Pupil Free Day
Tomorrow -
P/T Interviews

Year 6 Hoodie Celebration

Abbey, Ellie, Brielle & Eliza (front), enjoying their new Year 6 Hoodies. Story Page 6.
Cultivate Thankfulness

Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you, who belong to Christ Jesus, to live. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 – The Message)

A number of years ago in the Good Weekend magazine, there was a little column that asked a series of questions to a notable person each week. Questions such as: What are you angry about? What are you exultant about? Who would you most like to meet? What would you never give up? The final question was always, What do you want more of?

Over the weeks, you would get the ‘typical’ answers to this question – money, holidays, happiness, laughter, sleep… One week the questions were addressed to cinematographer, Christopher Doyle. In response to this question, he simply responded, “I have enough.”

Wow – what an answer! Would you have instinctively answered the question that way? Even as Christians, there always seems to be something we want more of. However, I am reminded of this saying:

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness… you are more blessed than the million who will not survive this week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation… you are ahead of 500 million people in the world.

If you can attend a church without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or death… you are more blessed than three billion people in the world.

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead, and a place to sleep… you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace… you are among the top 8% of the world’s wealthy.

If you can read this message… you are more blessed than over 2 billion people in the world that cannot read at all.

So, do we have enough? Perhaps, it’s only when we cultivate a sense of gratitude or thankfulness in our lives do we stop wanting more! As we nurture this spirit, it takes the focus off ourselves and helps us to see God and the needs of others more clearly. Colossians 3:17 encourages us to “Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ – the Message – have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God! Let every detail in your lives – words, actions, whatever – be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way.”

Recently I read in one of my daily devotional guides:

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life.

It turns what we have into enough, and more.

It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity.

It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.

Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow.

How important, as we partner together in the educating and nurturing of young people, is it to pass on this important message and truth? We live in a world where we are constantly bombarded with the message of ‘more, more, more!’ This message is particularly alluring to young people as they establish their identities and sense of self. We need to be an example of those who are cultivating a spirit of thankfulness and generosity. We need to be modelling a lifestyle that says, ‘I have enough.’

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Narelle
MECS Principal

March Board Report

The Board members had the pleasure of meeting the new staff over a wonderful meal before meandering down to the Board Room for our monthly meeting. Petra opened the meeting with a devotion from Psalm 40 and the connection to Jesus’ 40 days in the wilderness and the 40 days of Lent. Narelle gave an overview of what is happening in the school community, followed by the Finance Committee report, the Infrastructure Committee report and the Board approving a number of policies.

The Board is always keen for people to observe what we do. The student leaders had an opportunity to join us last year and tonight we had an association member look on.

One of our priorities this year is to encourage MECS parents to join the Association which is a great way to support the school. The Association’s Christian vision and mission statements are the basis for why and how we run MECS. The board is chosen from the Association members; the school Executive is employed by the board - so a robust Association is essential.

Please pray for the Board, the Executive and the Association as we aim to proclaim God’s Kingdom via education.

Petra
for the Board
Parent Teacher Interviews

This week is a busy one with parent-teacher interviews. We hope you see these interviews as an effective opportunity for you and the teachers to support one another in the education of your child. The partnership we enjoy takes both of us doing our bit – interviews are not meant to be a one-way flow of information!

Teachers have come prepared to offer insights into how your child’s education here at school is unfolding. They make speak about certain skills, or particular attitudes that have developed, or even offer suggestions and strategies for how things could improve. They will have chatted with colleagues, and carefully looked over relevant data. They will have reflected on how your child has presented and participated in each class. They have also been encouraged to pray for your child as they prepare for the interview in the hope that this meeting is a valuable time of celebrating and acknowledging the gifts of each child.

Of course, parent-teacher interviews are only one way in which you partner with us. Whether it be your hard work at the working bee last Saturday, your support at the Junior Primary Mini-Beast Parade on Wednesday or your ongoing assistance in our MECS Kitchen or junior classrooms – ‘thank-you’!

Primary Choir visits the Kindergarten

On Tuesday the Primary School Choir came to visit the Possum and Koala (4 year old) Kindergarten children. We were very excited to hear them sing ‘Let’s Go Fly a Kite’ and ‘The Push Bike Song’, and were delighted to listen and watch the choir’s animated singing. It is wonderful that the older children are able to visit and connect with the younger children. The kinder children then sang ‘I can talk to God’ to the choir, which was received very enthusiastically by the choir group! Actually, many choir children joined in, as they knew the song! Afterwards the choir was very excited to join in a short play with the kinder children. Playing in the Kindergarten was more than likely the highlight of the visit!

Wendy
Early Years Coordinator
MUSIC Notes

Thank you to all the instrumental staff and students for helping make the beginning of this year such a success for the Instrumental Music Program. Some changes are coming that the staff are very excited about - stay tuned!

Please Note - Recital Date Moved

Our Term 2 recital date for all instrumental music students has been moved back one day to **Wednesday, June 11**. All other details remain the same. Please mark it in your diaries.

Jodie
**Instrumental Music Coordinator**

MECS Notes

**Daily Five**

Following on from our introductory article last week on Daily Five and Cafe this week we will look at

‘Good fit’ books.

Students need to be reading books that are ‘Good Fit’ books. These are books that interest the student and that they can read with accuracy and understanding independently. In Daily Five students are encouraged to learn to choose their own appropriate books.

It is a bit like putting on the right pair of shoes for the right purpose. We wear runners to go jogging and dressy shoes for outings and rubber boots for working in the paddock or down in the garden. Just like we wear the correct shoes that fit us well and are useful for what we are doing, books are the same. The books we choose need to be right for the purpose we intend to read it for, we need to be able to read the book (accuracy) and we need to be interested in it. Everyone will have different interests and abilities and we will be reading for different purposes, sometimes we read to find out information and sometimes we read for the sheer joy and love of reading.

Not one book fits all. Students are learning how to pick their own ‘best fit’ books.

You can help your child with this at home or when choosing books or visiting the library or shopping for books.

In order to pick the right books we use a little strategy called **I PICK**

1. I choose a book
2. **P**urpose - why do I want to read it?
3. I interest - does it interest me?
4. **C**omprehend - am I understanding what I am reading?
5. **K**now - I know most of the words

Diane
**PS Coordinator**

Friends of MECS

**Stationery**

Did you know that 81% of MECS families used our Stationery Service this year? 462 bags of stationery were packed!

Total sales were $49,997, with an amazing profit of $10,622.

A huge thank you to Evelyn who coordinates this mammoth task and to all the volunteers who helped sort stationery, pack bags and helped on sale days - we couldn’t do this without you! Thank you also to all the families who use our stationery service and support the school in this way.

We will let you know when it is decided how the money raised will be spent.

**Meals needed**

We try to keep a supply of frozen meals in the office freezer to offer families who need support and that freezer is nearly empty! If you are able to make a meal, please place it in a disposable container and list the quantity and ingredients. We would really appreciate your contribution. You can drop meals in at the Main Office anytime. Thank you.

**Mother’s Day and Father’s Day stalls**

We are seriously considering doing Fair Trade gifts for the stalls this year. Are you interested in being involved? Do you have any contacts for Fair Trade gifts?

Please contact Nicole through the office or email

Nicole and Amanda
**Community Relations Officers**

**Prayer Chain**

Are you a praying parent who would like to support our school community in this vital way?

Email and you will be added to our growing list of praying parents and receive regular e-mails with prayer needs for our community.

**Entertainment Books**

Next week is the launch of the 2014/2015 Entertainment Book. This year for the first time they are selling a new digital membership as well as the book, so you can choose whatever suits you best.

An order form will go out to each family this week so read it carefully for instructions on how to order.

Remember that 20% of all sales are fundraising for the school so don’t forget to ask your family and friends too!

Any enquiries please contact Evelyn.

Evelyn

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**Working Bee March 22**

The community of MECS is great! We had our second working bee for 2014 on Saturday and it was fantastic. There were lots of mums, dads and children doing all types of jobs. They filled wheelbarrows, took wheelbarrows full of mulch, dirt, pruning etc to where they were needed, pruned garden beds, planted plants, washed buses and stained seats and benches. Another group did a great job cleaning and getting paint off the manual arts floor. Lots of other little jobs got done too.

Thank you to everyone who came along on Saturday. We achieved a lot in a short time and the school looks great. You should all be proud of how well kept the school grounds, buildings, buses etc are.

We had a great morning tea of dim sims, savoury biscuits and more, topped up with good coffee. There was so many of us for morning tea we filled the staffroom and had to sit in the courtyard.

Thank you all for coming and helping to make it a great morning.

Pete
**Property Manager**
**Scattered Lives - SS Drama**

Scattered Lives is a touring theatre performance that depicts the stories of refugees from World War II till today. It was presented last Wednesday in the theatre to augment the Year 10’s study of the novel ‘The Rugmaker’, and for VCE Drama students, who are required to analyse the performance as part of their course.

Two performers played a variety of characters, from families fleeing their war-torn homelands, to officials in detention centres. They used simple props such as suitcases and bags and projected real footage of refugees. One of the performers, who was also the writer, researched many refugee stories to create the performance, which was at times quite moving. The performance also gave Drama students lots of ideas on how to create a performance of their own. Their ensemble performances this year are on the subject of Ned Kelly and will be presented in Term 2.

Marlene
SS Drama Teacher

**Congratulations Melinda**

We would like to congratulate Melinda (MECS VCE 2010) who has been selected to represent Melbourne in the 2014 Worldskills Australia National Competition to be held at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre from September 18-20. Melinda gained this honour by winning the Worldskills Australia regional finals in December. This competition pits young workers against each other using the skills of their trade and involved a building project where points were awarded for accurate measurements, time management and whether the construction matched the design documents. The three day event in Perth will showcase the skills of 500 of Australia’s best trainees, apprentices and students as they compete for the prestigious title of ‘Nation’s Best’ in over 50 skill and trade areas ranging from the traditional trades such as plumbing, bricklaying and hairdressing to the more contemporary professions of web design and fashion technology. She will also be hoping to gain an international scholarship through one of WorldSkills Australia’s international pathways.

Melinda is an amazingly gifted person. She is gifted academically but also in the applied (hands on) areas of learning. While she was a student in Year 6, she approached me for help with the construction of a volcano and what an amazing construction that turned out to be - it even produced “molten” lava! Adam (our very own wrestling coach and guru) recalls that Melinda was easily the best ever female wrestler to come out of MECS. After finishing her VCE, Melinda took up an apprenticeship as a fitter and turner with Maroondah business Hargo Engineering. We are thrilled with this regional victory and look forward to her performance in the National competition.

We thank Maroondah Leader Community Newspaper for giving us permission to use the photograph.

Dr Roger F
VCE Coordinator

**MECS Notes**

**Pedestrian Safety on York Road**

If you travel York Road regularly you will have perhaps noticed the traffic counter tapes that were in place in January and February near the school crossing. These traffic observations have been part of a study for the York Road Pedestrian Safety Steering Committee. I have been a key participant in this committee since August last year (others involved are the Yarraview Nursery and Yarra Ranges Council).

Did you know that in January the average weekday count of vehicles using York Road was 20,044 per day? And in February the average weekday count was 21,600 per day? In February between 6am and 9am the average count exceeded 1200 vehicles per hour just in the west bound direction. No wonder there are queues in the morning.

Why am I telling you this? The committee is about to start a consultation process to get the input of the users of York Road, especially pedestrian users, about their experience in using the York Road crossing and footpaths. There will be an online survey and we expect there will also be a discussion group for student users and parents of users of the crossing. Please let the office know if you would like to participate – just mention it to Cassie or email the office.

Once the study is completed the committee will be recommending a plan that will lead to improved pedestrian safety. The plan will have multiple strategies. “Will it include pedestrian crossing traffic lights?” I hear you asking… Until the study is completed we do not know at all what the plan will include. Right now it is the research phase. Stay tuned for our survey. Thanks.

Gerry
Administration Manager
MECS Notes

Head Lice Information

Head lice is an ongoing problem in all schools and in the community and MECS is no exception! I often get asked questions about head lice by parents and students and I thought it would be helpful to answer some frequently asked questions and dispel a few myths. The Victorian Department of Health has some very good online fact sheets which are worth downloading which describe the latest treatment options and answer all manner of questions about head lice. Please take the time to read this information and learn all you can.


Here are few facts to make you ‘itchy’ to learn more!

• Head lice do not carry or cause any diseases
• Head lice cannot jump from head to head - they are spread by head to head contact – which is why they are common at school.
• It is the parent/guardians responsibility to check and treat for head lice, not the school’s (although I am happy to check any child for head lice at school if the parents/teacher have concerns).
• If head lice are found at school we DO NOT send the child straight home. A note is given or parents contacted at the end of the day and the child can return to school the next day as long as treatment has been started that night.
• Head Lice are NOT a result of poor hygiene. They are found in all sorts of hair; long, short, clean or dirty!
• No single treatment can kill 100% of all lice and eggs, so it takes persistence to get rid of them. Repeated treatments are often necessary.
• Lice can be treated with various chemicals available at chemists or with the conditioner method (cheap and effective).
• Re-infection from other children is the LEAST likely reason for head lice returning after treatment. It is usually due to failure to remove all the eggs in the initial treatment

Thanks for your cooperation.

Melinda
First Aid Officer

Chicken Pox

There have been two cases of chicken pox in the school. One in the Kindergarten and one in Middle Primary.

Melinda
First Aid Officer

Please remember to check your emails for school correspondence on a regular basis!

Year 6 Hoodie Party

Last Tuesday March 18, all Senior Primaries participated in the Year 6 Hoodie party. Year 5s brought their own hoodies from home while the Year 6s were given their new school hoodies! They are extremely comfy.

There was plenty of food and all Year 6s enjoyed going down the catwalk. We all had a lot of fun and it was a day we will always remember.

Jodie
Year 6
Year 7 and 8 Volleyball

We had a full on day with our Year 7 and 8 girls and boys volleyball teams. We had six schools crammed into a small venue which made for a very noisy but exciting time. Meredith came as coach and umpire and we appointed Jordan, Kate, Cooper and Christine Paoa as captains for the teams.

All teams had a win and the Year 7 boys and girls teams came 2nd overall. Year 8 boys came 4th and our Year 8 girls were 5th. Well done.

Anne-Maree
Secondary Sports Coordinator

Renewing your ‘Working with Children Check’ Online

All parent helpers must have a current ‘Working with Children Check’ in order to volunteer here at MECS. Please ensure you have listed ‘Mount Evelyn Christian School’ on the WWC Check website as an institution that you volunteer at, so that we will be notified each time you update your Check.

If you are a ‘Working with Children Check’ cardholder, you will be notified by SMS, letter or email 28 days before your WWC Check is due to expire. It is important that you keep your contact details up to date on the WWC Check website so that you receive a reminder.

After receiving a notification, you will need to update your WWC Check online by going to MyCheck on the WWC Check website (http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au). Cardholders will be asked to register with MyCheck if they have not already done so. Once logged in to MyCheck, cardholders will be prompted to confirm or update their personal contact details, and complete the online form.

Thanks for your cooperation with this.

Cassie
Receptionist

Primary School Atlases

In previous years, students have purchased an atlas which has lasted them through Primary School and into Middle School. The Middle School will now be using a different atlas, and as a result, Primary students are no longer required to buy an atlas during their Primary years. Instead, Primary students will now have access to class sets of atlases.

Families who had students in Years 3-6 during 2013 are eligible for a reimbursement for school atlases that they have previously purchased, once the atlas has been handed in to a class teacher, in good condition, with the student’s name written on the inside.

If you have not yet dropped your atlas off and would like to do so in order to receive the reimbursement amount, please hand it in to your current Primary class teacher. If you were in Year 6 last year, and you are not using it in MS classes this year, you can drop your atlas in to the Main Office.

Atlases need to be handed in by Thurs April 3, 2014, as we will begin the process of reimbursing the $20 to your fees account after this date. Please note that the reimbursement is not available as a cash refund. Please ensure you write your name on the inside of the cover. We are only accepting atlases that are in good condition.

Cassie
Receptionist
Carers Event
For carers who support a person with a mental illness, Saturday April 12, 10-2pm at Discovery Church.

$5 Bootcamp Classes
Fun, friendly with a great workout for all fitness levels. Now is the time to stay healthy and work towards your goals. Feel free to bring your children along.
Mount Evelyn Skate Park, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:15 am for a 45 min session. Bring a drink bottle and towel.
Contact Alisha.

Kittens free to good home
8 week old Tabbies (6 available). We can organise micro chip and de-sexing for a cost.
Raised in a family environment with other animals. Contact Leasa or Tim.

Autism Fundraiser
Zumba Fitness Class
Come and party for a cause! Zumba in Lilydale is holding a fundraiser for Autism. 100% of proceeds are being donated to AMAZE, Autism Victoria.
Come along all dressed in blue. No dance or fitness experience necessary, fun and easy! Wed April 2, 8-9 (7.30pm registration). 27 - 29 Market Street, The Jean Eales Pavilion - Lilydale Show Grounds. $10 per person.
Contact Alison.

Amazing Drumming Monkeys
A variety show aimed at 2–8 year olds but also entertaining for adults. Lots of singing along and dancing, and positive messages for all ages.
Moorooburk Community Centre, 125 Brice Avenue, Moorooburk. Thur 10 April, 11am & 2pm. Tickets $8 Full, $5 ERLmembers, online. Information and bookings www.culturetracks.info.

Keeper for a Day
Werribee Open Range Zoo’s Keeper for a Day program and Healesville Sanctuary’s Keeper for a Day programs are running these holidays. For ages 13-18. Cost $103.00 ($92.70 zoo members).
Dates April 8, 10, 14 & 16 - Werribee
Dates April 8, 9, 15 & 16 - Healesville

Controlled Falling Project
A great show for the whole family to enjoy during the school holidays.
Audacious heart stopping circus spectacular. Information and bookings www.culturetracks.info.
Tuesday April 8, 2pm at The Memo, Healesville. $15.

Fun Run
Yarra Ranges Athletics Fun Run on Sunday April 6 at Lillydale Lake, for all the family - 2km / 5km / 10km events.
Cheaper early entry, or on the day $3 extra. Entry is easy via our website www.yarrarangesathletics.org.au.
Major sponsor prize of $500 in products from The Good Guys in Bayswater to the school with greatest participation, scaled to account for the size of each school, but including parents, friends or teachers that enter an event on the day.
Interested students can sign up as a team. See Anne-Maree, Secondary Sports Coordinator to coordinate who else is going or interested.

AFL Healesville Holiday Program
The AFL are running a holiday program in Healesville, Healesville Football Oval (Don Rd Complex), Don Rd, Friday April 11, 9am-3pm.
A day packed full of footy fun! Test your skills in a mini AFL draft. Have a chance to win an AFL fan pack!
The program is a fun day out for kids aged 5-12. Learn the skills of football from experienced coaches. AFL players (subject to availability), will be involved. The program costs $72, plus processing fee imposed by a third party. Register www.aflvicholidayprograms.com.au.

Junior Ranger Program
Dandenong Ranges National Park, Apr 8 - 15.

Accommodation Needed
Young working lady looking for shared house or bungalow to rent in the Lilydale, Mount Evelyn to Seville area. If you can help contact Sandy.