PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

After what has been a really busy term, the holidays are at last upon us. We certainly have been busy not only working on the in class learning, but have engaged in many extra activities with a particular focus on sport and issues relating to our immediate environment.

The Students’ Environmental Wish Project concluded last Monday when the Minister for Water, Karlene Maywald, attended an assembly and unfurled the new town banners that have now been erected at either end of the town. Congratulations to Abby Hood and Skeet Tincknell, whose designs were selected from over 150 entries. The messages portrayed in the art work reflected students’ understanding of the issues we face in the community. The questions that were asked of the Minister during the assembly reflected concerns and understandings of even some of our youngest students. Hayden Biddle and Toni Johns, our compares for the assembly, kept the program tight and showcased the skill and abilities our students have in this area. We were pleased that many invited guests were able to attend, including Member for MacKillop - Mitch Williams, Member for Barker - Patrick Secker and Hills Murraylands District Director - David Jolliffe, to name a few. It was pleasing to see a number of community members in the audience as well as parents and caregivers. A comprehensive report was written up in The Lakelander last week, and footage taken at the assembly was used in the 7.30 Report on ABC TV last Thursday night.

This event was also an opportunity to present our 2007 Annual Report. We put together a slide show of highlights from the year along with footage from the Connecting Spirits Project.

Many thanks go to everyone involved and who supported the day in any and many ways. In particular thanks to Denice Mason, who was the link with the community in the project and, along with students in her Home Ec classes, provided lunch.

I have received a number of letters and cards congratulating the school on the success of the day and the way in which our students presented themselves and the programs they engage in throughout the school.

Holiday Security

School is closed as from this Friday afternoon and begins again on Monday 28th April. We remind parents that students will be dismissed at 2.20 pm and buses will depart from the bus bay at 2.30 pm.

The Community Library is open every day except Mondays. No unauthorised persons should be on school grounds throughout this time. DECS has asked that any unusual or suspicious activity be reported to the police.

Bike Safety

A number of community members have commented on students riding bikes. In particular there is concern that many students are not wearing safety helmets properly. We urge parents/ caregivers to have this conversation with your child/children. The helmet needs to have the strap done up properly for the head to be protected. With the holidays here, talking through a range of bike safety issues might be timely.
Junior School Reporting

Over the past two weeks, Junior School teachers have been holding parent/teacher interviews. Teachers have been pleased with the high number of parents who have responded to requests and come in to meet and talk about their child/children’s progress. It is evident in talking with teachers that they really valued the opportunity that this provided. Junior School Progress books will go home with students tomorrow.

Reports Middle & Senior School

Reports will go home Friday for all Middle and Senior School students. These will go home with your child in an envelope. As well as showing how your child is progressing academically, the report contains several other important aspects. It shows how many days he/she has been absent, wearing of uniform a general comment, and whether teachers require an interview. Please note parents are also able to request interviews with teachers and we urge you do so if there is a concern or issue by indicating on the report envelope.

In the envelope is information about the affects of absenteeism, our Home work policy and a new policy that has been developed over the term regarding mobile phone and personal listening devices. This policy has had input from Governing Council, students and staff. If you want your child to have a mobile phone, we ask that you read the policy carefully, complete the application form, and return to the school at the beginning of Term 2 As discussed with students, the purpose of developing a policy is around personal safety and security.

Absenteeism

Maximising the number of days all of our students attend school is one of our continuing priorities. To this end we try a number of strategies and work closely with the DECS Absenteeism officer and families where there are on going issues.

This term we have decided to share with you information that we believe is important for you to know.

Perfect Attendance

Our records show that the following students attended school every day this term that they were enrolled.

C ongratulations to

- Brandon Schmerl  Reception
- Ronnelle Clarke  Year 1
- David Wilson  Year 3
- David Koolmatrie  Year 3
- Melissa Botha  Year 4
- Breane Wilson  Year 5
- Coco Karriem  Year
- Gracie Ayres  Year 5
- Alysha Eckert  Year 6
- Brigitte Botha Year 6
- Mikayla Smart Year 6
- Kaitlin McKenzie-Campbell  Year 6
- Alex Bristow Year 8
- Sam Bird  Year 9
- Tim Eckert Year 9
- Mitchell Reichelt Year 10
- Bethany Marsson Year 11
- Matt Eckert Year 12

This is a fantastic achievement. Students were presented with certificates recognising this at the end of Term Assembly.

In addition 98 students had less than 4 days absent for the term. This is pleasing to see, however we really need to work on all students being here and engaged in their learning program. The following graph gives a picture of attendance for each class.

Monica Williams, Principal

CONNECTING SPIRITS 2008

Anzac Day

Once again the Connecting Spirits students will be involved in the Dawn Service and will also provide assistance at the breakfast in the RSL hall after the service. We remind every member of the school community of the importance of Anzac Day and it would be great to see as many students as possible at the Memorial at 6 am on the 25th April, 2008.

Golf Day

As one of its fundraising activities the Connecting Spirits group is holding an Ambrose Golf Day on the 18th May. Entry is $20 per player with 4 players per team. Registration will be at the clubhouse before Tee Off at 10 am. Lunch is included in the entry fee. Get a team together or just turn up on the day and join a team there.

Henley on Albert

Connecting Spirits is joining forces with the Sailing Club to run the “Henley on Albert” boat races on the
beach. This has been tentatively booked for the 28th September and will involve a variety of novelty races and events. Start getting a team together eg 4 or 8 people, and come up with a zany design for a “boat”.

**Raffle**
The Connecting Spirits raffle is closing soon. There are great prizes including a fishing charter for 6 people, a stay at Dalton on the Lake (great present for family) and a scenic flight with Captain Boggles. The tickets are $2 each and are available at shops around Meningie and at the school.

**Probus**
The students involved in this trip spoke at the recent Probus Club meeting at the Waterfront Hotel. The focus of the presentation was the 10 men from Meningie who we will be commemorating in November and December. Each student gave a brief history of each of the soldiers while I gave some background to the battles and areas where they were killed. There was a good sized audience and the response afterward definitely indicated that they found the talk interesting and informative. If there are any other groups who would like the students to talk to them, please contact Mal Jurgs at the school.

**MIDDLE & SENIOR SCHOOL REPORTS**

Term 1 reports will be sent home with students tomorrow. If your child/ren is absent tomorrow, they will be able to collect their report from the library during the school holidays, or they will be given out Monday of Week 1.

**INTERSCHOOL ATHLETICS CARNIVAL**

This years Interschool Athletics Carnival was held in pleasant conditions at Keith on Wednesday 21st March. Students from Meningie/Raukkan, Coomandook/Coonalpyn, Tintinara/Karoonda and Keith competed.

Unfortunately, due to our sports day being cancelled Meningie had a few empty spaces in the team, particularly in the senior girls. Some athletes also didn’t turn up on the day so Meningie struggled in particular events. However, those that came competed admirably and Meningie ended up coming second to Keith overall. Due to problems combining data we were not able to find out the rest of the results on the day. However, it has since been learned that Meningie won the Intermediate handicap pennant and were second in the Junior Division. We also won the Intermediate and Junior Division overall.

There were also some outstanding individual performances on the day with several students achieving one or more first placing’s. As a result of their performances at the Interschool Competition several Meningie students from Years 8-12 were chosen in the USE team to compete at Santos Stadium in the SSSSA C Grade Championships. They are: Amber Gibbs, Samara Gemmell, Hannah Pittendreigh, Madison Wenske, Sam Bird, Tim Eckert, Jackie Gibbs, Chris Biddle, Chloe Padman, April Gibbs, Alex Lightfoot, Megan Smart, Matt Eckert and Hayden Biddle.

A big thankyou to all the staff, parents and teachers who helped officiate at the event.

**SAPSASA ATHLETICS**

On Wednesday March 26th 2008 several students in Years 5-7 from Meningie Area School travelled to Lameroo to try out for the SAPSASA Murray Mallee Athletics team. These students were selected to attend the try outs based on their excellent results at the Interschool Athletics Carnival and their recent performances during our own tryouts.

It was fantastic to see many of these students selected in the Murray Mallee Team. They will compete at Santos Stadium in the following events on the 9th May next term against other country regions.

- Tamika Williams 13yr 100m, 200m, Relay
- Rhys Marles 13yr 100m, 200m, High Jump
- Alana Standley 13yr Discus, Shotput
- Marni Hood 12yr High Jump, Long Jump, Relay
- Brigitte Botha 12yr Long Jump
- Sam Sanders 12yr Shotput
- Adele Pittendreigh 11yr High Jump

Thankyou to all the parents who helped transport students to the venue. Thanks must also go to those who officiated on the day and ensured a successful day of sport.

**CROSS COUNTRY**

Meningie will be holding the Upper South East Cross Country Competition on Friday 2nd May Week 1 Term 2. This is the first time this event has been held and will be used to select Upper South East teams to compete in Adelaide. Students 10 years and up will be allowed to compete and will be selected based on their performances in the distance events earlier on in the year and their fitness levels exhibited in PE lessons. Students will be notified of their selection on Monday Week 1 Term 2. In order to conduct this event we will require parents to assist. If you are able to help, please let the school know by diary note or phoning the front office on 85 751106. More information on this event will be available at the beginning of next term.

Lisa Davis (PE Teacher)
CLLAMMecology

What the ……………??

CLLAMMecology means Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth ecology. It is the name of the Research Cluster that is running this project.

The project partners are CSIRO, Flinders University, University of Adelaide and SARDI.

The Mid Term Report was released last Friday at the Goolwa Steamship Brewery.

Mrs Mason, Mrs Wright and four Year 9 students left Meningie at 7.30 am and travelled to Goolwa.

The day started with a talk by Mr George Trevorrow about the importance of this area to the Njarrindjeri people. The rest of the day that followed was surprisingly easy to understand and interesting.

Speakers talked about different aspects of the region (eg. water quality, fish, invertebrates, food webs, habitats, birds and state of the Coorong).

Twelve scientists spoke to the group and they were very interesting and looked different to what some of us thought scientists look like.

Some of the things we learnt were:

- That the lake would be a puddle in a couple of years without water.
- How to tell the age of fish and how fast they grow.
- That the Southern Lagoon of the Coorong is becoming like the Dead Sea.
- The Southern Lagoon already only supports briney shrimp and only one type of wader - very unlike the Southern Lagoon of two years ago.
- If no fresh water flows into the Coorong it will become a ‘Dead Sea downunder’ environment and a marine environment.
- The research shows that the Lakes must stay fresh in order to keep the Coorong alive.

We learnt heaps – we hope to access the powerpoint presentation and audio in the next week. Some time next term we will show what we found out to the people at the school. Some scientists may also come to share their ideas.

Jack Appelkamp, Amy Bland, Tim Eckert & Molly Flanagan.
NETTABALL

The netball season has started and it’s time to think about our future stars! In Week 2 Term 2 we will begin training our nettaballers aged from 5-8 years from 3:30 to 4:15 pm on Thursdays (1st practice is Thursday 8th May). Anyone willing to help please phone Helen on 0427 971430 or 85737096.

Subs for the season are $25.00 per player, payable by the third training. Cash or cheque, made payable to Meningie Netball Club, can be given to Sharon Gibbs at the school in a named envelope.

Practice will be in the school hall. Don’t forget to bring a drink and wear appropriate shoes.

Helen Poulishe (President, Meningie Netball Club)

KEEPING KIDS SAFE IN CYBERSPACE

Professor Peter Cuttance and NetAlert — the Australian Government’s Internet Safety Initiative — will present a special parent evening to provide up-to-date information about safety in the cyber-world and strategies that parents can use to discuss and monitor cyber-safety in the home.

Thursday 8 May, 7.30–9.00 PM
Immanuel College, Novar Gardens
Adelaide

Cost: $20 per family booked directly on the website, or schools, parent and other groups can make block bookings on the website at $15 per person for 10 or more. Prices excl GST.

Book online — further details at: https://cyberbullying.conference.com.au