser (Bonney)

**Intermediate Girls U14**
- Winner: Abbey Hood (Bonney)
- Runner-up: Alysha Eckert (Bonney)

**Intermediate Boys U14**
- Winner: Kyale Rigney (Coorong)

**Senior Girls Open**
- Winner: Marni Hood (Bonney)
- Runner-up: Amber Gibbs (Bonney)

**Senior Boys Open**
- Winner: Dylan Vandenbrink (Albert)
- Runner-up: Zac Vandenbrink (Albert)

**Records broken**:
- Open Boys 4x25m Freestyle Relay – Albert 57.51 (Old Record 59.34)
- Open Boys 4x25 Medley Relay – Albert
- Senior Boys 50m Backstroke – Zac Vandenbrink 33.61 (Old record 34.03)
- Senior Boys 50m Butterfly – Zac Vandenbrink 31.43 (Old record 31.77)
- Senior Boys 100m Freestyle – Dylan Vandenbrink 1.00.16 (Old record 1.01.75)
- Senior Boys 50m Freestyle – Dylan Vandenbrink 28.5 (Old record 29.32)

Many thanks go out to parents for their great support timing, looking after the false start rope and assisting the junior school staff with splash day. Your help ensured a successful day of sport.

Thanks also to Brent Rowe for conducting ongoing swimming lessons at school, Josh Wright for refereeing and Judy Appelkamp for driving the bus.

Thanks to the staff for their help on the day and Katrina Hood for helping with preparation prior to the day.

Congratulations to all students, parents and staff members for a successful day!

Jack Rowe (PE Teacher)