Creative Arts Showcase

Emily performing with the Primary Drum Group in the Creative Arts Showcase
The Grand Delusion

The world is flat, the moon is made of cheese, cats are better than dogs (sorry all cat lovers) and teenagers are fun to raise. These all seem like crazy statements. Scientific evidence and popular wisdom clearly indicate the world is not flat, the moon is not made of cheese and clearly dogs leave cats for dead as far as a family pet goes (sorry again cat lovers).

What about teenagers? Surely the idea that they are fun to raise has to be a falsehood. For years parent conversations in the school car park, around BBQs and standing beside a sporting field have all concluded that teenagers are a mystery to be feared and that the years between 12 (10) and 18 are to be navigated with the greatest of care. Avoid explosions, resist confrontation, manage moods and live with the reality that family peace is a distant memory and a well hidden future. I’m not sure this folklore wisdom is indicative of the real state of play. What if, like the world not being flat, we could identify evidence that suggests teenagers are fun to raise?

I am scared to use a personal example (just in case next week it all changes) but have found that raising teenagers is fun. That said, I have no grand or sage like advice that will ensure safe passage for parents and their teenager. What I do have, are some reflections acknowledging the wonder that teenagers are and the joy found in navigating life with them.

I often hear (have probably said it myself) that so and so will one day do fantastic things if they could only focus on school work, get a better job, listen in class, get on with their little brother, feed the dog or with the help of a front end loader, find the floor in their room. This future expectation not only has the potential to envelope teenagers in guilt, it also fails to recognise what incredible things they are doing today.

They are navigating a world of rapid change. Financial markets are international, they move in cycles responding to the slightest change. My parents put money in a bank assuming the bank would care for it, and them. Teenagers have no such understanding. They are learning and growing in a world full of choice but also highly exposed to market forces. Many are learning a financial literacy far earlier than required in earlier generations. My observation at Ranges TEC and in my own home is that many teenagers are making carefully considered choices about what they buy and in some cases how they save and what they give. They are dealing bravely and wisely with what is an incredibly complex environment. This is both exciting and challenging to watch. Their questions and efforts call me to be a wiser steward.

Teenagers give and gain respect through relationship. They are genuine in their understanding of authority as long as it is born out of relationship. As an adult I can’t assume respect because of position or title. Rather, the greater the value I place in getting alongside teenagers and valuing their story, the greater the investment they will make in me and what I ask of them. On the surface this sounds all too hard but once again in asking me to invest, it also challenges me to find more in myself. This teenage desire to engage at a deeper level offers new strength and hope to society.

Teenagers are growing up in a world full of tension. Old hostilities are coming home to roost, climate change is a reality and world food supply, already an issue in many countries, is likely to be a source of new tension in the near future. Teenagers are finding ways to deal with these deep and divisive issues. They are doing incredible things through crowd sourced funding. This and other uses of social media are breaking down barriers that once isolated people all round the world. They are starting and heading up social enterprises that generate social equity rather than financial profit and they are facing uncertain times with incredible hope.

It is fun raising teenagers. They challenge me, they inspire and more often than not they make me proud. Like me they will fail but they are also doing incredible things. As schools and parents we should be encouraged to celebrate our teenager’s accomplishments, laugh with them whenever possible and search for new ways to engage their way of seeing and solving problems in response to the world’s needs.

Phil
Director Ranges TEC

Primary District Athls

This was our first year competing in the Montrose District Athletics Carnival. The whole day ran very smoothly and was a great chance to interact and compete against other schools in the district.

In order to go through to the division athletics event students had to place in the top 2 of their event; we had 10 students qualify for the next round.

Once again I was very proud of the way our students represented the school. Thanks to the Year 10 students who came along to help with the running of the event and to the parents and friends who came and supported the students. Overall we came 6th out of 8 schools.

Thanks for a great day and good luck to those going to the division athletics event.

Jason
PS Coordinator
Tournament of the Minds

We shared in breaking news last week that our fabulous Senior Primary Tournament of the Minds team had won their regional challenge and are now through to the state finals. This is very exciting and a great credit to the students and their teacher, Genevieve, who has been working with them over the term. So... this Sunday at Latrobe University, our team will be up against the best minds in the state as they come up with creative and innovative solutions to their next ‘spontaneous challenge’. That means, they will find out that morning what the problem is and have only a couple of hours to prepare their presentation. Presentations from all teams will happen in the afternoon. We wish the team of Lily, Zoe, Sophie, Josh, Holly, Isaiah and Jess all the best. What a great way for some of our proud dads to spend their Father’s Day!

Creative Arts Showcase

Last Thursday was another packed evening as talented students from across the school performed in our Creative Arts Showcase. Normally just our instrumental students would perform on these nights, but this time we opened it up to also include our Senior Primary choir, Middle Primary drumming group and Year 7/8 Performing Arts students. We also had a beautiful exhibition of student art work. It was a fabulous evening with so much talent on show. A hugely entertaining evening enjoyed by a full house!

Father’s Day Stall

Mum Alert! Don’t forget to send along some money with your children this Friday so they can buy something great for their dads at the Father’s Day Stall. We look forward to this being a huge success and by only selling fair-trade and locally made items, we also hope to bring attention to the need for all of us to think about how our consumer choices impact the lives of others. Dads – enjoy your special day on Sunday!

Parent Partnership

Last week we held the last of our Parent Seminars for the year with many new parents participating. Central to our commitment to parent partnership is making sure that our new parents have the opportunity to understand and discuss some of the key values and ideas that shape our understanding of Christian education. We want to make sure that our common purpose is well understood, has a shared language and an agreed outworking in the life of our community. Our Parent Seminars are just one way that we seek to do this.

Another important way we partner with parents is by conducting parent-teacher meetings. These provide parents and teachers the opportunity to make sure they are on the ‘same page’ when it comes to the learning of each child. Expectations are made clear, strategies shared and encouragement offered. This happens both ways in these important conversations. We look forward to seeing you over the coming weeks.

In 1985, Jean Blackburn, the chairperson of the ministerial review of post-compulsory schooling committee, published her report. Of the 45 recommendations made, the most significant was the abolishment of the one year High School Certificate (HSC) and replacing it with a single two year certificate, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). The new certificate was to address issues of poor retention rates, educational disadvantage and equity and social inclusivity. Access to this certificate was to be via the ‘satisfactory completion’ of learning outcomes within each unit studied. This was a significant and just innovation compared to the five exams (each 3 hours long) that a student had to pass in order to gain his or her HSC.

Having experienced the devastating consequences of students who had failed HSC exams and hence not achieved their certificate, the VCE certificate is a much fairer alternative. Employers as well as the tertiary sector supported this certificate. Unlike the HSC where many students would cram a month or so before exams, the VCE requires solid, consistent work over the whole academic year and in this way it mirrors working life and tertiary study.

However, because of a shortage of tertiary places and a greater number of applicants for these places, the results of VCE assessment (exams and internal tasks or SACs) are used to construct a tertiary entrance rank (ATAR). Sadly, this has led schools to be judged, not on their ability to educate students to be just and productive members of society, but rather on the school’s average ATAR and the tertiary institutions that their students are able to access. Here at MECS, while ATARs are important, we need to always keep in mind our mandate to equip disciples of Jesus within the framework of the VCE.

Dr Roger F
VCE Coordinator

Final performance of ‘Four Funerals and a Wedding’

Tonight! Thursday Sept 1, 7.30pm in the Theatrette

No bookings necessary, entry by gold coin donation.
MECS Notes

Baby Rafael

Congratulations to Daniela and Peter on the arrival of Rafael Kai, born Wednesday August 24, weighing 2.9kg. What a cutie!!

New Asthma App

The new Asthma Australia app brings together a raft of resources in one convenient place to help you ensure your child’s asthma is managed as well as possible. Sections include information on medications, device technique videos and Asthma First Aid in an emergency. The app is free from the iTunes store (Android coming soon).

For secondary aged students: Young people with asthma

Asthma Australia has established a Facebook page, Young People with Asthma – Australia, to provide the latest information and research for these young people and their supporters. We recently commenced posting profiles to share young people’s stories and experiences. Refer to the page for details if you have a child who might want to share their asthma story. We are also setting up a Q&A function where an Asthma Educator will respond to young people’s questions through the page.

For primary aged students: Asthma Kids

Looking for a way to help your child understand more about their asthma or about a friend with asthma? Asthma Kids is an online, interactive tool to help primary school aged children understand what it’s like to have asthma and what they can do to help. Check it out at www.asthmakids.org.au.

Friends of MECS

Cook Off Day - Postponed until next term - Monday, October 17

If you are able to help with cooking on the day, donation of grocery items, or making a cash donation we would really appreciate your support.

Items we need include - Worcestershire sauce, bread crumbs, tins of pineapple pieces, brown sugar, vinegar, tomato sauce, corn flour, tinned tomatoes, chutney, sultanas, arborio rice, large foil containers with lids and 1ltr plastic containers with lids (to freeze meals in).

Father’s Day Stall - This Friday!

We have an amazing range of gifts available for our Dads and all the gifts are Fair Trade or locally made.

Please remember to chat to your children about things their Dad likes, eg favourite chocolate, interests, hobbies etc and send money with them on Friday morning. (See further details below).

Thank you for supporting the stall. We wish all our Dads a wonderful day on Sunday.

Nico
Community Relations Officer

“Think Global and Local” is the theme of our Friends of MECS Father’s Day stall tomorrow, Friday Sept 2

We will have an exciting range of Fair Trade and locally produced items available for purchase at the Father’s Day stall on Friday 2 Sept. Gifts will range from $2 - $15.

Primary School students will be taken by their class teacher to purchase their gifts.

Please have your child's money in a named envelope; coins or small notes are preferable.

Senior School students can come to the PUMP room at lunchtime and Middle School students can come at 1.30pm (start of period 6).

Melba Service

As mentioned previously in MECS Matters, a group of Year 10 students from Ranges TEC have been working at Melba Services in Lilydale as part of their service project, constructing a concrete slab, erecting a small garden shed and designing and building a fence. The aim is to be working alongside people with disabilities, which has been great in developing their own growth and maturity. The work has proceeded - here is the finished fence!
More from Year 9 Industry Week

During the recent Middle School Special Week, Year 9 Open Village had their ‘Industry experience’. The students took on different roles to create their own company. We applied for these pretend jobs, writing up our own resumes and cover letters for the desired roles (after some very helpful seminars run by teachers) and then attending interviews. Each of us were given an important role to play in the company according to our individual skills.

Each department put their minds and hands to work, generating wonderful ideas and then creating excellent merchandise. Devotions were held each morning to encourage and involve the company employees which the General Manager presented. We also had a quote of the day to inspire our work ethic and team involvement.

All the work throughout the week led up to a couple of events, one of them being the Thursday night showcase evening. On Thursday night we had live music (courtesy of Lance), stalls full of handmade gifts, free food, a photo booth, a raffle and other games. All together the night was very successful and heaps of fun. The second event our company planned was a ‘Gourmet Luncheon’ postponed from Friday to the following Wednesday thanks to no water. People from Senior School and Middle School gathered together to enjoy good food, a beautiful environment and great company.

With lots of leftover products that needed selling our Sales and Media team and I (again with help) held stalls after school at the office and Primary School. These were very popular and a great opportunity for the Primary School to get in on the action!

At the end of it all, it was time to count up our profits. Our Management decided to donate the money to Baptist World Aid to buy some of the care packages including a gift to get a child out of the human trafficking cycle.

Despite our issues and many obstacles our strong respectful foundation got us through. Industry week has been quite the experience and I am so pleased with everybody’s achievements.

Jemimah
General Manager

MECS Notes

Are things changing for your family next year?

If your changes mean that your children will not be attending MECS in 2017, please remember that you need to provide one full term’s notice, in writing, of your intention to withdraw your children from the school, or pay a term’s fees in lieu of this notice. Even if you are not completely sure whether you will be here next year, please let me know.

Feel free to contact me to discuss your children’s enrolment via email or via the main office.

Natasha
Enrolments & Office Manager

MECS Jobs

There are currently four jobs being advertised on the MECS website: a Secondary maths teacher position, two Ranges TEC positions and a part-time Learning Assistant Position.

See the website for more information.

Student Stationery Lists

Stationery lists for 2017 were distributed on Monday. Please ensure your child checks their notice tray if they have not yet brought it home. All orders are due to be handed in to the main office by the last day of term, Friday September 16. No late orders can be accepted after the due date. Spare copies of the lists will be available to download from the website in the ‘Resources’ section / Download Centre / Student Stationery Lists.

Cassie
Receptionist

Gawa Christmas Gifts

As mentioned in the letter home about the Gawa Christmas project, the Primary School is organising gifts for the Gawa school. Each child and staff member at Gawa Christian School will once again receive a Christmas gift bag with some homemade goodies, cards, letters and gifts from MECS. For most of these children this is the only Christmas gift they will receive.

Please forward all gifts to either your child’s class room or the main office. The gifts need to arrive at MECS by tomorrow - Friday September 2 ready for packing and postage the following week.

Note that each year level has been given suggestions for gifts so that our gift giving this year will be more intentional.

Thanks in anticipation.

Di
Assistant Principal - Primary
K4 Traffic School Visit

The 4 year old kindergarten children headed off last Wednesday to the Kew Traffic School to learn about crossing the road safely and to ride bikes around the mini village, using the traffic lights and practising the rules they have been learning.

Did you know you have to be 10 years old to cross a road by yourself?

Did you know that the law states that you must be 12 years old and/or 145cm tall to sit in the front seat of the car? If you are under this height you are in danger of serious injury from seatbelt or airbags!

We learnt about why we alight from the left side of the car (the safety door) and how to tighten a bike helmet appropriately. Most of all you could hear the children shout ‘STOP, LOOK, LISTEN, THINK’ before you cross the road. Some children preferred to just practise crossing with the lights, others showed us their skills when riding the bikes, stopping at the red lights and at pedestrian crossings. Once again we say thank you to our parent helpers, whose contributions make all the difference toward a safe and wonderful sunshine-filled day!

ThingleToodle

As a follow up to this session we were very excited to have ThingleToodle, the Road Traffic Mascot, come to our Kinder on Monday with ‘Professor E. Speriment’ to present their road safety education program. The children were asked to ‘teach’ ThingleToodle, who is only 4 years old, the safety rules to use when crossing the road. The children sang the songs, laughed at his jokes and were confirmed in their learning about Traffic safety in a very engaging way. Thank you also to our Year 10 student Bethany and Koala parent Sarah who were willing to dress up as ThingleToodle for us!

Wendy
Early Years Coordinator

Healesville Sanctuary

What I liked most about Healesville Sanctuary was the people. The workers we met were really nice and helpful.

Riley

The best part was they allowed people to feed the animals, mainly the birds. This meant we got to be more involved.

Gabe

The thing I liked most was the birds because they landed on you and you could feed them nectar. Some have nice pretty rainbow colours. The helmeted honey eater was my favourite but it was very territorial and sometimes it attacked you.

Lily

What I liked most about our excursion was seeing all the animals. The koalas were my favourite. We got to see the koala show and saw how it lives in a tree branch.

Bailey

On the excursion, I really liked the kangaroos and the helmeted honeyeater. I liked the kangaroos because they were adorable and ever so fluffy. Also because when they hopped they looked so funny, they even acted like humans. I really loved the helmeted honey eaters because one landed on me and gently pecked me. They were so cute and tiny. I really loved it all!

Chloe

On the excursion, I really liked the reptile house with the jungle carpet python and lizard that tried to climb a wall. It looked like it was dancing. The best thing I learnt was that the helmeted honeyeater was attracted to shiny things. I was really amazed that there was a dog in the dingo cage!

Kip
Musical Showcase

What a wonderful celebration of Music, Art and Performing Arts we had last Thursday evening at our first Creative Arts Showcase!

It was fantastic that our students from throughout the whole school got to perform to a packed house of encouraging and enthusiastic family, friends and teachers!

There were many outstanding items but a few highlights include - our very expressive Primary Choir, Millie's rendition of Bjork's classic "It's oh so quiet" and the 3 solo performances from our Year 12 students Jess, Katie and Sophia.

Congratulations to all performers on excellent performances!

Thank you to the key staff that collaborated with me to make this event happen - Scott, Chris, Simon, Olivia, Alison and Anne-Maree for your faithful contribution and support in building the Arts at MECS. Thank you also to our Instrumental Staff, Administration and Maintenance teams - you are so treasured!

Annora
Instrumental Coordinator

Year 10 - To Kill a Mockingbird

During English we have been studying the Harper Lee novel, To Kill a Mockingbird. Leading up to writing a responsive essay on the book, we have been focusing on topics such as prejudice, bravery and education. We have been doing group activities to plan and assist our writing. We take turns each week to approach the novel in a different way, whether that's pulling out quotes and words, summarising chapters or even illustrating a picture.

My picture was based on a 'scene' in the novel when Jem and Scout (main characters) built a snowman, with the very little snow, in the fictitious hometown of Maycomb. As they are building the snowman dirt shows through, and they mention how it looks like a person of colour, (demonstrating the racism at that time).

Tiana

I drew my artwork about a character in the novel called Boo Radley. He was a peculiar character because not many people knew about him and he stayed inside his house in solitude most of the time. According to the local townsfolk, he was once cutting up newspaper and then drove the scissors into his father's leg as he walked past. This really stuck out to me as it was a very peculiar scene. I chose only black and white so these colours could represent bleakness and the bland or dull world that Boo lives in. I tried to make it uneasy for the viewer to look at because it is a weird scene.

Micah
### Experienced Babysitter

I am a responsible, caring 18 year old with a licence. I have 4 years experience looking after children ages 1-13. References available on request. Flexible availability - day or night, $10/hour. Ring Kate Willcox 0411 020 434.

### Free Family Fun Day

Aiming to connect families with local services including services for young people with disabilities.

Thursday September 29, 11am–3pm, Yarra Centre (2435 Warburton Highway, Yarra Junction).

Jumping Castle, Silent Disco, giveaways, BBQ, facepainting, arts & crafts, free swimming and learn to swim assessments and so much more!

### Mount Evelyn Toy Library

The Mount Evelyn Toy Library presents ‘The Amazing Drumming Monkeys’ on Saturday September 17, 10.30am (start) at the Mount Evelyn Public Hall, Birmingham Rd, Mount Evelyn. Join us for this fun, family friendly event where two adorable and very talented monkey puppets play drums, lead audiences in songs and dance and perform special tricks. All songs are upbeat and appeal to all ages with actions for children to be involved. The show features positive messages including getting along with everyone and caring for our environment. This show is recommended for ages 2-8. Tickets $6. For more information please visit our website www.mtevelyntoylibrary.org.au.

### Apple Man

The Apple Man is coming tomorrow - Friday Sept 2 and the following varieties will be available: Granny Smiths, Fujis, Royal Galas, Pink Ladies and Green Pears. Apples $10 a bag, Pears $8. Please put the correct money in an envelope with your order written on the front, and hand it into the office before 10.30am on Friday Sept 2.

### Resilient Kids Conference

A conference for parents, educators and anyone who works with children and teens. Saturday September 10, Speakers include:

- Steve Biddulph- Raising Happy Children
- Kate Johnston- Navigating the autism journey
- Melinda Tankard-Reist – The Sexualisation of Girls
- Susan McLean- Cyber safety concerns
- Sharon Witt- Raising resilience in children & teens
- Jules Haddock- Helping your child manage anxiety

Still some tickets available at: www.resilientkidsconference.com.au

Tickets are $59 for the full day (not including food)

Sharon
Middle School Teacher