Governing Council AGM

As has been advertised in the Lakelander, the Meningie Area School Governing Council AGM is on Monday 19th March at 7.30 pm in the staff room.

Please refer to this Newsletter for further information about nomination to Governing Council.

Governing Council is a decision-making body, made up of parents/caregivers, staff and a representative from the Coorong District Council. Governing Council has several sub-committees that make recommendations to Governing Council and includes such things as the budget, policies, grounds and general school operations.

Meetings are held two or three times a term, on a Monday evening. Every meeting has a set agenda and a number of reports are given including the finance report. I always give a report to Governing Council. In my Principal’s Report I give information about the things that are happening in the Education Department that relate to Curriculum, the Site Improvement Plan, Events, Student Learning, initiatives and a whole range of bits and pieces of current interest.

Governing Council Representatives gain a real insight into how the school operates and each representative has voting rights.

Every year parents and caregivers comment in the parent opinion surveys that there are not enough opportunities to get involved in making decisions within the school. Governing Council is where you can do this. With the Governing Council AGM coming up on March 19th here is an opportunity. Please give this your consideration and support.

Sports Review

As briefly mentioned in the last Newsletter, Governing Council is reviewing sport at Meningie Area School. This has not been done now for several years and will include House Sport, Interschool participation, Knock Out sport and other events that students engage in through the school.

Data, as well as anecdotal information, will be used in the review. As a starting point we have been looking closely at the attendance and participation of sport this term. This includes swimming and athletics at house and interschool level.

It was disappointing to see that 47 students were absent without a reason on the day of the Meningie Swimming Carnival on Wednesday 15th February. A further 20 gave the reason for absence as illness.

Last week, Monday 20th February, we hosted the Interschool Carnival at Coonalpyn. Only the swimming squad were taken to Coonalpyn. The remainder of students were expected to be at school. There was excellent attendance in the years up to and including Year 7. Class absences in Years 8/9/10 were way above what would be expected on a normal day. This was disappointing
as the program set in the school for that day was as close to the normal timetable as possible.

I would like to thank past Meningie Area School students Brent Rowe and Josh Wright who were the referees on the day.

**Meningie Athletics Day**  
**8th March 2012: Thursday**

We look forward to a high level of participation in our House Athletics Day to be held here next Wednesday 8th March. All students from Years 3 - 12 have been given a letter with information about the day. This information is also in this Newsletter. We seek your support in ensuring your child/children is/are at school on this day and engaged in the organised events.

**Interschool Athletics Day**  
**14th March 2012: Wednesday**

Interschool Athletics Day is at Keith this year. A number of staff are required to be at Keith on the day to be on events as well as chaperone students. Despite this, our school will remain open to classes. We seek your support in this. If your child is chosen to participate in Interschool, bus transport is available. Please support the school and ensure that your child is there. If he/she is not in the team, then they need to be at school.

Monica Williams

**JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWS**

**Splash Day**

Thankyou to the parents/carers who supported us on Splash Day. It was a wonderful day at the Coonalpyn pool with the opportunity for the children to interact with other students. This day, along with the school swimming program, builds student confidence in the water and helps develop water safety skills.

**Reception Year 3 Sports Day**

The Reception – Year 3 Sports Day will be held on Thursday 8th March. It will be held in the Meningie School Hall from approximately 9 am until 12.30 pm. Some students in Year 3 will follow the age based athletics program on the oval. These students will be informed of this by their classroom teacher. All students in Miss Wilamowski, Mrs Woolston and Mrs Starling’s classes will be required to meet at their classroom. After lunch students will be back in their classroom with normal dismissal procedure. All parents and caregivers welcome.

**Harmony Day**

Teachers are busy organising activities for Harmony Day. Students will be encouraged to wear something orange on the day. A separate note will go home with further details.

**SAPSASA**

A number of students went to Lameroo for the trials. All performed well and we congratulate Lucy Waser from Mrs Starling’s class for making the Mallee Region Swimming Team. Lucy along with Yr 6 & 7 students Kobie, Holly & Aleisha will compete at the SAPSASA Country Championships on March 26th. We wish them all the best.

There will also be athletic trials at Coomandook on the 3rd April (week 10) for students who perform well in athletics at both our carnival and the interschool carnival at Keith. Mr Rowe will send home notes with students who have been selected for this.

**Maths Facilitator News**

As one of the Maths Facilitators for the Murray & Mallee Region I was fortunate to attend four days of workshops last week with other facilitators from around the state. Much of this was spent on the implementation of the Australian Curriculum - Maths & Science. I was then able to share with teachers from our site the information and ideas that were generate from these workshops. This is also a task I will be doing with staff from other schools within our cluster.

**Parent/Teacher Interviews**

Letters to parents re: Junior School interviews will be sent home next week. Interviews for Reception to Year 5 students will be held during Week 8 to 10. If the dates/times set aside by the teachers are not suitable please contact your child’s teacher via a note in their diary.

Katrina Hood  
Junior School Manager  
Maths Facilitator Murray & Mallee

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

Congratulations to Lucy Waser, Kobie Hood, Aleisha Williams and Holly Vandenbrink for their selection to represent the Murray Mallee SAPSASA Swimming Team! These students will complete in the SAPSASA Country Championships at the new SA Aquatic & Leisure Centre.
**INTERSCHOOL SWIMMING CARNIVAL**

The Interschool Swimming Carnival was held at the Coonalpyn Pool on Monday 20th February in brilliant conditions, this year hosted by Meningie Area School. The team that represented Meningie at the Interschool Swimming Carnival was selected from our own Swimming Carnival held previously on Wednesday 15th February. Unfortunately, due to a lack of competitors at the Meningie Swimming Carnival, our Interschool Swim Team had many vacancies. However, Meningie was impressively represented by those who competed on the day.

There were some fantastic individual results. Zac Vandenbrink broke three records in the Open Boys 100m Freestyle (1.01.75 – previous record of 1.02.33), 50m Butterfly (30.94 – previous record was 31.19) and in the 50m Freestyle (27.87 – previous record was 28.59) as well as being recognised as the Male Swimmer of the Meet. Zac Vandenbrink and Marni Hood swam exceptionally well throughout the day and were recognised for this through their selection to represent the Upper South East Swimming Team in the SSSSA D-Grade Championships at the Marion Aquatic Centre on Wednesday 29th February.

Thanks must go the following parents for timing on the day – Di Williams and Deanne McPherson, and any others who kindly gave their time. Their assistance enabled us to contribute to a successful carnival as hosts and at the same time keep the school open. Thanks also to the staff who provided excellent support on the day, in particular Katrina Hood who was responsible for most of the pre-carnival preparation.

Jack Rowe (PE Teacher)

**ATHLETICS DAY**

Our School Athletics Sports Day is almost here. It will be held on Thursday 8th March at the Meningie School Oval. Events will start at 9.00 am. Students will need to report, as usual, to Home Groups at 8.45am for signing in and Pastoral Care matters.

Students are in houses – Albert (BLUE), Bonney (RED) or Coorong (YELLOW). All students participating will be awarded House Points and Individual Medal Points. The students will be competing in Age groups and be moving around to different areas to compete in different events. The Age groups will include all Year 3s and be grouped as U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15 and U16 & Open. Each age group of students will need 1 teacher and 2 parents to help supervise, chaperone and measure jumps and throws.

All students are expected to attend school on this day. A satisfactory note explaining an absence must be provided for non-attendance. Students are asked to dress appropriately for the weather and event. House colours or school sports uniform are both acceptable.

Lunch and other food and drinks will be available for sale on the day provided by the school canteen. Some shelter will be available for spectators and students while not competing. Parents may supply their own shades and shelters around the oval if they wish, subject to redirection where necessary. Students will need to bring snacks, drinks, hats, sunscreen and suitable clothes. The 800m races will be held on Friday 2nd March at 9.00 am and the 1500m races will be held on Monday 5th March at 9.00 am.

Please come along to support the students. We need help on the day with supervision of age groups. If you have not already done so, please contact the front office if you are able to assist, or return the tear off slip from the information that was sent home earlier this week. Any offers of help would be gratefully appreciated.

**WORKSHOPS WITH ANN BAKER**

Meningie Area School was fortunate to host a workshop and learning day with Ann Baker on Tuesday 28th February. Ten teachers from the Coorong cluster were able to watch Ann demonstrate one-hour numeracy blocks in both Mrs Woolston’s R-2 and Ms Giles Yr 4-5 class. This involves students having a set routine for the numeracy block – 10 minute mental (mostly game & question based) followed by a 40 minute problem or strategy session and a 10 minute reflection or review. The teachers observed the students and were fascinated by the thoughts and strategies as well as the discussions and mathematical language used.
A major emphasis of Ann’s is to get the students to put their thought processes onto their page; this may be through drawing, using numbers or known algorithms (sums). Ann then interviewed a range of students, getting them to tell her the thinking behind their ideas in working out the problem. This gives her an opportunity to annotate student learning. Usually four students are interviewed in any one numeracy block and by the end of a two week learning block all students in the class have been interviewed.

This was a wonderful learning opportunity for our teachers and has provided them with a range of skills and strategies to use with our students. Thankyou to Ms Giles, Mrs Woolston and their students for allowing us to share their learning. The teachers will have two further workshops (one in Term 2 and one in Term 3) and will be trialling the numeracy block in their classrooms throughout the coming year.

Ann Baker is an educational consultant with a background in maths and literacy education. She specialises in working with teachers to maximise the potential of the children they teach in areas such as numeracy, literacy and thinking skills. During her varied career, she has lectured in literacy at Griffith University (Gold Coast), been an adviser for Gifted and Talented Education with Education Queensland and a researcher at London University and the Open University (UK).

Ann and her husband John have a website; www.naturalmaths.com.au This has monthly newsletters and samples from their books, natural maths strategies.

## MENINGIE AREA SCHOOL GOVERNING COUNCIL AGM
Monday 19th March 7.30 pm

You are invited to the MAS Governing Council Meeting at 7.30 pm in the Meningie Area School Staff Room for nibbles/light supper.

Please give careful consideration to attending this meeting. Strong communities have strong schools and we need your input and support to keep strong.

Please fill out a Nomination for Election Form if you would like to be on Governing Council.
The Year 10, 11 and 12 Home Economics class have been very busy as part of their assessment this term creating a signature dessert. The students have had to research for recipes, size the recipe, cook the dessert using appropriate health and safety standards and create an appropriate way to plate and present the dessert. As you can see we have some extremely talented budding cooks in our midst!

Emma Clare – Sticky Date Pudding

Abbey Hood & Brianna Wilson – Chocolate Mousse

Chocolate Mousse Cake – Katie Reid

Chocolate Brownie – Kaitlyn McKenzie Campbell & Julia Parker

Marni Hood – Mango Meringue Torta

Banana Coconut Cake – Jake Shaw & Scott Fabian
The Young Endeavour Youth Scheme is now accepting applications for young Australians aged 16 to 23 to join a voyage aboard the national sail training ship Young Endeavour. The ballot for voyages departing between July and December 2012 will close on 2 March 2012.

A voyage in Young Endeavour is an exciting experience, and a unique opportunity for youth to develop teamwork and leadership skills through a world recognised organisation.

During each voyage youth crew from across Australia learn the skills to successfully sail a square rigged ship, including climbing the 30 metre mast, setting and furling sails, and maintaining a 24 hour watch on the bridge. They also learn to navigate, take the helm, keep lookout and help the chef in the ship’s galley. Once they have learned these skills, each youth crew will take command of Young Endeavour for 24 hours, and on their last day at sea will host a local group of youth with special needs, sharing their new found knowledge and experiences.

Lucinda Hirth, of Melbourne, sailed Young Endeavour across the Bass Strait in November 2011. On completing the voyage she said “It gave me the confidence and skills to achieve my personal goals and to contribute more in my local community when I return home”.

Sydney local Natalie Grove, who sailed the ship along the Pacific Coast in August 2011, said, “Sailing Young Endeavour provided me with an opportunity to push my limits, expand my horizons and to learn to never underestimate myself or the people I am working with. It was definitely the experience of a lifetime”. Since 1988 the Young Endeavour Youth Scheme, in partnership with the Royal Australian Navy, has provided challenging training voyages for over 11,000 young Australians in the tall ship Young Endeavour. The specially designed program delivered aboard the ship increases the youth crew’s self awareness, develops teamwork and leadership skills, and fosters a strong sense of community spirit.

Applications are accepted all year round, however first round offers will be made after the ballot closes on 02 March 2012. For more information on dates and fees, or to apply for voyages, visit www.youngendeavour.gov.au.

Young Endeavour Youth Scheme
1800 020 444
mail@youngendeavour.gov.au

International Women’s Day 2012
Connecting Girls, Inspiring Futures
Murray Echuca Regional Gallery
Wednesday 7th March
10:00am-12 noon
For more information contact
Murray Mallee Community Health
08 8535 6800
hiddenspace consult