Middle School Special Week - a Hive of Activity

Sarah, General Manager during Year 9 Industry Week, Photograph by Siennah, Year 9 Special Week Photographer
It takes time...

“One aspect of the world that I have been able to identify as harmful to Christians is the assumption that anything worthwhile can be acquired at once. We assume that if something can be done at all, it can be done quickly and efficiently. Our attention spans have been conditioned by the 30 second commercials. Our sense of reality has been flattened by 30 page abridgements.” A Long Obedience in the Same Direction, Peterson 2000

This quote from Eugene Peterson’s book, A Long Obedience in the Same Direction resonated with me as I thought about what it means to work in education. Although Peterson is setting the scene for talking about discipleship, it reminded me that there is no efficiency in the sometimes messy business of working with children and families. There is nothing instantaneous about a young person’s growth toward maturity or a student’s consolidation of their learning and of their ability to negotiate and get along with others.

We would be foolish to think that a child can become literate and numerate without any effort, or reach higher academic achievements without lots of consistent hard work. In the same way we would be unwise to think that a young person could become a person of character and integrity, a disciple of Christ without teaching and training, modeling, prayer, making some mistakes and a bit of heartache and lots of consistent discipline and love in their life.

Yet the world we live in constantly tells us that everything is instant and instantly obtained. How many of us get frustrated when there is a time lag of a couple of seconds as our computer boots up? I know I get annoyed if the little wheel starts spinning. The speed of connection and access we have to instant information via the internet, fools us into a false reality. Our iPhones constantly keep us connected to others and remind us that everything is possible immediately.

We watch reality TV and see whole houses and backyards transformed in minutes. If only my half acre of messy backyard and falling down retaining walls could be transformed between a few advertisement breaks. I know that to see my backyard transformed is going to take many a weekends worth of backbreaking work. Those retaining walls aren’t going to be built by the secret army of workers just off screen.

This all reminds me that as parents and teachers we need to remember that education and growth take time. Our children are all uniquely different and each one will get there at their own rate. Sometimes the messiness of seeing them fall over and make mistakes and not be able to do things makes parents anxious. We want to fix it. We want to save our children from pain. We want it to be good and perfect and immediate. However the reality is that our kids are going to need to work at things. They may have to work at their schoolwork or at relationships or at things that don’t come easily to them. They will need to learn resilience and perseverance, kindness, gentleness and forgiveness. As parents and educators we must be patient and positive, we must help them persevere. We must encourage, love and discipline. We need to set positive frameworks for our kids. We may not see results immediately; it may take years! But we must not give up when the going is tough. So take heart if you are encouraging your VCE student to keep going and hang in there this term, or if your five year old is not getting going with reading and writing yet or your Senior Primary student is having lots of troubles with friends and fights and hassles with others or your teenager says it’s plain boring...

Let us not fall into the trap of wanting growth in our kids to happen immediately. This is not reality TV - it is real messy life and real messy life is not an abridged 30-page book. It is more like the Complete Works of Shakespeare full of love, broken relationships, repentance, forgiveness, joy, sadness and hope!

We need to remember that education and growth takes time. Our children are all uniquely different and each one will get there at their own rate.


Year 7 & 8 Netball

Last week, 19 of our Year 7 and 8 girls represented MECS at the Interschool competition in Dandenong. The girls worked well together under the captaincy of Jemma (Year 8) and Jenna (Year 7).

Congratulations to all for great sportsmanship and healthy competition. Our Year 7 team came third overall. Thanks girls for a lovely day of netball.

Mem

MS Teacher

Beth & Clare

Brooke & Erin

PS Coordinator
Father’s Day
To all the fathers in our community – happy Father’s Day for this Sunday! Thanks for the way you support and encourage your children in their learning. We pray that you will always look to God for the wisdom, patience and love you need in your parenting.

Middle School Special Week
Last week the Middle School was abuzz with a range of activities and programs as part of Special Week. Hopefully you have all had the opportunity to purchase goods from the stalls the Year 9s have had this week as they sold the produce and goods they made. Chutneys, fudge, wheat bags, cards, cushions, wooden games and toys – all proudly made by our Year 9 students. Whilst the Year 9s were being so industrious, the Cycle teams were either furthering their Medieval studies culminating in a fabulous feast or exploring a range of social issues which resulted in an Expo that parents were invited to. Visitors to our school from the Northern Territory commented on the maturity and independence that was so evident in our students as they observed the various activities. So many great things were happening over the week – a special thank you to the Middle School teachers who put in a tireless effort to make these special weeks fly!

Parent/Teacher Interviews
It’s that time again – we are looking forward to the conversations that we will have over the next two weeks as we meet together for parent teacher interviews. This opportunity gives parents and teachers the time and space to chat about the learning and progress each child has made throughout the year. There are always great things to celebrate in each interview, yet also areas to keep working on together. Please let us know if there are further ways we can support your child in their learning as a result of these interviews.

Numeracy in Action
In Middle Primary numeracy we wanted to give our students a real life scenario that would both teach and put into practice vital money-handling skills. The mission: design an orphanage from an empty warehouse in Indonesia. Students were split into 2 groups: Designers and Tradies.

The Tradies were given the task of providing materials (electrical, furniture or flooring) that the Designers could purchase. They had to price the items so that they could make a good profit while competing with rival trades. They also had to handle the transactions, using various methods to give the correct change.

The Designers were given a floor plan of the warehouse and their task was to design, buy and draw plans for their orphanage. They had a strict budget of $1000 which they could spend to give 12 Indonesian orphans and their 2 carers the most comfortable and cost effective home.

We marvelled as the students took control of the task and explored a wide range of learning from the careful handling of money to the concept of essential verses luxury items.

Alistair
Middle Primary Cluster Leader
MECS Notes

Hiking equipment needed

The Wilsons Prom Camp is coming up in Term 4 for Cycle A, Year 7 & 8s. It is the camp which requires the most equipment in Middle School and it can be tough for parents to get all the right gear at the right cost. This year, we are trying something new to help. We are asking if families have equipment they would be willing to lend, sell second-hand or give away such as:

- Hiking tents (lightweight)
- Hiking packs (55-70 litres, no exposed frames)
- Hiking stoves
- Hiking shoes/boots
- Sleeping mats
- Warm sleeping bags

Our plan is to collate a list of the items you nominate, and give it to Cycle A parents through the MECS Website. You can find this under ‘Updates’ on the MECS home page. There is also an opportunity for Cycle A parents to add what they need. You can find all the details of how to seek equipment or contribute on the web page. We are happy to talk anyone through this process.

There is also an unofficial yet complementary group running on Facebook (search for “MECS Yr 7/8 Wilsons Prom Camp News” or go to https://www.facebook.com/groups/553207961467972/) and ask to join. This is a place where families can share news about sales or good buys and other tips as the camp draws closer.

We really hope this will be used to make it easier for parents and would appreciate your support! Thanks,

Neil, Mic & Nicky

Old Textbooks Wanted

Do you have old edition novels or text books that you would like to donate? We are collecting books for an organisation called ‘Recycled Textbooks’ to support schools in remote areas of Papua new Guinea.

Books wanted:

Upper Secondary (Year 11-12) Subjects:
- English, Mathematics A and B
- Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Economics, Accounting, Business Studies, Geography, Physical Education, Agriculture, and Information & Communication Technology

Lower Secondary (Year 7-10) Subjects:

Please drop books off to the Main Office by Thursday September 18, 2014.

Cassie
Receptionist

Friends of MECS

Cooking for the community

A group of 7 ladies met in the Food Tec room to chop, blend, cook, and bless while we chatted, laughed and got to know each other a little better.

The aim was to cook 50 meals for people in our school community who may need a little extra support or help. We made 75 meals!

For me this was a great opportunity to return the blessing after having received meals earlier this year when my Father passed away, and I know I was not the only one there for this reason.

Father’s Day Stall

Helpers Needed!

Volunteers are needed between 9 and 3pm tomorrow, Friday September 5 to help with manning our Father’s Day stalls. If you are able to help even for 1 hour it would be very helpful. Please contact Amanda or Nicole in the main office or email.

Father’s Day Stall - Outside Staffroom

We have an exciting range of Fair Trade and locally produced items available for purchase at the Father’s Day stall tomorrow, Friday Sept 5. By purchasing these products, you will be supporting local suppliers and communities in:

- Uganda
- Thailand
- Cambodia
- Africa

These are some of the gifts available:

- coasters
- chocolate
- wristbands
- honey
- plants/herbs
- wallets
- chutney
- scarves...

We have a wonderful selection of gifts ranging from $2 - $15. Please explain to your children that the money they spend is being used to help support people in other countries who do not have the same opportunities that we do here in Australia.

Primary school students will be taken by their class teacher to purchase their gifts. Please give your child’s money in a named envelope; coins or small notes is preferable.

Middle School students will also have the opportunity during class time to purchase a gift.

Senior School students please come to outside the main staffroom at lunchtime.

Thank you for supporting this venture.

Friends of MECS
The highlight for me was definitely the incursion because I learned heaps of interesting games and how they were played. We got to play the games; they were really enjoyable and exciting. My favourite was a game called Kubb. It was a game with blocks of wood which you had to knock over with ‘axes’ (sticks of wood). The game gets really competitive and is really involving for every player.

**Jemma**

The highlight for me was the Medieval feast on Friday because there was so much entertainment and laughter between everyone and I met lots of new people. The dancing was probably my favourite part of the day.

The thing I learnt most about was the sword fighting and the armour. I learnt about what armour the Vikings wore and what the peasants would do in battle. I even got taught how to sword fight myself even though I’m not so good at it!

**Katelyn**

If I had to describe Special Week in one word it would have to be fantastic! The highlight for me was listening to the incursion staff play some medieval instruments. The instruments included a hurdy-gurdy which is a violin, piano and bicycle combined.

The thing I learnt the most about was how the feudal society worked. I found it interesting that you cannot move up or down in your social status. If you are born a peasant, you are a peasant for life.

**Jenna**

One word to describe Special Week: Surprising.

The highlight for me was definitely the incursion! It was so much fun getting to try on armour and learning how to fight with swords! I loved learning how to play the games that medieval people would have done to entertain themselves. My favourite game was Kubb!

The thing I learnt most about was Joan of Arc! I learnt about her story and who she was. It was really interesting to learn about what she did and what happened to her.

**Emily**
Cycle B World Issues Expo

Last week, Cycle B students took part in their annual World Issues Expo. The Expo looked amazing. The World Plate Foundation Food was our organisation, food and nutrition was our topic, and confidence was our goal!

I spent the day with our Administrations Manager, Tara, wandering around to find some lost customer to guide towards our stand for some hopeful donations with our pretend currency. Each person we spoke to was greeted with, “Hello, would you like a business card? This is for the World Plate Foundation, where we believe that everybody deserves food on their plate!” It seemed to have worked because altogether we had some very generous pretend donations.

We also sold some handmade jewellery, the proceeds of which will go towards the Jinja Christian School in Uganda. We were thrilled to see so many donations from the generous public. Heidi, our Product Manager, did an amazing job with the jewellery, greeting customers with a pleasant smile.

Although we were nervous, when people came over to the table we delivered our information confidently. Angus and Tim, our graphic designers, made an amazing logo and invitation. They delivered information about the issue wonderfully.

I was so proud of all of my group and the wonderful work we accomplished! I learnt about understanding your issue, and how important delivery is. I also found that as a CEO, people surprise you and I was happy to be surprised by my employees almost every time. Our business had its ups and downs, but I speak for all of us when I say that we loved the journey. So, maybe someday you’ll see one of us leading World Vision, hey teachers?

Jemimah
Cycle B Student

Bring Your Bike To Kinder Day

Possum and Koala children each had their turn bringing their bike to kinder last week. What fun! We rode around the primary school asphalt, stopped on cue, changed directions and rode through a slalom course! This fun activity was an opportunity to put into practise the road safety rules that we have been learning about, plus it was fun to zoom around the yard!

Wendy
Early Years Coordinator

12 Baskets Reflection

Since becoming a volunteer at the 12 Baskets Foundation, I have learnt so much about world hunger that it has actually shifted the way I see the world. There are so many people who are malnourished and in desperate need of food, that just seeing pictures of them is heart-rending and it makes you feel guilty about the many shelves of chocolate you have consumed over the years. Australians spend three times as much money on unhealthy treats as we give to people who are starving and don’t know if they will ever see another meal. We are incredibly privileged and don’t realise it, just the fact that we can buy food from supermarkets shows our ignorance, and this project has increased my resolve to change this injustice.

In Victorian times, the upper class believed that they didn’t need to help the poor because God had put everyone in a certain position in life and that it would be rude to try to change that. However, the lower classes did not share this view, and they were right, because greed ruled the people’s hearts. We need to make sure that does not become the case in our modern society today, we may not live on the same streets as the poor now, but the internet has bridged the gap, we are close enough to see and also to help these people, even if we don’t see them in person. The internet, however, is also an enemy; the multitude of commercialised ads take our attention away from things that matter, and depositing our thoughts at the first world problems that seem to make up our world but are really not problems at all. We need to get out there, ignore our commercialized world, and do something!

Lwendyl
Cycle B Student
As part of our term looking at the modern world, Year 9 embarked on the massive task of creating our own company during Special Week. Even before the week began we had a lot preparing to do to get the positions we wanted. For example, we had to submit a cover letter and resume. We then had to go through the difficult task of interviews and the teachers had to face the even harder task of deciding the position of each student. Some of the roles on offer included Managers and Deputy Managers for each of the departments, accountants, the General Manager and Personal Assistant along with various worker roles.

In the food department people were busily making a whole range of goodies, including fudge, lemon butter and tomato relish. Many of these items you may have seen at our stalls these past few days.

‘It has been really fun but a lot of work’. – Lena, a cook in the Food Department.

If you saw our stall you may have seen the wonderful work of the Textiles Department. They spent the week making headbands, cushions, phone cases and much more. Taking over the Year 9 rooms the Textiles Department had a lot of fun and learned a lot about sewing, time management and working as a team.

‘It was stressful at times, but enjoyable and we had nice relaxing workspace; lots of learning going on.’ – Naomi, Textiles Department Manager.

Down in the manual arts room the Woodwork Department worked hard sawing and sanding. Chopping boards, spinning tops and tic tac toe games were some of their wares. The high standard of the products produced were achieved through hard work and a lot of dedication from all who were involved.

‘Different, fun because it is something we don’t usually do.’ – Sarah, worker in the Woodwork Department.

The Landscaping team may not have produced a product but they sure worked hard. They helped with lots of things around the school like cutting down trees, moving mulch and putting sand in the kindergarten sand pit.

‘Enjoyable, good to be outside doing things.’ – Robert, worker on the Landscaping team.

To remember the experience of Year 9 Special Week, the Documentary Team spent their week filming and editing a documentary to capture the feel and overall experience of the various groups.

‘It was fun but difficult. People don’t realise the amount of effort that is put in.’ – Kyle, Director of the Documentary Team.

How did you hear about our stall? No doubt the Marketing and Sales Team had something to do with it. There was an unbelievable amount of work put in behind the scenes by each department to make sure things ran smoothly and I’m sure you will all agree that the Marketing Team did an outstanding job. They made posters, flyers, video adverts and packaged all the products.

‘Ridiculously maddening, but overall a good experience.’ - Reilly, Manager of Marketing Team.

All of the departments put in an amazing amount of effort but none of this would have worked if it hadn’t been for our excellent General Manager, Sarah Caldwell.

‘It has been really good, I enjoyed working with everybody. It has been a really good insight into what a company is really about.’ – Sarah.

Erica
Year 9 Student

The Textiles crew was a hard-working, relatively small group. We had four days of fun and frustrations, relaxation and yet frantic times. We had some failures (or challenges yet to be overcome) and produced some things to satisfy our efforts. We hope you will enjoy some of our products as much as we enjoyed working together to produce them. Naomi, our fearless leader was a great boss and kept the team well on track - not easy when most of the team had had very little experience with a sewing machine before we began on Tuesday. It was inspiring to see our Year 9s thriving in roles of responsibility and getting to know each other more, as co-workers rather than as their teacher. A very special week.

Mem
MS Teacher
### Calendar

#### 2014 Term 3 Week 7: 1 - 7 September

**Thur 4 September**  
4 Year Old Kinder Dad’s night 5.30-6.30pm  
SP Space Expo 6.30pm

**Fri 5 September**  
Father’s Day Stall

#### 2014 Term 3 Week 8: 8 - 14 September

**Mon 8 September**  
PS & MS Parent Teacher Interviews

**Tues 9 September**  
Year 7-12 Tribal Athletics  
SP Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom

**Wed 10 September**  
MP Hootptime

**Thur 11 September**  
MS Social Media Seminar  
Positive Boys Billy Cart Races 2-3pm  
Parent/Teacher Interviews

**Fri 12 September**  
SP Hootptime

**Sun 14 September**  
Centre Trip Departs

#### 2014 Term 3 Week 9: 15 - 21 September

**Mon 15 September**  
Year 7-9 Indoor Sports Day

**Tues 16 September**  
Positive Boys Blokes Night 6pm

**Wed 17 September**  
Empowering Girls Mother Daughter Night 7.30pm

**Thur 18 - Fri 19 September**  
MS Exams

**Fri 19 September**  
HHD Exam Prep Lecture Monash Uni  
End of Term 3

**Sat 20 September**  
School Holidays Begin

#### 2014 Term 3 Holidays: 20 Sept - 12 Oct

**Wed 1 - Fri 3 October**  
Year 12 Practice Exams  
Centre Trip Returns

**Mon 6 - Tues 7 October**  
Year 12 Intensives

**Mon 6 October**  
VCE Performance exams begin (to Nov 2)

**Wed 8 October**  
Unit 4 Drama Performance Exam

**Thur 9 - Fri 10 October**  
Year 12 Intensives

### Holiday Movie Days

**Discovery Church, Mount Evelyn, will be running two movie days in the upcoming school holidays.**

- **‘Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs 2’**  
  Wednesday September 24, 10:30am
- **‘Muppets Most Wanted’**  
  Wednesday October 1, 10:30am

Entry is by a gold coin donation. Sausage sizzle and lollies for sale.  
89 Monbulk Rd Mount Evelyn. 9736 2323.

### Boots for sale

Pair of mens Merrell Moab Goretex walking shoes. Waterproof and lightweight. Color is walnut. Size US 8, UK 7.5, Eur 41.5. Second hand but barely used. Retails at $140, selling for $75.

Contact Jane on 0418 383 730

### Hope for Creation Sunday

This Sunday - September 7, is ‘Hope for Creation Sunday’. If you would like your organisation to be part of Hope for Creation – a movement of Australian Christians committing to prayer and action on climate change, then please go to our website hopeforcreation.com.au, where there are Biblical and practical resources for awareness-raising, action, advocacy and prayer on creation care and response to climate change.

Hope for Creation aims to help change the conversation on climate change & creation care among Australian churches. We long to see Australian Christians bearing witness to the abundant love of God in creation and walking with Christ in defending the rights of the vulnerable poor in the face of a disrupted climate.

The founding partners of Hope for Creation include Ethos (the Evangelical Alliance Centre for Christianity and Society), TEAR Australia, The Uniting Church of Australia Victoria-Tasmania Synod’s Justice and International Mission Unit, and Micah Challenge Australia.

### Bubs and Kids Community Market

The Bubs and Kids Community Market in support of the Royal Children’s Hospital, will be held in Lilydale on the October 18, 9am-1pm at the Jean Eales Pavilion at the Lilydale Show Grounds. This a not for profit event with many volunteer hours going into it.

Bubs and Kids Community Market is seeking stall holders. This is a great way to turn your second hand kids clothing/toys/bulk items into dollars. Stalls are $30 for one or $50 for two, BYO table or hire one for $10.

Enquiries Kerry on 0409 809 889 or Simone on 0422 111 476 or visit us on Facebook.

### Shopping Tour Fundraiser

Bek and Kerrie Goldsmith (from one of our school families) are running a shopping tour on Saturday October 11, to raise money for research into PSC. This is the liver disease that saw Bek need a transplant 2 years ago, and this, and it’s complications continue to plague her with poor health. We’d love you to help us find a cure!

Cost is $31/head. Pick up at 7.40am and drop off at 6pm at Doncaster Park and Ride. Payment can be made by cash, with correct money in an envelope with your name and contact details handed in to the office marked for attention to Craig Goldsmith. For more information please phone/text Kerrie on 0425 067 346 or email kerriej1221@gmail.com.

### Accommodation Urgently Required

A missionary family (2 adults and 3 kids) is looking for accommodation (preferably house sitting) from the start of October through to the end of the year. One of their children recently commenced attending MECS.

If you know of any possible leads, please contact Gary on 0428 640 790 or garyewa@yahoo.com. Thank you.

### School Holiday Cricket

Free Holiday Expo, Tuesday Sept 23, 10am-1pm at 2 venues - Bayswater Park, (King St and Mountain Hwy, Bayswater) or Box Hill City Oval, (Cnr Middleborough Rd and Whitehorse Rd).

Includes cricket clinic, BBQ, information, door prizes and Melbourne Stars giveaways.

www.playcricket.com.au

### Notices sent home this week and on Website

- MP & SP Hootptime Letter
- Parent Satisfaction Survey Letter
- Father’s Day Stall
- SP Connect Morning Tea Invite
- Hootptime Letter for Attending Parents
- Ranges TEC Information Evening
- Careers Newsletter No 14 Sept 2
- Year 11 Formal Letter & Form for seats

Newsletter deadline is 11am Tuesday on published week.

Email articles (images attached as jpg) to the Newsletter Office