Staff News

22 February 2016

PHS Involvement in Australia Day Celebrations
Many PHS staff, students and family members and friends attended the local Australia Day celebration. Ashlee Sullivan, who completed Year 12 in 2015 and undertook a variety of leadership roles while at school, received the Young Australian Citizen of the Year award for Riddoch ward. Imahgen Hecht entertained the crowd with four songs, one of which was her own composition. She accompanied herself on guitar and is to be complimented on her fine performance.

Week 0
Week 0 saw staff return to school and undertake two days of intensive preparation for the year ahead. Whilst much of the time was devoted to administrative meetings and class preparation, staff also undertook two sessions of training and development led by Kristen Bence.

First Day Back 1st February
The first day of school was an orientation day, with Year Level Organisers and Home Group teachers working with students in their year levels. Individual programs are briefly described below. As well, House meetings were held to elect leaders and prepare for the swimming sports.

House Captains are:

Moyanga: Captains: Montana Freeman Josh Currie
Vice Captains: Ella Kain Callum Sutcliffe

Torilla: Captains: Hannah Klemm Charlie French
Vice Captains: Sarah Stokvad Hamish March

Yalluminga: Captains: Alana Winter Bailey Walker
Vice Captains: Aliza Pfitzner Tom Walker

Year 8 Program
The first day program for our new Year 8 students built on work done during the 2015 transition days to foster their sense of belonging in the school community. A number of ‘getting-to-know-you’ games and activities were undertaken to help build friendships within the group and to engender group identity.

Year 9 Program
The Year 9’s first day program focused on team building and goal setting around learning. Students played many games that encouraged a high level of thinking and working together, such as a blind walk, removing a bucket full of water from a space with only a piece of rope, tower building problem solving and a classmate scavenger hunt. Students also used their Independent Learning Plans, created at the beginning of last year, and their Capability Folio Project feedback to set goals for their learning this year. Those goals will be reflected upon and reviewed at the end and beginning of each term, with the hope students will work towards developing more learning independence.
**Year 10 Program**
The year 10s completed the requisite administrative tasks before listening to presentations from guest speakers. Kevin Gritton, Apprenticeship Broker, excited students when he spoke about the possibility of beginning ASBAs and traineeships during Year 10.

Students also secured ‘Universal Student Identifiers’ to enable them to complete First Aid and Work Health Safety courses prior to going on work experience. A number of team building activities such as Ping Pong Table Soccer, Planet Escape and Balloon Shuffle were undertaken enthusiastically. The photo below show students engaged in Planet Escape. They were given three planks of wood they could use to transfer their team of eight members across a ‘toxic space pond.’

![Planet Escape](image-url)

**Year 11 Program**
Highlights of the day included visits from former students, Ashlee Sullivan and Heidi Hutchesson, who shared their tips for success, and ‘getting to know you’ sessions focussing on the SACE from Jason Plunkett and Andrew Stockley. Three students, Bradley Tregenza, Cam Schriever and Connor Eastwood, spoke about their experiences at the Adelaide University Science camp which they attended with Mike Hentschke in the last week of term 4 2015, and Aliza Pfitzner spoke about some of her experiences in Germany during her exchange year. The whole group enjoyed a lunch of baguettes at Vintage café and, by their excellent behaviour, presented our school in a very positive way in the wider community.

**Year 12 Program**
16 Year 12 students attended the first day of the school year. They were introduced to their YLO and Home Group teacher, Rob Thornett and school counsellor, Suzanne Gray. During the day they met as a group, the new principal Andrew Stockley and deputy principal, Jason Plunkett. Both principal and deputy gave their views about achieving success in Year 12 and the challenges of navigating through SACE.
Two previous Year 12 students, Ashlee Sullivan (2015) and Heidi Hutchesson (2011) provided a student’s perspective of the year ahead. Some time was spent on explaining the routines required for achieving the best outcomes and the importance of organisation in this process. A goal setting exercise was completed and students reported back on their discussions.

It was clear that, from a Year 12 perspective, most students were very keen to start coursework as soon as possible.

**Visit by Emily Merrett  5th February**
Former PHS student, Emily Merrett, is now a fully qualified physiotherapist with considerable experience under her belt, including working with athletes at various AFL clubs. She has recently returned to Penola and established her own clinic. Emily very kindly donated her time to meet with our Year 11 and 12 students during the week 1 Learning for Life session. She spoke of her time at PHS and the path she has followed since, engaging her audience with a variety of anecdotes. Emily spoke about the need to keep active while studying and finished the session by introducing the students to some balance exercises.

**Swimming Carnival  5th February**
The annual swimming carnival was held on a glorious summer’s day, with a considerable number of parents and friends attending. The keen swimmers were in their element and very competitive, with two new records being set. Other students demonstrated good sportsmanship and support for their Houses by participating in novelty events and filling spots in the individual races.

Congratulations go to Ella Kain who set a new record of 26.4 seconds in the Open Girls Breaststroke and the team of Sarah Stokvad, Hannah Klemm, Samantha Sims and Brooke Hutchesson who set a new time of 1.30.6 in the Open Girls Freestyle Relay.

Final House points were Yalluminga, 255, Moyanga 216 and Torilla 175. Alana Winter and Bailey Walker made gracious acceptance speeches as Captains of the winning House.

**Individual age group winners were:**

**Under 14s:**
- **winners:** Cheyenne Faux and Jack Kain
- **runners up:** Ally Jones and Jack Walker

**Under 15s:**
- **winners:** Brooke Hutchesson and Tom Abbey
- **runners up:** Emily Winter and Jesse Martin

**Under 16s:**
- **winners:** Emma Ryan and Nick Rowe
- **runners up:** Joanne Drury and Josh Currie

**Open:**
- **winners:** Hannah Klemm and Bailey Walker
- **runners up:** Ella Kain and Cory O’Connor

Our congratulations go to all those who did their very best and our thanks to all who contributed to the smooth running of this event, especially our new PE teacher, Chloe Long. Special mention should be made of former teacher Bob Reece who returned for the afternoon to run the novelty events.
**SRC Elections**
SRC elections have been held in Home Groups and the 2016 SRC is now up and ready to run under the capable leadership of Alana Winter and Cory O’Connor.

**Open Boys Cricket 8th February**
Our cricket team, dominated by younger students, set out enthusiastically to take on a team from Millicent High School and it is to their credit that they finished only ten runs behind Millicent. Bailey Walker (3/24), Josh Currie (3/25) and Logan Gibbs (2/23) took valuable wickets, while Penola was saved from ignominious defeat by an impressive last wicket stand between Jesse Martin (29) and Joel Virtanen (34).

**School Photos**
School photos were taken on Tuesday, 9th February.

**Year 11/12 Parent Information Evening 10th February**
Parents of Years 11 and 12 students attended a meeting run by Rob Thornett. Jason Plunkett explained the ins and outs of SACE, and Rob spoke about the challenges of Year 12, strategies to support students and the transition students face at the end of this year.

**Kids’ Time 19th February**
‘Trains’ was the theme for the first Kids’ Time of the year. Rob Thornett was in his element as train driver Ed. Books featuring trains and birthdays were read by Heather Stone and Rob. Ali Bond developed a craft/numeracy activity which had the littlies making their own train and then driving it to a numbered station on tracks laid down throughout the book stacks. There were train tickets with stickers to foster counting skills and an adding on activity for those who were ready to be extended. Staff were delighted when the children related the morning tea birthday cake to the birthdays mentioned in the stories. Stage 2 student, Felicity Drury, is working with the Kids’ Time team as part of her Community Studies subject. She was fully involved with the children during the session, interacting beautifully with them.

**Interschool Swimming 19th February**
Report to come

**E-Language Sister School Partnership**
Last year, Kathleen Phillips spoke to Governing Council about the E-Language Sister School Partnership she had won a grant to establish. Here is her progress report:
We have been approached by Tsu City Board of Education to partner with one of their Junior High schools. The school is called Nishikyonai Junior High and has approximately 300 students. The plan is for all students studying Japanese at PHS to participate in a joint unit of work to help broaden their understanding of Japanese culture and share our culture with the Japanese students who will be undertaking this program.

**Staff Training and Development 20 Feb**
Kathleen Phillips participated in the Association of Secondary Research Teachers annual conference. Based around the Research Project, which our students take in Year 12 as a compulsory Stage 2 subject, the sessions focussed on improving students’ understanding, growth in the capabilities and improving students’ performances in the evaluation. Kathleen found the experience valuable and returns with some fantastic new ideas to try out and looking forward to implementing some of these in our school.