FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Welcome to the 2009 school year. It is great to be back from my leave of six months and I am looking forward to working with the whole school community throughout 2009. I take this opportunity in thanking Ron Pratt (Acting Principal Terms 3 and 4) the 2008 Governing Council and staff and students in continuing and extending the Site Learning Plan whilst I was on leave.

As we begin the 2009 school year I welcome our new students and their families. We hope that you settle into the daily routines of the school quite quickly, and become a part of our learning community. We welcome Ms Margaret Hart, R/1 class teacher, who has been appointed new to the school. Mrs Judy Woolston who has a returning contract and is teaching a reception class.

What a week! Given the extreme weather conditions we have coped remarkably well. Planning for these conditions means that teachers and students do spend the most part of the day inside in an air conditioned environment. Our aim is to minimize the time outside throughout the day, however we try to get students out at recess to give them some space. Students are encouraged to drink plenty of water, and we suggest that a bottle of frozen water be brought from home to go on the desk for use throughout the day. Packed lunches should be in either an insulated container or packed with a freezer brick to minimize food spoilage in the extreme weather conditions.

Year 12 Results

Congratulations and well done to our Year 12 students, who achieved a high rate of SACE completion; well above the State Average.
Swimming Carnival

With our swimming carnival programmed for Thursday 12 February at Coonalpyn, House practice is scheduled for lunch times on a roster system. Ms Davis is supervising this activity.

After School Swimming Practice for students involved in the swimming carnival will also be held starting next week from 3.30 to 4.30 pm. Times are as follows:

Week 2 – Monday, Wednesday and Thursday
Week 3 – Monday and Wednesday

Miss Sarah Wright will be supervising after school practice.

We ask that students make sure that they are well prepared for swimming lessons and practice, and strongly encourage the use of swimming goggles. All students need to have their bathers, towel, hat and a T-shirt to wear over their bathers when in the water. Sunscreen is provided by the school. However, if your child is allergic to sunscreen, please make us aware of this through the diary to the class or home group teacher. We are also having some problems with a few students having sore eyes after swimming. This seems to be caused by sunscreen being wiped in, or running into, their eyes. Please reinforce with your children not to touch their eyes. As advised by the medical staff at our local clinic, if a students presents to the front office with sore eyes, we are treating this problem with an eye wash of saline solution.

School Uniform

It is great to see most of the students in Meningie Area School uniform, particularly the school Polo T shirts. We want our students to be active and fully engaged in the range of activities that we provide. Shorts are therefore a practical and accepted part of the uniform, for both boys and girls. However the short length of some of the girls shorts is inappropriate for the learning environment. In the first instance we ask parents and caregivers to give some attention to this issue. Thankyou in anticipation of your support.

Hat Policy

The aim by August this year is to have a whole site hat policy. While there has been a no hat no play rule throughout the Junior School for a number of years, it has been difficult to come to a consensus for Middle and Senior School students. Staff are leading the way and wearing hats whilst on Yard Duty. We strongly encourage the wearing of hats by all students when in the sun at all times.

Monica Williams

2009 SCHOOL PROJECT OF THE YEAR

On Monday at the Coorong District Council Australia Day Awards, students from Meningie Area School were rewarded for the many hours of both lesson time and volunteer lunch times it took to create the beginnings of the upgrade to the entry of the Community Library.

At the ceremony Anne Wright, who was responsible for nominating the project, spoke briefly about the background of the nomination and presented the perpetual award to school representatives; Alana Butcher, Scarlett Hozier, Tim McKenzie Campbell and Charlotte Wenske, 4 of the students heavily involved in the garden upgrade and Denice Mason, art teacher for Semester 1 and Active 8 coordinator.

Denice and the students accepted the award and gave the following description of the project.

“I would like to firstly take this opportunity on behalf of Meningie Area School to thank Anne Wright for assisting in the nomination for our garden for School Project of the Year 2009. Also thank you to the Coorong Council for considering the nomination worthy.

For those who have not yet seen what we affectionately call “the mosaic garden’ and ‘mosaic table’ we invite you to take a look next time you visit the school or the Community Library. You will see the garden as you approach the Library but will have to walk just behind the library under the shade to see the table.

The project began for 3 reasons
1st - the Students Environmental Wish Project early in 2008 was developed to encourage a positive slant on the problems being faced by the Coorong and Lower Lakes and create an awareness of the many related issues.

2nd - because I (Denice) was to be art teacher for semester 1 and had to rely on either skills I had or people who I knew could help.

3rd - to begin to brighten some of the school grounds and begin to create an area that could be enjoyed by students, library users and visitors to the school.

So with extra funds from Governing Council and success in a grant from the Minister of Youth’s Community Engagement Grant the Year 8 and 9 Art classes set to work to design and produce a mosaic mural on the table behind the library which shows the River Murray, the sun setting over lake Albert and the wide variety of wildlife supported by these delicate environments...frogs, lizards, dragon flies, swans, echidnas and of course pelicans..

The Year 10 class were set a larger task of creating mosaic sculptures for the garden.

I would like to introduce you to some of the students who were responsible for these great art works....
Alana Butcher, Scarlett Hozier, Charlotte Wenske who are with us today (Sophie Vivian and Lycitia Weetra were also in this class)

Alana said, “After lots of discussion and research we decided on what we could make that would go with the lake theme. Using Art lessons lots of lunch times and a weekend workshop we finally finished the sculptures. Mignon Cliff, a mosaic artist, was able to help us along the way which was great”

The project also involved Vic Woolston’s senior welding class and Tim McKenzie-Campbell was part of that group.

Tim said, “In Tech we were given a design brief and with close consultation we designed and made the fence for the garden to represent the reeds and grasses of the lake edge. This was a team effort and some of the year 10’s helped us finish off.”

The Active 8 group took on board to develop the garden bed.

Charlotte said “We removed old stumps and weeds, repaved, brought in new soil, planted and mulched. For some this was a brand new experience! This again took lots of lunch times but counted towards Community Service for our Duke of Edinburgh Award.

As you can imagine this project took lots of consultation, cooperation and commitment from all those involved. But when we look at what we have achieved we know what can be done with planning and persistence.”

To finish Scarlett said, “There are a number of people we need to thank, Mignon Cliff our visiting Mosaic artist, Mrs Lewis, Mr Woolston, Miss Freeth and Mrs Wright, Rural Engineering, Mr Halliday and Mr. Hastings. Thank you again for acknowledging our project. We are proud to receive this award today.”

Parents & Friends is a group made up of volunteer parents who meet approximately once a month at the school to discuss and create ways in which we may be able to support our school, but most importantly, our students. We raise money by supporting projects usually connected to the school eg. teachers Training & Development days, school photo day, etc. All money raised goes back into our school.

During 2008 we have added to supporting our year 12 SACE jumpers and our Interschool athletics singlets. We also continue to support school photo day, $20 voucher towards students moving into senior school for a white polo top and many other small things within the school such as sun screen within classrooms.

Parents & Friends allows you to be able to keep in contact with what is happening within the school and our students. It enables you to express any concerns, suggest ideas or be involved in general discussions relating to the general function of our school. We are also able to have a representative at Governing Council meetings which keeps us in contact with issues higher up.

We, like many other groups, struggle for support. Without that support we may not be able to continue giving to our school and students as we have in the past. I believe this would be a great loss.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask any parents/grandparent/carer out there who would be able to spare a couple of hours a month to attend meetings and support our projects so we are able to keep this humble little group going. We are fortunate to have a school within our town and it would be great to have parents and other community members support it in any way they can. It doesn’t matter how small your contribution may be, everything helps.

PLEASE give Meningie Area School Parents & Friends your consideration for 2009 by either using the contact details below or attending our first meeting for the year on Tuesday 20th February at 1.30 pm in the meeting room at the school (please sign in at the front office and the staff will direct you to the meeting room).

Thankyou for taking the time to read this.

Any queries, please feel free to contact either:
Sharon Gibbs (front office) – phone 85 751106 - email: info@meningieas.sa.edu.au or Gwenda Eckert – phone 85 737084 or 0427 737084 - email: d.eckert@internode.on.net

SCHOLASTIC ORDERS
Catalogues will be sent home with students at the beginning of next week.

Orders, with payment, can be made to the front office or bookroom until the end of Monday 16th February.

**NEED HELP? We may be able to assist with:**
- School Fees/Any School Related Expenses
- Household bills
- Prescriptions/Glasses/Medical Costs
- Vehicle Maintenance/Tyres/Registration
- Repairs to Essential Household Items
- Food/Fuel Vouchers (conditions apply for fuel vouchers)
- Able to consider most types of requests for assistance

**CONTACT**
Anglican Community Care

**ABOUT**
MALLEEF DROUGHT EMERGENCY RELIEF

Ring to arrange a confidential

10 minute phone interview. It will be necessary for you to have access to a fax machine.

Please note – Your confidentiality will be maintained

11-21 Kennett Road
Murray Bridge SA 5253
**Telephone – 85326303**
**Fax - 85321823**