ISSUE 1-3

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 2011
Through the Mercy tradition we seek to act with love, fairness, tolerance and compassion to all.

Prayer
Loving God, we have entered the time of Lent. May we journey with Jesus in our weaker times. May he bring his Spirit into the dark places of our hearts and lives. As we discover our weakness in temptation, may we know the depth of your love enfolding us. We ask this in Jesus’ name confident that you will hear us.
Amen

Last Wednesday, as a College community, we celebrated the commencement of the school year and of the sacred season of Lent. The theme of the Commencement Mass celebrated by our College chaplains, Fr Eugene McKinnon and Fr Matthew Thomas reflected that we come together, ‘On Good Ground’. It is an idea that offers much. Indeed, as we travel to school each morning in Camperdown and Noorat we are on good ground, buildings and classrooms rich with the opportunities for learning and growth. Yet, the real depth to the theme is the richness that is to be found in the ‘good ground’ of the Christian story. Lent provides the chance for all to stop, reflect, go without or simply to give in the hope that, through these simple actions, the joy of the coming Easter event fills us anew.

James spoke briefly but meaningfully about the challenges and rewards of Year 12 and his speech is included on page four of this newsletter.

My School 2 Website
On March 4th, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, otherwise known as ACARA, launched a new version of the My School website – My School 2 (www.myschool.edu.au).

The My School website is an Australian Government initiative that brings together NAPLAN data and other information with a view to allowing parents and other interested parties to compare the results of a range of schools.

Two significant additions have been made to the revised website:
- My School 2 can track trends in NAPLAN results over time (from 2008 – 2010);
- The website now provides a range of financial information about schools. It includes recurrent income and capital expenditure, broken down into various sources, both total and per student. It is important to note that taking into account all sources of funding Catholic schools cost less per student than government or independent schools, both in Victoria and nationally.

In each of the last three years, Victorian Catholic schools as a whole scored well above national and state averages on NAPLAN tests. Student performance on NAPLAN in Victorian Catholic schools was also generally higher than that in statistically similar schools in most domains in all year levels.
I hope to reflect further on the Mercy Regional College data and encourage parents to view the website themselves. Our Deputy Principal - Learning and Teaching, Lisa Pope has written an article later in this newsletter which highlights some of the limitations of the My School data and website.

Catholic School Funding
Early last year, the Federal Government launched a broad review into the funding of schools across Australia. Now known as the Gonski Review, the review is inviting submissions from the public on a number of issues on education, school funding and community and family engagement. Given the importance of government funding for all schools including this College, I encourage interested parents and members of the school community to explore the review on its website [www.deewr.gov.au/fundingreview](http://www.deewr.gov.au/fundingreview) Submissions to the review close on 31st March.

Student Achievements
Within the College, a number of students have achieved significant milestones in the last few weeks:

- Elizabeth Smart (11B) received a Spirit of Anzac Award from the Premier, Mr. Ted Baillieu at the Shrine of Remembrance last Friday. As one of the twelve students selected as award winners, Elizabeth will travel to Turkey and France next month to explore the sites integral to building the Anzac legend. I will publish Elizabeth’s winning short story on the ‘Spirit of Anzac’ as we commemorate Anzac Day at the start of Term 2.

- One of the College’s Sports Captains, Stacey Boyd (12A) featured prominently in our local newspapers as the vice-captain of the WDFNL under 17 netball team.

- Mercy Regional College has had great success at recent interschool sporting competitions including the HSSSA swimming carnival and our representatives in the Barwon South West junior golf competition at Colac golf course who have won the right to compete in the State Championships at Royal Melbourne.

- A huge congratulations to the many staff and students who directly and indirectly supported last weekend’s Relay for Life. It is a wonderful charity and the support it receives in the school and local communities says much about our commitment to compassion, justice and hope.

Welcome
I extend a very warm welcome to Mrs. Kylie Broderick who joined the Mercy Regional College staff this week as a new integration aide. Kylie will be familiar to many in the College community and will be working in Student Support predominantly at the O’Keeffe Campus.

Student Support Groups
The first round of student support group (SSG) meetings are underway this week and provide the College and staff with an invaluable opportunity to work with a number of parents and students to best engage and improve learning. Generally, SSG meetings include the Principal or my nominee, the student’s Head of Teaching and Learning, homeroom teacher and other subject teachers. Parents will receive a letter in advance of the meeting and I strongly encourage parents to attend.

Presentation Ball
As we move into March, the College’s Presentation Ball is less than three weeks away. All families with children involved in this year’s Ball received a letter last week that outlined procedures for purchasing tickets and other important matters. Parents are reminded that a maximum of seven tickets may be purchased per child (this allocation does not include those students being presented) of which four tickets are at tables and three at the rear of the hall.

Classroom Interruption
I would like to remind parents that it is not appropriate to ring or visit the College and request that the office staff call your child out of class over the PA system as it is disruptive to classes and learning. Office Staff are permitted to call students over the PA at recess and lunchtime only. If your child has to leave the school for an appointment they must bring a note from home which must be shown to the office staff that morning. They are then required to sign out before leaving. Your cooperation in this matter would be appreciated.

Yours in Mercy,

Darren Egberts
Principal

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Teaching & Learning Report
Mrs. Lisa Pope

With the release of the MySchool 2 website, there has been much talk about how schools are performing. Whilst there is substance behind the use of data to indicate schools performance, this website does not really tell the story behind the data for individual schools and, in particular, for Mercy Regional College.

In 2010, we had 51 students complete their senior school certificate. These certificates were either VCE or VCAL and the results students achieved enabled more than 90% of them to receive their first preference to University, TAFE or Apprenticeship. The VCE data released by VCAA indicated that our students performed well above their expected level of achievement. In fact, this data highlighted that students had greater value adding to their learning compared with 2009 where nine students successfully achieved ENTER’s above 90.

As a VCE teacher, we love to celebrate the students who successfully achieve high results but this celebration is equally as significant for the students who achieve results beyond what they expect. Every student comes through our door with their own story, they have a varied range of abilities, knowledge and skills and the challenge for schools is to help develop these skills and knowledge to support them in life beyond their secondary education. This is our greatest celebration, knowing that we have enabled our students to move to their next stage of life as capable and well-rounded young adults.

Schools often talk about the development of the whole child; this development cannot be measured by data alone. As teachers, we are encouraged to make both formative and summative assessments of our student’s progress. Formative assessment is a form of reflective and observational assessment where teachers make judgements of where a student is ‘at’. The data on the MySchool website provides forms of summative assessment such as NAPLAN data where students sit tests to gain a value of how they performed against a set of standards. Both forms of assessment are valid and when used in conjunction provide a more thorough indication of student performance.

Last year Mercy Regional College provided 118 different combinations of learning pathways at the VCE level for our 134 students; these combinations included students with VCAL and VET subjects. At Year 10, over 90% of our students completed an accelerated program by studying a VCE or VET subject. At this level, our school was able to cater for a variety of learning needs with 56 different pathway combinations for the 75 students enrolled. The opportunities provided to our students for a rural school is very significant and one in which our staff are very proud. Each year, the College reviews these pathways and continues to develop the opportunities available for students. In 2011, our VCE program provides 124 different learning pathways while at Year 10, a significant increase to 67 different learning combinations has occurred.

It is not only through the delivery of our curriculum that we witness the growth of our students. It is also through their participation in the various extracurricular opportunities such as camps, excursions, retreat days, school masses, academic competitions, sports days and work experience that we witness their true growth. So simply put, Mercy is proud of the achievements of our past students and our staff is willing to work hard to support the learning needs of our current students. Yet our focus will always be to develop the ‘whole child’ through our ongoing care and support and continuing to offer a variety of learning experiences.

Wellbeing Report
Mr. Kerin Glennen

Wellbeing Workshop
All Year 9 and 10 students will be attending various activities in periods 1 and 2 on Tuesday 15th March. This is a compulsory experience for all Year 9 and 10 students. The girls will be attending a play titled “The Shape of a Girl” which focuses on the bullying that does occur in this age bracket. The presenter will both challenge and confront the girls about how they treat and support each other. This activity will take place in the stadium from 9:20am until 10:45am.

Whilst this is taking place, the boys will be working with several members of the community regarding what it is like to raise boys and how risk-taking at this age is dangerous (not that it is not at any time). The presenters are a mother who will highlight the challenges and joys of raising boys and Fr Matthew will speak regarding what happens when a risk goes wrong and the affect that this has on family, community and school. The third presenter is a Police Officer who will share some stories from his experiences regarding when boys push the boundaries.

The cost to the students for this experience is $4:00 each payable to the office through the Homeroom “tub” system no later than the 11th of March.

Year 9 Issues day
This is a compulsory activity for all Year 9 students and will take place on Thursday 31st March. Details for Year 9 Issues day are presently being finalised. On the day all Year 9 students will go through the Ambulance Drug and Alcohol Program for Teenagers as well working with Terry Woodcroft Victorian Police Resource Officer. The program provides for the students to hear first hand issues...
Other Important Notices

Students are asked to not bring spray deodorant to school due to the fact that a number of our students suffer from asthma and spray-on deodorant may trigger an asthma attack. Unfortunately for one of our students this has already occurred this year. I would ask parents to supply their sons/daughters with roll on deodorant only. I congratulate students for the way that they wear our uniform and thank parents for supporting them. However, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that boys must wear grey socks for summer and winter uniform. If there is a concern regarding uniform then firstly a note in the student’s diary and then contact is to be made to the Year level coordinator so a solution can be reached. Mercy has a uniform and the expectations are that it is worn correctly which so many of our students do.

Parentline

Parentline provides a 7-day-a-week telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents with children from birth to 18 years. It is a confidential and anonymous service available to all families in Victoria. Professional counsellors are available to discuss issues related to parenting such as sleeping, managing tantrums, teenage conflicts and family relationships. A wide range of positive parenting tip sheets are available on request. Parenting counsellors are able to access the telephone interpreter service if required. Contact us 13 22 89 or go to www.parentline.vic.gov.au

James Lenehan 2010 College Dux Speech

Good morning Fr. Eugene, Fr. Matthew, Dr. Egberts, Staff, Parents and Students.

Firstly I would like to thank all my teachers, who were a tremendous help to me during 2010, all the time and effort they put into our education is very much appreciated. Also to my class mates, who as the current year 12 students will find during this year, are a great source of support and help for the year. And a special thanks to my parents. Without their help and support I would not have been able to attend the many after school classes and revision days throughout the year.

When Dr. Egberts asked me speak at this Mass, he suggested that I talk about my perspective of Year 12. As you can imagine my perspective has changed from when I sat here in this stadium this time last year.

The biggest challenge in Year 12 is finding a balance, you come across many distractions in your time completing VCE and you will have to make many choices about how much time you spend on certain activities. Spending 12 hours a day studying is tiring and ineffective. Then again going out every weekend is not the best choice either. You may also have to factor in sport, part time work and other commitments, as they take a considerable chunk of your time too. Every now and then though, when you know there is no SAC due or required study, don't be afraid to have a night off. Sometimes just the simple things I found were the best relief from study you can find; go for a jog or participate in weekend sport.

Another thing that I found was a huge benefit was to attend as many revision classes as you can. Your teachers put them on for a reason, and give up their own time for you, so take every opportunity they give you. Revision lectures are also invaluable; they give you a different perspective on material and method for questions.

I know Lachie and Lyn have probably drilled this into you but you will be faced with a lot of life altering choices this year. Don’t become too overwhelmed at the prospect. Year 12 can be the best year of your life. You will create memories that will last a lifetime and forge life-long friendships, not only with your class-mates but with the staff.

Even now, at this early stage, it can be useful to set small goals in terms of results for the end of the year. This will help you with your decision making from now until your last exam. Whether getting top marks in a particular SAC or setting a minimum 2 hours a night to study, or aiming for a certain ATAR score. As long as you do your best, strive for what is achievable for you, then that’s all that should be expected.

One last point. On that day in December, when you get your results, some of you may think that luck has played some part. I have a favourite quote that I would like to share with you “Luck is a point in time where preparation meets opportunity”, so no matter what happens during the year, if you do enough preparation for the challenge that is VCE, then luck will be on your side and your results, and the rest of your life, will just fall into place.
Message from the Business Manager

I would like to thank all the families that have returned their Tuition Fee Arrangement Form.

There are still a third of families who have not yet returned their form. The details on this form allow the College to budget our cash flow more effectively and also not to have to contact families unnecessarily regarding unpaid school fees.

Should you have any queries regarding completion of this form, or need another form, please don't hesitate to contact me at the McAuley Campus.

Lynn Wadley

Year 11 Camp
Report by: Rachael Harney

So Wednesday the 23rd of February, a whole bunch of year 11 students jumped on the bus and headed to Melbourne. With a 7.30am start to the trip that meant that by around 10ish we were at RMIT in the city, and ready for the day to begin.

First thing we did was sit in a lecture theatre and listen to 2 ladies from RMIT talk to us about everything that university could offer. They filled us in on the courses they offered, the exchange programs (the idea of going overseas made everyone listen) and many different other points about university life there. We then split up into small groups for a scavenger hunt around the campus which had us running up and down everywhere.

Next we were off to the city campus of ACU (Australian Catholic University) for another talk about that Uni and a tour around the campus. We got to see inside the labs of the health science area which was pretty interesting. The last university that we visited was Melbourne University. We split up into groups again for a guided tour of the large campus and learnt the history of many of the historic buildings.

After that we were headed to the Carlton Baths for a swim and then across the road for some Rock Climbing. The rock climbing was so much fun, but it was such hard work! It was a struggle to get to the top but most of us made it. The best part was coming back down again on the harness!

It was around about 8 o'clock by the time we finally got to our hotel so by the time we listened to the hotel manager explain all the rules and regulations (that took a fair while), and then got our bags up to our rooms, everyone was pretty hungry. So we had a set time to meet back near the hotel and we all went off to have tea. We met back at around 9.30 and caught the bus down to South Bank for a walk. Everyone was exhausted by the end of it so as soon as we got back it was straight to bed!

The next day it was our time to show off our navigating skills in the city! We split up into our coloured groups and each got a set of questions that needed to be answered, but the answers to these questions were spread all over the city and it was our job to direct our way to and from the chosen destinations. This of course involved a lot of walking, but there were no complaints as the sun was out and I think everyone was just enjoying the fact that we weren't at school. We each visited the Mary McKillop center for guided tour and talk, which were very interesting, but then we were keen to get back out and into the city for more exploring. Everyone safely made their way around the city and we all met back at the bus around 3.00pm. The bus ride home gave us all a chance to catch up on what each other had done and saw during the day and before we knew it, we were home.

We didn't have to travel quite as the far the next day, as we headed to Noorat for a day with motivational speaker Shane Garner. First he talked to us about goal setting, having appropriate goals and being leaders, then after our break and a bit of Annette's scrumptious chocolate cake he took us outside for some group activities. These activities made you work as a team and some of them were really challenging. He used those same activities with Collingwood Football Club (they probably would have the same brain development as a group of 16 year olds!) to help them develop team skills. Then we had lunch and had another chat inside about focusing and using your support team to reach your goals.

Overall it was a really good camp. Having the responsibility of directing people through Melbourne was a really great thing to experience, especially for those of us who plan on living in Melbourne after they finish school. And Shane was such a fantastic guy to listen to. He really connected with the group and I think everyone would have taken away something that he said.

Thanks to all the staff that came and made the whole camp so enjoyable! Only one more camp to go now!

Here are some photos of students enjoying the camp in and around the city of Melbourne.
Uniform Shop

NEW TRADING HOURS
Commencing Tuesday 15th March, 2011
Tuesday 10am-2pm
Thursday 10am-2pm

During term two we will be trialing on the first Thursday of each month for the uniform shop to be open at the O’Keeffe campus at the O’Keeffe Campus Noorat. Please note that on this day the Uniform Shop WILL NOT be open in Camperdown.

Also, while at the Noorat campus we will not have access to Eftpos facilities. Payment can only be made by cash, cheque or credit card.

As of the start of the 2011 school year, the following uniform items were made compulsory, these include;
- White shirts Only
- Mercy school back pack
- V-neck navy VCE jumper
- Black mesh PE shorts with logo on the left thigh
- Mesh PE top with Logo

All of these items are available from the uniform shop.

On Thursday 7th April, the last day of Term 1, the uniform shop will be open at the O’Keeffe Campus, Noorat for winter uniform collection the hours are 10.00am-2.00pm. Please email us what you will be requiring to collect on this day. [email: uniform@mercy.vic.edu.au]

On Friday 8th April, Parent Teacher interviews will be held at the McAuley Campus, Camperdown and the uniform shop will be open from 10.00am-2.00pm for winter uniform collection.

The uniform shop will not be open over the Easter holidays, so these are the last two days to purchase winter uniform items.

Regards Katrina & Fiona.

FASHION CLUBWEAR

Head Lice
There have been a couple of reported cases of head lice. To keep the spread of infection to a minimum parents are asked to check their child’s hair as a precautionary measure. If your child is found to have head lice, then action must be taken. Information on how to deal with head lice can be found on the State Government’s Department of Health website [www.health.vic.gov.au](http://www.health.vic.gov.au) type the words HEAD LICE in the search box and click go. This will bring up information relating to the treatment and control of head lice. I would also ask parents to inform their child’s homeroom teacher if their child has head lice. Thank-you for your co-operation in this matter.
Portland Camp Report
By: Lucretia Bell

On the 17th February the first group of the Year 7 students left for Portland. That group was 7A & 7C who made a pit stop to Port Fairy and went on a boat ride and walked to the lighthouse. When that was finished they hopped back on the bus and started to make their way to Portland. When they got there they went to the Portland Aquatic Centre, The War Memorial and the Maritime Centre. Then they went to the accommodation and played Night games and watched a movie “Cool Runnings”.

On the 18th February Years 7B and 7D headed for Portland. Then when group 1 woke up they had breakfast and then the 2nd group showed up. Then we all headed off for the Great South West Walk. The walk lasted 2 hours. At the end EVERYONE was saturated. We all went back to the accommodation and everyone got changed and then Group 1 headed off for Noorat. Then group 2 headed for the Maritime Centre and the War Memorial. Then all of group 2 headed for the Portland Aquatic Centre. We had loads of fun there because the waterslide was open and all of us had at least 2 goes. That was really fun! Then we went back to the accommodation. We hopped into our pyjamas and we watched “Cool Runnings”.

The next day we woke up, we had our breakfast then left our accommodation at 8.00am for Port Fairy. We went on the Boat Ride and that was really cool and then we went for a walk to the lighthouse. After that we went back to Noorat. Overall the camp was really fun and everyone had a great time!! ☺️
From the Director of Religious Education
Mrs. Jo-Anne Saunders

World Day of Prayer
This year World Day of Prayer was coordinated by the people of Chile. World Day of Prayer is a long standing tradition and is a time when people of all nations stop and take time to pray simultaneously. On Friday March 4th at the O’Keeffe campus, we were visited by Mr. Ian Davis and members of the Colac Chilean community. Mario, Maria and Gladys spoke to the Year 7 students about the country of Chile and the geography of the land. They entertained us with lovely traditional singing, brought along some examples of Chilean pottery and art, and were dressed in traditional Chilean riding costumes. The Year 7 students sang along with Gladys to a wonderful tune about a White Horse. Mr. Davis then invited the students to listen to readings from both the Old and New Testament about giving, namely Luke’s Gospel account of feeding the five thousand. Some of the 7B students read a play that emulated the Gospel story of feeding of the five thousand in modern language. Finally we were lead in prayer: after which, Meg Lenehan thanked Mr. Davis, Mario, Maria and Gladys for visiting our campus to pray, sing and laugh together.

Commencement Mass
The Mercy College community reflected on the feast of Ash Wednesday along with a joyful Commencement Mass to celebrate the start to the 2011 school year. It was wonderful to see so many parents and friends of Mercy in attendance. During the Mass, Dr. Egberts was commissioned as the new Principal of Mercy Regional College, the Mercy College staff were bestowed a blessing for their work during the year ahead and our student leaders were called upon to set an example of commitment to the rest of the student community. The class of 2011 was presented with their Year 12 badges and our student leaders including SRC were also presented with their badges. After Mass, the Dux of subjects during the 2010 school year were honored by their awards and invited, along with parents and staff, to a scrumptious morning tea in the multipurpose area which was prepared by Annette Price. We would like to thank Fr Eugene and Fr Matt for celebrating the Mass. Many students were also involved during the Mass and the music was lead beautifully by the choir who has been busy rehearsing since the second week of school. The choir was ably led by Ms. Janet Backhous and Mr. Luke Bourchier. Thanks must go to all staff and students who helped to prepare this special Eucharistic celebration and those who participated on the day also. It was most certainly a team effort and a joyful celebration.

Fundraising for St. Joseph’s Charlton
As we enter into the season of Lent and prepare ourselves for the celebration of Easter, we are called upon, as a community to consider those less fortunate than ourselves at this time. At both the Religious Education faculty meeting and Leadership level, it was decided to focus our Lenten giving to St. Joseph’s school in Charlton, Northern Victoria. St. Joseph’s Primary School was hit hard by the recent floods with 1.4 metres of water, contaminated by sewerage, passing through the school. Students and staff has only just been able to return to their school, having been bussed over to Donald for the first 5 weeks of the academic year. Mr. Frank McGrath, Principal of St. Joseph’s was pleased to accept our offer of funds and has earmarked a special project for us to raise money for. It is a new sandpit for the students to play in. Their current play area was decimated during the flooding and needs complete rebuild including recycled plastic walls and a cubby house. We have set ourselves a target of $1500 with each homeroom having a “St. Joseph’s Charlton Sand Bag” to fill with coins and notes. Once our funds have been raised, a special delegation of students and staff will travel to Charlton to present the money to the students and to share a special lunch with them. We feel this to be a worthy cause for our students with a local connection in our Diocese.
50th Anniversary of the Blessing and Opening
Of St Joseph’s Church Building
Sunday 10th April, 2011
2pm Celebration of Mass
By Bishop Connors and FR Dan Arundell
(This will be the only Celebration of Mass for this weekend)

An open invitation is extended
To all past and present parishioners and the wider community to attend
Refreshments Supper Room of Town Hall after Mass

Exquiries:

St. Joseph’s Parish, Timboon
31 Hamilton Street, P.O. Box 62, Timboon, 3268
Phone 03 5598 3193; Fax 03 5598 3681
Email: timboon@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Contact: Enid O’Connor ph 03 5598 3296 email etoc@bigpond.com

WELLBEING FORUM
17th March, 2011

Time: 7:00pm - 8:15pm
Venue: St Pat’s Church
No Cost

On 17th March Mercy Regional College will be hosting an evening Wellbeing Forum for our VCE students, parents and teachers. The forum is aimed at sharing information with Students, Parents and Staff on how to make VCE as stress free as possible for all participants as well as offering advice to all involved about dealing with concerns before they become an issue.

We have three highly qualified guest speakers who have vast experience in this area:
- Ms Jac Van Velsen from the Catholic Education office
- Mr Michael Harris from the Early Intervention Team
- Ms Lorri Chandler from Centre Care Warrnambool

Topics to be covered

- The importance of students taking care of themselves both physically and emotionally.
- The need for students to strike the balance between study and family/person free time.
- Resources available for both students and families to access if a concern arises.
- The importance of open and honest communication between students and their family.

Each speaker will speak for approximately 15 minutes and questions will be taken from the floor at the conclusion of each session.

The speakers will also be available to talk with once the forum has concluded. At the conclusion of the forum each family will receive a number of resources.

I do urge parents and students presently in VCE to attend, as well as any other students and parents from Mercy.
H.S.S.A Swimming Sports
Report by: Jess Baxter and Jack McKenzie

On Monday the 28th of February Mercy students headed up to the Camperdown Swimming pool of the H.S.S.A. Swimming sports. It was a cold day to be swimming with students under towels for a majority of the morning.

Across the pool Mercy dominated winning the junior, intermediate and senior shield as well as taking out the overall championship (Scores are below). We had several age champions with Jack Williams, Dana Rhode, Ben Saunders, Kayla Spicer, Dylan Lee, Caitlyn Mitchell, Daniel Unwin and James Devlin all winning the respective age groups. As well as Kayla Spicer, Daniel Unwin, Haylee Davis, Caitlyn Mitchell, Jessica Baxter and Lachlan Spicer breaking records throughout the day.

Big congratulations to all Mercy competitors and we look forward to competing in Warrnambool in the South West Competition on Friday 11th March.

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### SENIOR TOTAL
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Tennis Report
Darren Cheeseman

Last Wednesday 2nd March, Mercy Regional College sent three teams to Warrnambool to participate in the School Sport Victoria Tennis Competition. Conditions were tough with a windy and cold day at Warrnambool. The teams were Senior Boys (Matthew Pemberton, Jeremy Lucas, Matthew Field and James Keough), Senior Girls (Ellie Kenna, Amity Pope, Madeline Moloney and Rachael Hamley) and Intermediate boys (Joe Arundell, Jake Clissold, Matthew Baxter and Jack Kenna).

The competitors were from a wide range of schools from Portland to Colac, which ensured that the quality of tennis was high. The senior boys competed in pool B against Trinity College and Warrnambool College. Unfortunately the boys were unable to win either match but tried hard. The senior girls finished third out of the four teams entered and the Intermediate boys were able to make it to the final out of seven teams entered. The Intermediate final was played against Trinity College but the boys lost 10 games to 4 games against the excellent Trinity team. A great effort to make the final.

Well done to the 12 students that represented MRC and conducted themselves in an excellent manner at all times.

Outdoor Education - Surf Camp Report
James Castles

I would like to give a big thank-you to all staff and students who attended the Unit 1 Outdoor Education Surf Camp at Torquay.

The camp was a success due to the participation, behaviour, and initiative of all our students. The students experienced both Surfing and Sea Kayaking where we all learnt new skills and had a bit of fun.

Thanks must go out to “Go Ride a Wave” for their time and effort in teaching us how to surf and kayak. It was pleasing to see that all students enjoyed themselves and the company of their class mates. Looking back on the camp it was a positive experience for all students and staff involved. Well done.
Careers Report
Mr James Castles

Year 10 Work Experience
Our Year 10 students were involved in the Work Experience Program throughout last week. It is amazing to see the range of jobs that students experienced across the fields of Health, Journalism, Education, Technology, Architecture, Construction and Retail to name a few. All host employers were contacted over the week and it was very encouraging to hear such positive feedback.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the parents, family members and friends who have supported the students with the organisation of their placements, as well as the staff who are supporting this Program with site visits and phone calls. In particular I wish to thank Maureen Adeney for her hard work in helping to organise this initiative and for supporting students throughout the process.

Some of the benefits of the program include
• It provides an opportunity for you to explore possible career options.
• It can increase your self-understanding, independence and self-confidence.
• It can increase your motivation to continue studying and go on to tertiary or further education and training.
• It has been found to enhance your opportunities for part-time or casual employment.
• You can also develop work-related competencies.

Can you do more work experience? We encourage that Work Experience takes place during the holidays in Terms 1, 2 or 3. It can be taken at the end of the year, but only up until the second week in December. It cannot be arranged over the Christmas holidays. Below are photos of some of the students at their various workplaces.

Cameron Spence
Campbell Robbins
Zach O'Flynn
Molly Rix
Liana Collins
Toby McKenzie
Peta McDonald
Daniel Sinnott
Focus on Careers in Agriculture

Research shows that there has been a steady decline in the number of school leavers applying for Agricultural related courses in Australia and other countries. Many young people are put off the thought of a career in agriculture due to media influences and the thought that it isn’t a ‘glamorous’ career.

The media surrounding the ongoing drought, bush fires, farm closures, starving stock and poor prices for farming produce have had an influence on young people’s reluctance to study agriculture. Whilst this has been a sad reality for many farmers, there are many other careers besides farming in the agriculture industry.

Agriculture is now focused on “the entire food chain, managing the environment and minimising the impact of human endeavours on natural resources”. About 50% of all jobs in the agriculture industry are in capital cities. These jobs include environmental management, research / development, agribusiness and education.

Agriculture is a major skills shortage area. During the last decade, tens of thousands of workers in the agriculture industry have switched jobs to different career areas due to the drought and other economic factors. This has left an enormous gap in the employment market and over the next decade, the demand for agricultural graduates will be huge.

In Australia, we need around 6000 graduates to fill positions each year and only 800 young people are completing agricultural related degrees. This means that graduates can demand high salaries and have solid employment outcomes, often being offered lucrative jobs before even completing their degrees.

Experts are needed in the areas of sustainable farming practices, land management, land conservation, climate change practices, food security, agricultural research and policy making. Students can specialise in areas such as economics, marketing, animal and plant biotechnology, catchment management, climate change impacts, crop management and production, plant and soil science, nutrition and feed production, sustainable production and consumption, water management and rural business practices etc.


Vocational and Higher Education News

Changes to Youth Allowance Rural and regional zones: The Federal Government has recently announced it will review and implement new eligibility arrangements for Youth Allowance, removing the regional eligibility zones put in place last year. The new eligibility requirements will come into place on 1 January 2012. The eligibility distinctions between inner regional and outer regional, which came into place, last year, resulted in an unfair set of circumstances for many students.

Before these changes, all students could take a year off between secondary school and tertiary education to work to declare independence and qualify for Youth Allowance. However, the regional eligibility zones meant inner regional students would have to earn more over a longer period of time to qualify – whereas outer regional students still fell under the old arrangements. This brought up questions and arguments as to how inner and outer regional zones were decided – particularly when towns located hundreds of kilometres away from the closest university were declared inner regional.

The Government will now eliminate the zones, with the review and report released by July 2011. Keep up to date with the latest on Youth Allowance by visiting the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations website at www.deewr.gov.au (copied from the Swinburne University Career Advisers Newsletter)

RMIT Student Village: If you plan to study at RMIT in the future, you can apply to stay at the RMIT Student Village in Melbourne. The Village has recently opened four new common areas for their residents including a study, tutorial room, fully equipped gym and student lounge featuring a wide screen TV with pay TV and a Play station 3. The Village has a strong focus on the social, academic and personal needs of its residents. To make a time to visit the Village, contact 03 8330 200, info@rmitvillage.com.au

What is the future of media and communication? The Faculty of Life and Social Sciences at Swinburne University have created a suite of videos about the future of digital media, journalism, media and communications, the transformation of the industry and why Swinburne believes it is at the forefront of media courses. You will be able to watch and learn while their media academics speak openly about the future of the industries, which are
going through a time of change and you will be able to make informed decisions about the courses you would like to study in the future. To access the video, go to www.swinburne.edu.au/lss/areas/mediaVideo.html

Do you have a passion for Tourism and Hospitality? Victoria University’s (VU) Tourism and Hospitality courses are the first in Australia to receive quality accreditation from the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD). VU Faculty of Business and Law Executive Dean Professor David Lamond said the accreditation from the highly respected EFMD showed that VU’s Tourism and Hospitality courses were internationally recognised for their quality of curriculum, staff and graduates. Professor Lamond said that with more than 10,000 students from all over the world and an extensive network of international partnerships, VU’s Faculty of Business and Law is one of the largest business schools in Australia. For more information about the courses, go to www.vu.edu.au

Are you interested in applying for an Aviation course at Swinburne in the future? Understanding the application process and prerequisites for the Advanced Diploma of Technology (Aviation) at Swinburne can be challenging for some students. It can also be hard to know exactly what you will be studying, for example, what kind of pilot license will you receive at the end of the course? The School of Engineering, Technology and Trades have put together a document of frequently asked questions, information on the entry and selection process, and the pathway opportunity into Swinburne’s Bachelor of Aviation. Download the FAQ document by visiting www.future.swinburne.edu.au/aviation-faq

Upcoming Events
Passionate about Arts and Design? If you are planning to visit the Top Arts and Top Designs VCE Exhibitions in Melbourne, you should also consider taking a tour of the RMIT School of Design on the same day. You can do the following: view the visual merchandising galleries, building design architectural labs and explore the interior decoration and design studios, tour the furniture and product design workshops and see modern designs come to life. The School of Design is a creative space where students explore and turn their design talents into exciting careers. You can make a time to tour the school by contacting Scott Knight at RMIT at 03 9925 3040, scott.knight@rmit.edu.au. Top Arts will run between Thursday 31st March – Sun 19th June at the Ian Potter Centre and Top Designs will run between Sat 26 March – Sun 26 June at the Melbourne Museum.

Interested in a career in fashion and textiles? In 2011, RMIT’s School of Fashion and Textiles will hold a series of free public lectures featuring local and international speakers. The lecture series kicked off earlier this year with Frank Wijlens; a freelance editor and lecturer at the AMFI (Amsterdam Fashion Institute). For more information on dates of upcoming public lectures contact Scott Knight at the School of Fashion and Textiles, 03 9925 3040, scott.knight@rmit.edu.au

March Events
- **Meet Melbourne**, University of Melbourne- Geelong (17), Sale (23), Warragul (24) and Bendigo (31), www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/meetmelbourne
- **15: My Day Communications**, Charles Sturt University, Bathurst Campus, Contact Judy Walsh to register at infoevents@csu.edu.au
- **16: Information Evening**, Australian International Hotel School and Blue Mountains Hotel Management School, Melbourne, 1800 257 360, enquiry@hotelschool.com.au
- **29: My Day Nursing/ Paramedics**, Charles Sturt University, Bathurst Campus, Contact Judy Walsh to register at infoevents@csu.edu.au

April Events
- **‘Meet Melbourne’,** University of Melbourne, Ballarat (6) and Mildura (28), www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/meetmelbourne
- **7: My Day events at Charles Sturt University-** Allied Health at Albury-Wodonga and Exercise Science at Bathurst.
- **15: Access all Areas (Year 12 Students only)**, University of Melbourne, Parkville Campus, http://futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au
• 15: ‘Talk and Tour’, La Trobe University, www.latrobe.edu.au/study/events
• 18 - 20: Career Focus Days, Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School, 1800 257 360, enquiry@hotelschool.com.au & Australian International Hotel School, 1800 500 307, degree.info@aihs.edu.au
• 21: Art and Design Discovery Day, Swinburne University, www.swinburne.edu.au

Scholarships
New Dean’s Scholarships: Faculty of Life and Social Sciences at Swinburne University: The Faculty of Life and Social Sciences is pleased to announce a new Dean’s Scholarship commencing this year. The scholarships recognise high-achieving students and will provide high-level professional development and entry into the Faculty’s new Student Leadership Program. The Faculty will award up to five scholarships at their discretion to students who have achieved an ATAR of 95.0 and above. The scholarship will provide successful students with a full fee waiver for the duration of their degree. You can find out more about the Faculty of Life and Social Sciences by visiting www.swinburne.edu.au/lss

Would you like to keep up to date with news from Monash Uni? If you are in years 10 – 12, you can subscribe to Monash E-News at www.monash.edu/study/eNews and receive regular updates about courses, careers, admissions, scholarships and events via email or SMS.

The National Careers & Employment Expo: Students in years 10 – 12 have the opportunity to explore careers and employment opportunities at this exciting event at the Melbourne Convention Centre. You will be able to speak to University and TAFE institutions about their programs, scholarships, accommodation options and student services. You will also be able to speak to employers from different industries and gain career advice from the National Career Development Week representatives. The expo is free and will be run on 25 and 26 March. For more information, contact 1300 667 121 or go to www.eocexpo.com.au

Gap Year Information
Thinking of taking a year off to travel overseas after school? Then check out the following two ideas:

Cultural Care Au Pair: If you are interested in working with children and traveling to the USA, you could work as an Au Pair (live in Nanny). You need to be between 18 – 26yrs old to be able to participate in the program. If you would like to learn more about the program, call Trish Cavenagh, Country Program Manager on 1800 677 373 or visit www.culturalcare.com.au

Latitude Global Volunteering: Would you like to have the opportunity to travel overseas during your Gap Year? You could travel to countries as diverse as Africa, Mexico, Spain, Poland or the UK and undertake activities such as teaching primary school children English, working with homeless young people or working with communities developing sport and REC programs. To learn more about these programs, you can attend a Latitude Gap information night which will be running in various locations over the upcoming months. For more information, contact Siobhan Marsh, Marketing Officer, Lattitude Global Volunteering on 9826 6266, www.lattitude.org.au

Cultural Care Au Pair

Latitude Global Volunteering
Scholarships for Children of Veterans intending Tertiary Studies in 2012

In 2012 the Australian Veterans’ Children Assistance Trust (AVCAT) is expecting to give financial assistance for up to 65 students under many different scholarship schemes. All schemes help the selected children in need of the Australian veteran community with the costs of tertiary education. Applicants are considered for all schemes for which they are eligible.

Applications open on 18th August 2011. To apply you must be:

a) Within the means test. That is eligible on assets and income grounds for Youth Allowance benefits for full-time education.

b) Enrolled, or planning to enrol in a full-time course of tertiary education in Australia by attendance at a university, TAFE or college. The course must be of one or more academic year’s length and at undergraduate level.

c) The child or grandchild of a person who has operational service with the Australian Navy, Army or Air Force, or if not has three or more year’s continuous full-time service as a member of the Australian Defence Force.

d) Under the age of 25 when applying, unless exceptional circumstances related to veteran’s service exist.

The largest scheme is the Long Tan Bursary funded by the Australian Government. There are 50 new bursaries each year. They are valued at $9,000 each which is paid at $3,000 per year for three years. There are selection quotas for each State and Territory. To apply you must be the child of an Australian Vietnam Veteran, be resident in Australia, be entering any year of tertiary study, having not previously received a Long Tan Bursary.

The other national schemes are the AVCAT Bursary, the two RSL Scholarships, three Vietnam Veterans’ Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Scholarship and the Defence Force Welfare Association Scholarship. George Quinsey Scholarships directly pay tuition fees for economics, commerce and accountancy studies. There are also regional scholarships. In NSW, there are three from Brisbane Water Legacy covering Gosford/Wyong NSW and one from the NSW TPI Association. Some private donors offer two scholarships to resident NSW applicants. In SA, the VVAA also offers a scholarship.

Schemes vary between $3,000 and $5,000 per year each. Some are restricted to location of residence or studies. Most require veteran service in Vietnam but others are broader in eligibility criteria. Most schemes continue payments for later years of study. All scholarship schemes but one pays monthly instalments. That scheme helps with tuition costs for courses in commerce, economics and accountancy. In addition to the above there is one grant per year to assist a handicapped eligible veteran’s child or grandchild with special extra costs of transition to tertiary studies or employment.

To receive an application form register interest on 1800 620 361. Children and grandchildren of Vietnam veterans should do so now, as should any others who believe that they are eligible. If not sure, ask: Applications close on 31st October each year.

AVCAT PO Box K978, Haymarket, NSW 1240
FAX: (02) 9213 7307
Email: avcat@dva.gov.au
Web: www.avcat.org.au
PUBLIC NOTICES

- LADIES NETBALL Wednesday nights at the Camperdown Stadium commencing 27th April. Contact Kellie Kempton on 0418 176 698 for further information on entering a team all ages, all abilities.

- CAMPERDOWN AND DISTRICT JUNIOR NETBALL ASSOCIATION. Enquiries can be made to: 5593 2260. (Saturday morning netball) Annual General Meeting and General Meeting. Tuesday 15th of March. Commencing 7pm in the Basketball Stadium foyer. Agenda Items: (1) election of office bearers, (2) Planning for 2011 season.

ST. COLUMBA’S SCHOOL BALLARAT NORTH.
CENTENARY CELEBRATION
ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2011

All past and present members of the
St. Columba’s Community
are invited to celebrate this significant event.
Centenary Mass: 10.00 am
School Tours, Luncheon, Photo displays,
Entertainment
To register your interest and to receive further
information, logon to www.scballarat.catholic.edu.au
We welcome photos and stories.
Please complete the on-line survey.
Or contact the school on... Phone: 53 324894 Fax: 53 317196
St. Columba’s is a School of the Times

BECOME A WEP HOST FAMILY
Open your door to an international exchange student and expand your knowledge of other
countries, cultures, languages and cuisines!

A place to call home
World Education Program (WEP) is inviting you to experience another culture in your own home by becoming a
volunteer host family to one of our international students arriving in July 2011. Our students from Italy, France,
Belgium, The Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Japan, Brazil and Chile are looking forward to experiencing
life in Australia, making new friends and becoming a member of an Australian family soon.

Messages from Overseas
“I’ve always wanted to visit this country and I want to improve my English and I want to know a new
way of living in another country.” ~ Georgio, Italy
“Australia is a beautiful country and I have always wanted to go there.” ~ Jana, Switzerland
“Because of everything that’s told me, the people are so nice and open.” ~ Roxan, Netherlands

Find out more!
Getting to know your student before he or she arrives brings fun and joy to everyone involved.
Take the next step and contact WEP today to receive a full information pack for your family.

Nikki Medwell
Inbound Exchange Administrator
Phone: 1300 884 733
Email: wep@wep.org.au
Online: www.wep.org.au

It’s easier than you think and a fantastic experience for all!