Open Day
This Saturday
10-1pm
All Welcome

MP - Getting out in the Bush
The Language of Love

As a former Bible translation adviser I deeply value the importance of each person’s mother tongue. When your ‘neighbour’ has a different mother tongue than you do, having a go at using that language to communicate with them demonstrates love and hospitality toward them. I want to connect this thought with one of the requirements of the National Curriculum: that every school teaches a language ‘other than English’. This presents an exciting challenge for the way that MECS engages with languages learning, and the way we develop students who love their neighbours.

As a school community, we’ve been working through what this means for MECS, and we are now at the point of implementing an Indonesian language curriculum. Before I talk about that let’s first think about some of MECS’ language teaching story.

MECS is unique. For around 30 years we have taught the Western Desert language, Warlpiri. From the late 1990s we taught Warlpiri in Year 9 and Year 10 as a part of the Aboriginal Studies and Centre Trip program. Since around 2004 we have taught it only in Year 10. Apart from our unique learning of Warlpiri, a number of students have studied other languages through the Victorian School of Languages; mainly in Senior School where a student had a desire to study that language.

You’re thinking languages are boring and useless, right? MECS as a community has probably not embraced the learning of another language across the entire school due to the fact that, historically, schools in Australia have not delivered language programs in ways that are inspiring or lead to truly effective language learning. Mums and dads, you are probably remembering deadly boring language grammar lessons you had at school. I’m with you; poorly delivered language programs are like vaccinating children against the wonder of acquiring another language. But approaches to teaching other languages have changed and we can rise to the challenge of changing them even more. The great strength of our Warlpiri program, even though it’s brief, is that students meet and interact with Warlpiri speakers during their Centre Trip experience.

While teaching a language other than English is a compliance requirement for MECS, maybe it is also a requirement of the gospel. This next statement by a Christian educational thinker, David Smith, is pretty complex, but it nails an important truth: “What … Pentecost teaches us, I suggest, is that an education that does not seriously engage with the languages and cultures of others is not just pragmatically or intellectually, but ethically and spiritually deficient, rooted as it is in a failure to love others as ourselves, to do to them as we would have them do to us. This runs deeply counter to the basic instincts and priorities of Western culture – but then since when did the Holy Spirit go with the flow?” I find these words profoundly challenging but the thought fits MECS so well – running counter to the priorities of Western culture.

Our Response

What about Warlpiri? The idea of teaching Warlpiri throughout the school is an innovative and adventurous approach that would be exciting and challenging. Unfortunately, the practical reality of a full Warlpiri program both in terms of cost and personnel is too great for our single school community to sustain. Therefore, after careful consideration, we are planning to implement Indonesian as the language to be learned by students at MECS from Prep to Year 8 (we expect that Warlpiri will continue in Year 10). We will begin by rolling out the learning of Indonesian in our Primary section in 2015. Subsequent roll out plans for Years 7 and 8 will then be developed. We also hope that we can establish a relationship with the Indonesian speaking Christian community in Melbourne to enable real life language encounters for students.

Why Indonesian?

You might be asking why choose Indonesian. Here are just a few of our reasons:

• Indonesia is a national neighbour.
• There is a good potential to link to the Indonesian Christian community in Melbourne.
• It is not as linguistically complex as other Asian languages.
• It uses a Roman script for its alphabet; this eliminates a literacy burden which makes it more straightforward to keep a focus on spoken language.

• There are many teaching and learning resources as it is one of the most commonly taught languages in Australian schools.
• It aligns with the Australian government’s promotion of Asian languages.
• Other Christian Education National schools in Victoria study Indonesian.

What happens next?

Our next step is to recruit a passionate, capable Indonesian teacher. We hope that this teacher will start in Term 4 2014, so that they can plan and develop the curriculum and relationships needed to begin teaching Indonesian in 2015. Please pray with us in this vital next step. If you have any questions, or perhaps know of an inspiring, passionate, capable Indonesian teacher please let us know.

Terima kasih

Dr Gerry B
Administration Manager

P.S. For those of you academically inclined, the statement by David S is in an article called Pentecost Perplexity and Language Learning in the Journal of Christianity and Foreign Languages, 2004, p.8.

Primary GT Dates

Parents are welcome to attend the Primary Get Togethers held on Mondays 9am. Primary GT dates for this term are:

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<th>Week</th>
<th>JPY</th>
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<td>3 (12/5)</td>
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<td>8 (16/6)</td>
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Whole School Assembly
What a fabulous whole-school assembly we enjoyed on Monday morning. It was great to come together with all our students, and many parents, and join in a celebration of all the different types of learning that happens in our school. It was also a special time of praising God as we introduced a time of worship through singing – thanks to the parents, teachers and students who led us in this way. I’m already looking forward to the next whole-school assembly in Term 3! If you can join us that would be great!

ReConnect
Hopefully you have had an opportunity to read through the ReConnect newsletter that was published last week, instead of our regular MECS Matters. The purpose of Re-Connect is to keep in touch with our broader MECS community, including our alumni. Thanks to Nicole for the important job she does in preparing this newsletter, but also in finding other ways to strengthen our ties with past students and families. It’s always great to check out some news of past students, see who has married who, what new babies have come along and so on! Hopefully you also enjoyed the ‘chin-wag’ between Martin and myself. ReConnect reminds us of God’s faithfulness to this community over the last 40 years!

April Board Report
The April Board meeting began with some new faces in the room. First of all we had the privilege of meeting one of the new teachers, Ella. Ella is a former student at MECS and her dad, Charles, used to serve on the Board. Also attending were two Association member observers who are learning about what being a member of the Board is all about.

The meeting featured a report from the principal, Narelle, regarding recent parent seminars and how the school year is going in general. We were happy to hear that three parents expressed interest in joining the Association. It is only with going in general. We were happy to hear that three parents expressed interest in joining the Association.

We also heard about the 2013 Audited Financial Report from Gerry who provided us with an overall appraisal of the financial health of the school. It is encouraging to hear that overall student numbers are up this year and that we are on track to meet financial goals.

Board Chair Sue shared with us about upcoming important dates and we are all looking forward to the AGM coming up on 22 May. This one will be special as it will be held at Ranges TEC.

Eric
On behalf of the Board

Gapuwiyak Girri Op shop
The Gapuwiyak school in remote Arnhem Land is in need of babies and childrens’ clothes for their op shop. If you have clean & in good condition preloved summer babies & children’s clothes please drop into the main office.

Thankyou for this indigenous community, it is greatly appreciated by the students & community.

Di & the Primary MELT team

Open Day
We look forward to our Open Day this Saturday from 10am-1pm. It’s a great opportunity to share with your friends and family what a special place MECS is. If every family invited another family to come and visit us on the day, the place would be buzzing! In particular, if you’re a family with a current Year 5 or 6 student at MECS, why not come along and check out the Middle School so you know what’s up ahead? We have a special focus on the Middle School this year so it would be great to see familiar faces as well as new ones!

Working Bee
To coincide with our Open Day, special attention was given to our garden beds last Saturday at our regular working bee. Over 160 man-hours made it possible to plant a huge array of new plants and move a mountain of mulch! I’m sure you agree that the school grounds are looking great. Thanks to all those willing parents and students who joined us in being good stewards of all that God has blessed us with!

Naplan Testing
NAPLAN testing for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students will be held between 13 - 15 May. NAPLAN tests are used to gather data on Literacy and Numeracy levels in Australia. They are a snapshot in time of a student’s performance and contribute to the school's reporting and assessment processes. MECS uses the results to evaluate teaching programs and identify specific student needs in literacy and numeracy. The tests should not be feared or cause any anxiety. Please reassure your child that there is no ‘pass’ or ‘fail’. MECS teachers ensure that the tests are a normal part of school. Students are prepared for the tests and provided with appropriate support and guidance.

NAPLAN will occur as follows:

- Tues May 13: Language conventions test, Writing test
- Wed May 14: Reading test
- Thur May 15: Numeracy test

Some students may be eligible for an exemption from, or additional support during, NAPLAN - you can speak to your child’s teacher about this.

Students may be withdrawn from NAPLAN by their parent or carer. You need to discuss this with your child’s teacher or the principal. If you decide to withdraw your child, you must sign a Student Withdrawal Form (available from the office).

Later in the year you will receive your child’s personal NAPLAN report. The report will describe your child’s particular skills in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and Numeracy. The report will also show how your child performed in relation to national minimum standards.

If you have any questions about your child’s involvement in NAPLAN, please speak to your child’s teacher.

Laura
NAPLAN Coordinator
**MECS Open Day Help Needed - This Saturday**

If you have family or friends who are interested in Christian education, you are most welcome to take them on a personal tour on Open Day or encourage them to come along. We have quite a few activities happening around the school on the day.

We would appreciate some volunteers, parents and student leaders to help with:

- Welcoming Team
- Helping in classrooms

If you are available to help us (even for an hour), we would appreciate it. Please phone Amanda or Nicole, or email us.

If you have a busy day, then please just drop in to school when and if you can.

Thank you for your support.

Amanda & Nicole

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**Think Global and Local**

Mothers Day Stall, Tomorrow - Fri 9 May

This is the theme for this year's Mothers Day stall. Friends of MECS have an exciting range of 'Fair Trade' and locally produced gifts for the Mother's and Father's day stalls. Sales will be supporting OS communities in Uganda, Thailand, Cambodia and Africa.

Let your children know that the range of gifts will be different to past stalls and may be a little more expensive ($2 - $15), but the money is being used to support people who do not have the same opportunities as we do in Australia.

Primary students will be taken by their class teacher to purchase their gifts. Please have your child's money in a named envelope. Middle School students will have opportunity to buy at lunchtime in the PUMP Room.

Amanda
Community Relations Officer

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**Medical Action Plans**

If your child suffers from asthma, allergies, diabetes or any other medical condition, please ensure an action plan has been completed and handed in to the office as soon as possible. These plans are available as downloads on the MECS website or you can pick one up from the main office. Thank you, Corrie Irons.

Corrie
Admin Support

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**Entertainment Books**

Do you shop at Woolworths? Do you go to the cinema? Do you go out for dinner or coffee? Well this is the book for you.

If you shop at Woolworths you can save 5% on your groceries and petrol. If you spend $100 a week you save $5; over 52 weeks that's a saving of $260 a year. If you spend more, you will save even more. I purchase a $500 gift card for $475 and when that is nearly finished I purchase another one. Within 3 months I have got my money back from buying the book.

If you go to Reading Cinema you can purchase Cinemoney movie tickets for $11 each. That's a saving of $7 on an adult ticket. I prepurchase 10 and then whenever you decide to go you have them ready. You can even use them for the kids. Tickets are valid for 12 months from purchase.

Do you like going out for dinner? There are vouchers for Taco Bill - 25% off the total bill up to $30 value, Olinda Creek Hotel Lilydale - 25% off the total bill up to $40 value, Lilydale Palace, The Pancake Parlour and many more with similar discounts as well as coffee vouchers.

There is a sample book in the main office so drop in and check out the many other ways you can save money.

If you would like to order one please go to www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/193f695 or pay at the office.

Evelyn

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**Friends of MECS**

**Open Day**

**Sat 10 May**

10am-1pm

Enquire for 2016 & beyond

Kindergarten to VCE

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**Association for Christian Education**

**AGM**

Thursday 22 May

7.00pm - Coffee & Supper

7.30pm - Meeting Start

We will be meeting at

Ranges TEC,

1/9 Hightech Place, Lilydale

with a delicious supper provided by the Ranges TEC Hospitality Students

All Welcome

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**Thank you from Genevive**

Thank you for your support during my Masters. I feel so blessed that I was able to join the MECS community for the final part of it. As you can see from my recent Graduation photo it’s still quite challenging to get everyone to look at the camera at the same time!
Working Bee May 3

The task of moving and spreading 45 metres of mulch, 2 metres of Lillydale toppings, planting about 350 plants, raking and picking up sticks on a kilometre of cross country track sounds daunting doesn’t it? But when you have 40 dads, mums and children helping you it’s not a big task at all!

These were some of the jobs we did on Saturday at our working bee, along with washing buses, cleaning pits and drains and pruning plants - as well as chatting and sharing a great morning tea together. The weather was great! It didn’t rain as expected and it was exciting to make the school look well cared for.

Thanks to everyone who came to help out. It was fantastic and we all had a great time together. These working bees really help Steve and I and keep the school looking great.

Peter
Property Manager

Congratualtions Chris Mosley

On Tuesday 29 April during a ceremony at the Melbourne Convention Centre, Christopher (Class of 2013) was awarded a Premier’s VCE Award for Information Technology (VET). These awards are held each year to recognise the outstanding achievement of students in particular areas of study. Well done Chris!

Melanie
Executive Assistant

Active After-school Communities

The Active After-school Communities (AASC) program is a major component of the Australian Government’s package ‘Building a Healthy, Active Australia’ that aims to improve the health and well-being of Australian children.

MECS Primary is once again participating in the AASC program in Term 2, 2014.

Monday 3:45pm – 4:45pm: Badminton
There are 6 places left for Badminton.

Thursday 3:45pm – 4:45pm: Lawn Bowls
There are 9 places left for Lawn Bowls.

The program will run for 7 weeks beginning 5 May, 2014.

Children attending will be offered fruit for afternoon tea prior to the activities commencing. Please ensure that your child brings a refillable water bottle to each session.

The program will offer fun, safe and inclusive activities which will provide children with the opportunity to develop their motor skills. It also promotes a healthy lifestyle in a comfortable, non-competitive environment.

If you would like your child to participate in this program, please complete a parental form (available from the office) and return this to the office as soon as possible.

This is a free program for Primary students and places are limited.

For further information, contact the office.

MECS Notes

Drama for Everyday Life Program Term 2, 2014.

Drama for Everyday Life is a program that uses drama games and role play to teach social skills and self-confidence in a safe and creative small group environment (4 or 5 students), and has been offered at MECS for the past 11 years. Parents, teachers and students anecdotally report a significant improvement in social skills, behaviour management and confidence. A research partnership with Latrobe University has recently been completed that confirmed these reports.

Each session consists of three main components that assist students in addressing the above aspects: conversation skill, non-verbal cues and role plays. Through this program, students are provided with skills to successfully manage a number of everyday situations, including:

- conflict
- meeting new people
- friendly conversations
- anxiety
- losing at games
- sharing and taking turns
- appropriate skills for the workplace (for senior students)
- identifying and expressing emotions

Students currently enrolled and new students are invited to join the program in Term 2, 2014. Students who have previously participated benefit from the ongoing nature of the program. In Term 2, a 6 - week program will be offered for students, commencing week 4, Thursday 22 to Thursday 26 June at a cost of $115. MECS recognises the positive impact of Drama for Everyday Life, and has subsidised the program for a number of years.

If you would like your child to attend in Term 2, please complete the form and return to the office as soon as possible. If you have any questions, requests or suggestions, please contact me at school by telephone or email.

Shirley
Primary Education Support Coordinator

Lifting Lunch Club

For Middle and Senior School students and all staff in Term 2, involving high repetition, low weight, lifting of weights.

The club meets in the Understory Monday and Wednesday lunchtimes. Middle School students meet at 1pm to do the routine. Senior School students meet at 1:35pm. Teachers and staff can come to either or both.

Thanks to Adam for generously giving of his time to encourage good health in the school.
MP Bush Day

At the end of Term 1, after exploring the life, challenges and achievements of Australian explorers, Middle Primary wanted to finish the unit with a bang. So, with a back pack of skills such as map reading and navigation in the bush, the students had a fun-packed day of ‘explorer activities’. They began with a trek into Mount Evelyn bushland where they had to build their own shelters as well as imitate the great William Dampier and make careful drawings of the plant life around them.

Then returning to school, their skills were put to the test further with a school-wide orienteering challenge and a series of team challenges. Before they could eat their staple explorers diet of camp fire-cooked potatoes and bbq meat, their final challenge was to pitch tents and collect firewood. The evening was completed with the age old tradition of making damper. The pictures do not do the day justice; it was a fantastic day for students and parent helpers.

A real celebration of learning in the great outdoors.

Alistair
Middle Primary Coordinator
Whole School Assembly

Monday saw the whole school gather together in an assembly to focus on ‘Celebrating Learning’ both here at MECS and in Jinja, Uganda.

Ron (Jinja Christian School) and Jaz and Ben spoke of their experiences in Uganda and of the highlights and celebrations of learning in Uganda. Our students were able to see how their contributions had helped to fund a playground.

MECS students then shared about the exciting learning that is taking place across the school from Prep right up to Year 12.

The assembly concluded as we praised God together. A huge thank you to the Primary team for putting the assembly together and the Instrumental teachers, parents and students who formed the band. In the words of one parent who attended, “Wow! What a blessed way to start my morning, and for all the children, staff and community members who also attended! How great is our GOD, and how great is MECS!!

Di
Primary School Coordinator

Musical Show & Tell

Some students from our instrumental music program came to show the Preps what they have learned so far on the violin and piano.

The Preps were interested to hear that some of the students began learning their instrument as young as four or five years old!

The children very much enjoyed the individual and ensemble items, and were impressed and inspired.

A big thank you to Rachel (Instrumental Teacher) for organising the concert for our Preps and giving our young musicians an opportunity to shine!

Prep Fun

The Long & the Short of It!

We have had lots of fun in Prep learning about length.

We have measured things using units such as unifix cubes, icy pole sticks and arm spans.

We compared the length of our feet and ordered them from shortest to longest.

It will be fun to measure how tall we are early next term and to find out near the end of the year how much we have grown!

Jan
Prep Coordinator / Teacher
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 9 May</td>
<td>Mother’s Day Stall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat 10 May</td>
<td>Open Day 10am-1pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 13 - Thurs 15 May</td>
<td>NAPLAN Testing (Years 3, 5, 7, 9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 14 May</td>
<td>SP/yr 6 Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom Parent Seminar A 7pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 14 - Fri 16 May</td>
<td>Year 6 Camp Year 12 Mentor Supper 7.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 15 May</td>
<td>Year 12 Mentor Supper 7.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 20 May</td>
<td>Year 9 &amp; 10 Soccer</td>
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<td>Interschool Cross Country</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 26 - Fri 30 May</td>
<td>MS Special Week MP Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom</td>
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<td>Fri 30 May</td>
<td>K4 Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom</td>
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<td>Wed 4 June</td>
<td>Prep Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 5 June</td>
<td>Prep Hospitals in Schools Incursion VCE Music Recital SS Theatrette</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 6 June</td>
<td>SS VCE Units 1 &amp; 3 End</td>
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MECS Community Notices

Calendar

2014 Term 2 Week 2: 5 MAY - 11 MAY

Fri 9 May
Mother’s Day Stall
Sat 10 May
Open Day 10am-1pm

2014 Term 2 Week 3: 12 MAY - 18 MAY

Tues 13 - Thurs 15 May
NAPLAN Testing (Years 3, 5, 7, 9)
Wed 14 May
SP/yr 6 Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom Parent Seminar A 7pm
Wed 14 - Fri 16 May
Year 6 Camp Year 12 Mentor Supper 7.30pm
Thur 15 May
Year 12 Mentor Supper 7.30pm

2014 Term 2 Week 4: 19 MAY - 25 MAY

Tues 20 May
Year 9 & 10 Soccer
Wed 21 May
SP/yr 5 Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom Preps Parent parent 6.30pm Prep Rooms VCE Drama Performance 7.30pm Theatre
Wed 21 - Fri 23 May
Year 5 Camp Year 5 Camp
Thur 22 May
Immunisations for Year 7 Girls and Boys & Year 9 Boys Association AGM at Ranges TEC 7pm Supper, 7.30pm Meeting
Fri 23 May
Interschool Cross Country

Mon 26 - Fri 30 May
MS Special Week
Thur 29 May
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Fri 30 May
K4 Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom

Wed 4 June
Prep Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom
Thur 5 June
Prep Hospitals in Schools Incursion VCE Music Recital SS Theatrette
Fri 6 June
SS VCE Units 1 & 3 End

Newsletter deadline is 11am Tuesday on published week. Email articles (images attached as jpg) to the newsletter office.

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.

Babysitter Available
My name is Amy (past MECS student). I am 23 with car and license and Cert III in Childcare and am looking for some baby sitting work. I am currently studying for my Diploma in Childcare. Contact me if interested.

Bookkeeper seeks work
Experienced and nearly qualified. Skills include MYOB and Reckon Accounts (Quickbooks). Hard working and very reliable. Please ring Keren for further information.

$5 Bootcamp Classes
Fun and 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.

Lilydale Eagles Soccer Club
It’s not too late! Lilydale Eagles Soccer Club is still looking for Under 13 players. We have all ages/all levels. Boys and girls, ladies and men. Lilydale Eagles is part of the Victorian Churches Football Association. Training and home matches are held at Morrison Reserve, Mount Evelyn. Contact Les.

Host Families Needed For New Exchange Students
Girls and boys aged between 15 and 18 from Italy, Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Brazil, Norway, Sweden, Japan, Finland, Canada and Austria are hoping to come here to study for 3, 5 or 10 months from July this year and stay with a volunteer family that is willing to host and welcome them. If you feel you could do this for the length of their stay or even some of it, please contact Klaus let me know of your interest.
Klaus
WEP Community Coordinator

Girl Guides Free ‘Quest’ Day
Mount Evelyn Girl Guides invite you to our ‘Quest’ day. For girls 9-13, Sun 18 May, 10am-3pm at the Mount Evelyn Girl Guide Hall, Wedderburn Crescent. Cost free. Give Girl Guides a go with a day of epic adventures. For more information or to register contact Mount Evelyn Guides.

Apple Man
The Apple man will be doing a fruit delivery on Fri 9 May, so orders will need to be handed in to the Main Office by then.
The following varieties are available: Rpyal Gala, Granny Smith, Fuji and Golden Delicious apples - $10. Green pears $8. 5-6 kg each.

Babysitter Available
Cassie Quinlan (past MECS student) is available to babysit until May 26. Qualifications include a Cert. III in Children’s Services, First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis, Asthma and experience in caring for children 6 months to 9 years. Hourly rate is $15 ($10 after children’s bedtime). Contact Cassie.

Tuning into Kids™
This parenting program to help parents encourage emotional intelligence in children, is recommended by MECS Primary School.
This is being presented at Croydon Hills Counselling Centre in conjunction with Croydon Hills Baptist Church, from May 8 at 7pm for six consecutive weeks. Cost $100. Ring for further details and bookings www.livinglife.net.au.
It is also being presented by Yarra Ranges Council on Fridays, May 23 – June 20 (5 Weeks), 12.30- 2.30pm, Upper Yarra Family Centre. Warburton Hwy, Yarra Junction. This course is Free and is limited to a maximum of 15 parents. Registrations - Maureen. Free Occasional Childcare but places are limited and parents/caregivers need to complete a registration form.
If you would like more information you can contact Natasha, Student Welfare Officer via the MECS office.

Bookaburra
Bookaburra Volunteer Storytellers would like you to join them for ‘Story Time at the Station House.’ Weekly sessions of interactive stories, rhymes and fun! Free weekly sessions, Tuesdays 9.30 am, Mount Evelyn Station House, 50 Wray Cres, Mount Evelyn. For enquiries contact Mount Evelyn Library.