ISSUE 2-5

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Our Vision
Mercy Regional College serves a wide rural community which values growth and diversity in Catholic Education in the Mercy tradition.

Our Mission
In the Spirit of the Gospels we commit ourselves to the core values of community, inclusiveness, learning, care, justice and mercy, excellence and achievement.

Our Focus for 2007
Community
Through the Mercy tradition we promote the uniqueness of the community and its heritage.

Post Year 12 Destination Information 2007
This week the major metropolitan newspapers published information relating to the destination of our graduating class for 2006. This information is part of a large amount of data that is generated each year and published. While at times this information can be useful, it is important that the information is read carefully and analysis in the right way. The generalisation of such data can be misleading. We need to be careful. For Mercy Regional College the information that was published provides us with some very positive news about our graduates. Mercy was among only a few schools across the state, where 100% of our students who applied for a tertiary placement received one. The other pleasing information related to the number of our students who are now either in education and training or full time employment. There is now doubt that the staff of the College through their hard work and dedication have ensured that all our students have had very positive outcomes since leaving the College.

Reporting on School Performance to the School Community
From 2007, schools are required by law to comply with an Australian Government requirement to report on school performance to all parents. The Australian Government requires secondary schools to report to their communities via at least thirteen items of school performance as listed below:

(i) Staff attendance
(ii) Staff retention
(iii) Teacher qualifications
(iv) Expenditure and teacher participation in professional learning
(v) Student attendance
(vi) Proportion of students meeting national benchmarks at Year 7
(vii) Changes in national benchmarks at Year 7
(viii) Value added
(ix) Average standardized results at Year 9
(x) Senior Secondary outcomes
(xi) Year 9-12 student retention
(xii) Post-school destinations
(xiii) Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

I am pleased to attach with this newsletter a copy of this report in relation to the 2006 school year for Mercy Regional College.

Another requirement placed on the school is for the report to be made available in two different forms. Therefore, a copy will be placed on the College’s website along with the copy that has been provided with this newsletter.

GAT/ Exams
Last Thursday our students studying VCE/VET sat the General Achievement Test. Last week and this week our Year 10 -12 students have completed various mid-year examinations. We pray that each student has put their best effort into these exams and that good results will follow. Staff are busily completing end-of-semester reports which will be mailed home on the last day of classes Friday 29th June. Parents of VCE students are also advised that Parent/Student/Teacher interviews will be held on Thursday 19th July, the first week back of Term 3.
Enrolments Year 7 2008
Many enrolments are currently coming in for our year 7 classes next year. Once again indications are that all our Year 7 places will be filled quickly. The College will need to make certain decisions about the number of Year 7 classes in the near future. I urge all parents to complete enrolment forms as soon as possible so that initial planning for 2008 can commence. Enrolments for 2008 close on 29th June, 2007.

Letter regarding State Government Funding
In the last newsletter, I included a copy of a letter regarding the funding of Catholic Schools by the State Government and information regarding the recent State budget to inform the wider Mercy community that in Victoria Catholic schools receive $578 less per child each year than children being educated in Catholic Schools in New South Wales. I am please to say that during the week I received a letter and information from Mr Peter Ryan leader of the National Party in relation to their policy of funding non government schools. I provide this information for your consideration:

More than one-third of students in Victoria attend a non-government school. Victorian Government education policies must recognise the significant role non-government schools play and their contribution to achieving the community’s educational goals.

State funding of non-government schools in Victoria is well below the national average. While Victorian has the highest proportion of students attending non-government schools, the share of the education budget allocated to non-government schools is lower than every other State except Tasmania.

As noted above non-government school students still do not enjoy the same access to school bus or special needs services as government school students

The Nationals will:
- Increase State Government funding to Victorian non-government schools so that the average funding per student is at least equal to that provided by other State Governments
- Work with the non-government sector to establish a new funding formula, based on a percentage of recurrent costs at equivalent government schools but with an additional needs-based component to provide extra support for disadvantaged non-government schools.
- Provide free bus transport for all students attending their nearest non-government school.

I look forward to receiving responses from the other political parties in relation to the government funding of Catholic Schools which I will be more than happy to publish in forthcoming newsletters

Parents as Career Transition Support – (PACTS)
This year in conjunction with the South West Local Learning and Employment Network the College is pleased to offer parents (mainly Year 9 & 10) Parents as Career Transition Support (PACTS) Workshops to be held at Mercy Regional College on Monday 13th and 20th August 2007. All workshops will be held from 7.00pm to 9.00pm and places are limited to 12-14 per workshop.

The PACTS project is a series of workshops and resources developed to provide parents with up-to-date information about career transitions that enables parents to support their child effectively when they’re making career transition decisions. A set of two workshops are offered that aim to provide basic information to bridge the gap between what parents did when they left school and what happens when children leave school now.

Some of the workshops topics include:
- Learning to use the job guide
- Simple careers assessment tools
- Understanding the Job Network, New Apprenticeships and Group Training
- What are VET, VCAL, and VCE?
- Communicating with teenagers about career transition
- Career services at school and outside
- Further education options
- Preparing for employment

Key features of a PACTS workshop:
- Interactive facilitated workshops with limited visual aids – the focus is on discussion and participation
- Workshops are limited to two hours duration
- Maximum of 12 parents in a group
- PACTS Liaison parent – the connection between school, PACTS and parents
- Simple, easy to understand workshop handbook
- Networking and forming relationships with other parents
- Increased understanding about the school, its people and services.

If you are interested in being part of the PACTS workshop, please register your interest by phoning the College on 5593 2011

Commencement of Term 3
Term 2 will conclude on Friday 29th June at 2.00pm. Term 3 will commence for students on Tuesday 17th July, 2007. I hope that all families enjoy the school holidays and return to school refreshed for the beginning of the new semester.
It has been a long term and the break will be very welcomed by both staff and students.

The later start for term 3 allows the staff of Mercy Regional College to gather for a day in Melbourne to reflect on the life and work of Mother Ursula Frayne and the many sisters of Mercy who have followed her. This day is being facilitated by Sr Mary Dennett. The theme for our time together will be “Our heritage our community - LIVING OUR VISION”. This theme ties in with our particular focus in 2007 which is part of the College’s Vision and Mission Statement. The program will follow the lives and work of the Sisters of Mercy who first arrived in Australia in Fremantle through to the establishment of Catholic Education in Camperdown, Terang and Mortlake. Staff will be asked to reflect on a number of questions during our time in Melbourne. The day will see us visit The Academy of Mary Immaculate, the first school founded by Mother Ursula Frayne 150 years the Mercy Congregation Centre in Alphington.

- How has our past history shaped us?
- What of the past do we want to take into the future?
- Would Catherine McAuley and Mother Ursula Frayne be proud of the College they see today?
- Have we remained true to their legacy and our heritage?
- What does it mean to be women and men of Mercy?
- Is the Spirit of Mercy a lived reality at the College?

These are big questions but ones that must be asked as we move forward into the future. Our time away will provide our staff with the opportunity to reflect and ponder upon our role as Catholic educators working within Catholic Education in the Mercy tradition. It will also be a welcome opportunity to spend some time on the religious dimension of our school as much of the past few weeks have been spent preparing and correcting exams and writing reports while we continue to implement VELS.

**Coming Events**

**Friday 29th June**
- Term 2 concludes
- Semester 1 reports mailed out
- Year 7 2008 enrolments close

**Monday 16th July**
- Staff Professional Development Day
  - Mercy Ethos (Melbourne)

**Tuesday 17th July**
- Students commence Term 3

**Thursday 19th July**
- VCE Parent/Student/Teacher Interviews

**Wednesday 25th July**
- Year 10 Retreat commences
- Grade 5/6 Transition

**Thursday 26th July**
- Year 10 Retreat
- Grade 5/6 Transition

**Friday 27th July**
- Year 10 Retreat concludes

ANDREW WATSON
PRINCIPAL

**Mercy Awards**

**VCE (Yr 11 & 12) Mercy Award**

Amy Unwin for her successful nomination for school based apprentice of the year

**Middle School (Yr 9 & 10) Mercy Award**

Amy Walsh for speaking to Year 7’s about her overseas travels as part of the SOSE program.

**Junior School (Yr 7 & 8) Mercy Award**

Nathan Sargeant and Nick Bourke for helping out in the woodwork area on Open Night.
**Bus Travellers**

At Mercy Regional College, we rely heavily on our bus system that has been in place since the commencement of the College. However, it has come to our attention that there have been incidents on the bus that students use to travel to and from the O’Keeffe Campus to the McAuley Campus, and from the O’Keeffe Campus to Terang. These incidents include objects being thrown inside the bus and vandalism of the seating.

Whilst it is important to recognise that the vast majority of students use this service responsibly and show great respect towards the drivers and the bus property, we are nevertheless very disappointed and concerned about the incidents that have been brought to our attention.

All students who use this transport service undertake to do so responsibly, and the continued use of the service is the responsibility of all.

We would encourage students to report immediately, any damage to bus property or if they notice any damage, to bring it to the attention of the driver. Students are also encouraged to report confidentially, any information about incidents on the bus to the driver or to a College staff member. In this way, students will continue to enjoy the convenience of the service and the well deserved excellent reputation they have as bus travellers.

We would appreciate your support in this matter by discussing with your child the importance of safe travelling on buses and the reporting of incidents and/or damage immediately to the driver or staff member.

Thank you from -
Mr Kerin Glennen  
Mr Michael Goss  
Deputy Principal  
Head of O’Keeffe Campus

**From the Wellbeing Coordinator**

Kerin Glennen

**Alcohol and your child: Harm minimisation**

As parents, family or community members we can help to increase the safe use of alcohol by young people.

**Some of tips for parents**

- Talk to your children about what is important to them and their plans in life.
- Know who your child’s friends and parents are.
- Start discussions about alcohol and drugs and there effect on young bodies.
- Know where your child is..... it’s OK to insist on this as a safety measure.
- Talk about ways of getting home safely from parties (walking late at night is not a good option) and other places where alcohol may be used. Do this BEFORE your child leaves for the occasion.
- Provide money for a taxi.
- Plan for your child to stay at a friends place and follow this up with a phone call to the parents.
- Harm minimisation is as much about preventing anticipated harm as reducing actual harm.
- Party planning...talk with other parents about providing a safe environment at a party alcohol is not the be all for a good party.
- If you are planning a party talk to other parents who have hosted one. Their experience can help a lot when you are planning a party.
- Encourage car pooling to parties and other events. This not only shares the work load but is supportive of other parents and families. It also helps you to keep in contact with people your child may mix with.

**Parties / Alcohol and the Law:**

Regarding unlicensed parties, there is some risk of legal liability attached to the provision of alcohol to party guests and in particularly those under the age of 18 years. Teenage parties are a dilemma for parents. We want our children to have fun and learn social skills, but no one wants drunken behaviour, property damage, personal injury and gatecrashers to be the outcome of such a party. Yet young people often want to have alcohol available.

**Social Justice Report**

Dear parents and students,

My name is Kelsey Pekin and I would like to share some information about Social Justice.

In Social Justice this term we are all about trying to make our school and the local communities safer and cleaner. At the moment we are working on a recycling project to keep our school clean and help keep the environment free from pollution. We are trying to find out ways to make it just that little bit of fun so people will get involved and start recycling. We are also collecting old mobile phones and printer cartridges, and then we will send them off and they will get recycled. For every mobile sent in before the 30th June a new tree will be planted thanks to Mobile Muster (recycling company). There are many more things we are trying to improve on like, raising money and clothes for the poor and sending people to the Edmunds Rice Camps for the children and families who do not have the opportunity to have holidays. I hope you have learnt a bit from this, and hope you get involved

Please send your old mobile phones or printer cartridges to school if you have any- there will a box in the library. Thank-you
Deap parents and students,
My name is Siobhan Bond

I’m apart of the social justice committee. In the social justice committee we try to accomplish things to make or school and community a happy clean and safe environment. This semester we have a few main goals to achieve they are raise money for the St Vincent DePaul Winter Blanket Appeal, collect old mobile phones and ink cartridges to give to the Australian Post, also start a recycling program. Last but not least the Edmund Rice projects in the developing countries over seas such as Africa. Social justice is about making the world a better place for every one.

Student Brief
As a part of the Social Justice committee we are collecting old mobile phones and empty printer cartridges. It would be appreciated if u have any lying around the house could you please bring them to a box that will be in the library.
Thank you for your co-operation.

Year 9 Happenings
Report by: Matthew Moloney and Joe Gleeson

On Friday the 1st of July the year 9 S.R.C members and other students from the class went to the Camperdown golf club for a youth forum. There were other schools from the district including Derrinallum, Cobden, Camperdown College and Timboon. Every school had about ten students representing them. A lady called Lisa came to talk to us about things that we could do for our town and what we could do to make the town that we live in a better place to live. Lisa presented a number of things we could use to improve youth related activities in this region. It was a very educational and fun day where we had a chance to meet other students and leaders in the community.

On the 5th of June the year 9 students went on camp to Melbourne. When we first go there we went to the University of Melbourne for a CSIRO program. Afterwards we went for a tour of Brunswick St with our personal guide Mr Staunton. Then we headed to the hostel in north Melbourne to drop our things off. That night we went to the state parliament and had a tour with our local representative John Vogels. Afterwards we had a walk through south bank at night. On the 2nd day we want to the Shrine of remembrance. We participated in a short service and some activities. Afterwards we had lunch in the park. We then went to the State library and saw Ned Kelly’s armour. Afterwards we went to the old Melbourne gaol for a tour. Afterwards we got some free time in Bourke Street Mall. We then left to have a nice dinner at Lygon Street. Afterwards we went to Melbourne aquatic centre to participate in the wipe-out program where we went on the slide, the diving boards and in the wave pool. The next day we went to the national art gallery of Victoria where we had a tour and also went to federation square. We then spent some time in the Queen Victoria market. Then we left for home. All in all it was a very enjoyable camp. Thank you to all the teachers who supervised us.

On the 26th of June the year 9 students will be having a shared lunch at Noorat campus. We will all be bringing something to share in our groups. It will hopefully be an enjoyable day.

The PAL program was introduced to the year 9’s this year. At the start of the year all the year 9’s were trained to be PAL leaders. Throughout the year all of the year 9 students will have a chance to visit St Thomas’, St Pats or St Colman’s to spend an hour doing activities with the year 5 and 6 students.

The year 9 students have recently been competing in the HSSA football and netball competition. This took place at the Terang rec reserve. With all student having an enjoyable day.
From the Director of Learning and Teaching
Careers Report
Mrs. Lisa Pope

Monash University
Experience Monash - This program is aimed at students in Year 10, 11 or 12. It aims to introduce students to study opportunities and experiences available at the Clayton and Caulfield campuses. Parents are also invited to attend. Participants can stay for the whole day or only register for sessions of interest. Date is 9th of July. To book online or for more information on sessions go to their website www.monash.edu.au/study/events/experience/

Deakin University
Bachelor of Nursing Course Information Seminar
Deakin University’s school of nursing (Warrnambool Campus) invites interested students to attend a nursing Course Information session. Friday 13th July @7.30pm. For further enquiries on the session you can contact Monica at their Office on 5563 3374.

Melbourne University
The University of Melbourne’s Open day is on Sunday 19th of August between 10.00am and 4.00pm. To register an interest in this day and to generate a customised itinerary go to the following website http://openday.unimelb.edu.au

Year 12 VTAC Application Process
Just a reminder from the 30th July (9am) - 28th September (5pm) is when VTAC applications are open. Over the holidays it is worth looking at the VTAC website www.vtac.edu.au, especially the Year 12 applicant area (which has information on applying, the ENTER, entrance requirements etc) and also the Course search area - where you can find out information on a previous courses ENTER, prerequisites etc for TAFE and University courses of interest to you. The VTAC guide for 2008 will be available on Monday 30th of July. Timely applications for Year 12 students is $23.00

Westvic Workforce

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To find out any more information on any of these current vacancies please contact David Gladman at Westvic Workforce on 5561 9000

** PERFECT STUDENTS LAPTOP **
Ultra Portable Sony Laptop - Top of the Range.
A top line model from Sony that is no larger than a portable CD player! RRP of these units is over $3500.
Core Solo Processor, 768Mb Ram, 40gb HDD, 11.1" Widescreen, CDRW, DVD Player, Webcam, Windows XP.
The unit is tiny and weighs only a little over 1kg making it perfect for taking everywhere.
Please call Daniel at the school for details ... Only $1200.00 ONO.

MRC PTFA
CHOCOLATE FUNDRAISER

REMINDER
A box of 48 chocolate frogs will be sent home with the youngest child in each family next week.
Each box will have your child’s name on it and an envelope will be enclosed for payment to be returned to the school. Please don’t forget to put your name on the envelope.
The chocolate frogs are to be sold for $1.00 each and the money (and any unsold chocolates) are to be returned to the office no later than Friday 27th July.
We encourage all families to sell at least one box of chocolates as this is a very profitable fundraiser for the school, for every box sold half the money goes to the College.
The upcoming school holidays would be a great opportunity for students to sell some chocolate frogs to their family, friends and neighbours.
We very much appreciate your support for our school fundraising.
Anne Carr – Secretary PTFA
From the Head of Sport
Darren Cheeseman

HSSSA Netball Report

Last Thursday the 14th June two teams represented Mercy Regional College at the HSSSA Hampden Cup Netball in Terang.

The A Grade team consisted of Ebony Boyd, Lauren Field, Rebecca Van Den Eynde, Megan Bullen, Jordan Clarke, Alexandra Harry, Kate Moloney, Lauren Carlin and Lucia McSween. This team finished in third position with two wins and two losses.

The B Grade team consisted of Megan Johnstone, Samantha Meade, Grace Heffernan, Amy Smart, Rachael Steel, Amy Henry, Natalie Fleming, Taylor Harlock and Lucy Keough. This team also finished in third and ended the day with one win, two losses and a draw. Well done to all girls for their efforts.

Thanks to both Loreto Milbourne and Cherolyn Bullen for giving up their time to coach the girls on the day and also to Hayley Munro and Jessica Van Den Eynde for assisting and umpiring on the day.

### A GRADE

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Hampden Cup Football

Last Thursday saw the final day of competition for the Hampden Cup Football. After the first day MRC were one win and 1 loss. Therefore to win the competition it would need to win both games and also for other schools to lose. MRC performed really well and defeated Camperdown College by 44 points and then in the final game defeated Terang College by 58 points. These results meant that MRC and Timboon College finished on 3 wins each, but Timboon's superior percentage got them over the line. Well done to all of the boys that represented the school and also to James Castles for his coaching and to Ricky Sullivan who assisted on the day.

### Winners:

- **Timboon** 3 wins 266%
- **MRC** 3 wins 185%
- **Cobden Tech** 2 wins 121%
- **Terang** 2 wins 120%
- **Camperdown** 0 wins 15%
Safety Tips for Kids and Teenagers

A few simple tricks will help you enjoy your time on the Internet. Discuss these ideas with your friends and see if there are any more that you can come up with.

- Always be alert when on the Internet – while there are some excellent sites to visit there are also some bad ones like pornography, animal cruelty and hate sites.

- If something appears on your screen that disturbs you, tell your friends, a teacher or parent or phone the NetAlert help line on 1800 880 176 or email on enquiries@netalert.net.au for some advice on what to do.

- Remember you will not get into any trouble by letting people know what you have stumbled across.

- If you hear or see your friends getting into places that look unsuitable, remind them of the potential dangers and advise them on how to get out of the site.

- Keep all personal information to yourself (including photos, your name, the name of your school, the name of your family members and your phone number). Strangers might use your personal information in a way that you never intended them to.

- “Chat Rooms” are great ways to talk to people but be aware that some people in them are not who they say they are. If someone or something disturbs you in a “Chat Room”, leave and find another one where there are people you like. Talk to your parents, carers or teachers about advice on how to deal with “Stranger Danger”.

- Remember not everything you read on the Internet is true. Be smart and make decisions for yourself on what you think is right and wrong.

- Be careful downloading free games or files. Sometimes people can trick you into clicking on a link that sends you to an “Unsafe Zone” or makes your computer download a “Virus”.

- Only give your mobile phone number to your family and friends and if you start getting upsetting or annoying text messages, tell a teacher or parent.

- Always seek help from adults or friends. Mum and dad might not know as much about the Internet as you, but they know about life and together you can work out any problem that you might encounter when online.
Internet and mobile phone safety

presenter

Greg Gebhart, NetAlert
Australia’s Internet Safety Advisory Body

Greg Gebhart is an experienced educator of over 20 years being recognised with national education awards. His presentations are easy to understand, thorough, non-technical and enjoyable.

In his presentation Greg will cover a range of issues which may affect your children and then provide you with strategies you can use to minimize the dangers. The issues include:

- The online exploitation of children by paedophiles
- Exposure to illegal and inappropriate content
- Advertising and marketing practices that increase the vulnerability of children
- Increasing trends such as cyber bullying and cyber-stalking
- Helping parents understand the ways children use the Internet
- New mobile technologies (such as iPods and camera phones) and how to deal with unsavoury content

Free resources for parents are provided at the end of the presentation and there is the opportunity for you to discuss with Greg specific issues you may be having at home.

The details for the Net Alert presentation are:

Date: Thursday 26 July 2007
Time: 9.30am – 11am School Staff; 7pm – 8.30pm for Parents and Staff
Venue: Red Lion, Sovereign Park Motor Inn, Main Rd, Ballarat.
Cost is free.

Registration for schools is on the CEO website. Registration for parents is via email jvanseln@ceo.balit.catholic.edu.au or by phoning 5337 7135 stating number attending and which session.
Any queries phone Jac Van Velsen Ph: 03 – 5337 7135
Females 12-26 years

The link between cervical cancer and HPV (human papillomavirus)

REGISTER YOUR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST NOW

We need to know how much vaccine to order for this age group. Your details will not be required – we only need numbers. Please phone the Shire and register your interest – we will be holding public sessions in July.