Science and Engineering Challenge  22\textsuperscript{nd} July

Term 3 was off to a fabulous start with twenty-six students from Years 8, 9 and 10 travelling to Mt. Gambier to compete in the Science and Engineering Challenge. All students applied themselves consistently to a range of engaging activities throughout the day and represented our community in fine style. One team, comprising Charlie French, Daniel Meek and Jamie Colbert, was particularly successful, producing the best plane of the day. Other students built bridges, a catapult, a ‘Mars rover’ and a hovercraft. As well, students investigated electricity supply networks, balloon-powered vehicles and load-bearing towers.

The teams were composed of students from different Year levels, and it was great to see the way in which the students quickly settled to working cooperatively and supporting each other.

Students from eight South East schools attended, and it was pleasing to be placed fourth, ahead of some much larger schools.

Knock Out Netball  28\textsuperscript{th} July

Simone Combe organised our girls’ participation in the annual Knock Out Netball event held at Olympic Park in Mount Gambier. Here is her report.

All the girls did their best on the day and the two Penola High School teams were very competitive against teams from much larger schools.

The Open Girls managed to finish in third position, which is a much higher placing than any achieved in recent memory. Alana Winter and Hannah Klemm worked hard under the goal ring to score for Penola, and Kara Martin and Montana Freeman provided plenty of drive through the middle of the court. Jade Lythgo was unstoppable in defence, and Kate Rowe came through with many intercepts and deflections in Wing Defence. Emma Cadzow tried her hand at Goal Keeper and pulled in many valuable rebounds, and Georgie Beighton and Ashlee Sullivan were speedy and passed with precision. The girls should be commended on their effort and skills, with many smooth passages of play coming from a group who have not played a lot of netball together – of the nine girls in the team, only two play together on Saturdays. The Open team also had three Year 10 girls, playing well outside their age group. These girls did not look out of place in this grade, and dominated their opposition.

The Year 8/9 Girls were placed in the tough Pool A, with some closely fought contests with quality opposition. The girls managed to finish the morning with just the one loss – against Tenison, who were the eventual winners of the day. The girls then crossed pools and played the top placed Bordertown in the first final. Unfortunately this game did not go the girls’ way, and they found themselves playing off for third position against Mount Gambier High School in the second final. The final was an extremely tough match, against girls who were in many cases a great deal taller than the Penola players. The Penola girls did not allow themselves to become intimidated by their opposition, and held a narrow lead for a large amount of the match. Unfortunately, the girls ran out of time and lost the final by one goal! This meant that they finished the day in fourth place out of eight schools. It is worth noting that the undefeated Tenison team’s closest match was against Penola – an admirable effort by a team that consisted primarily of Year 8 students. Emily Winter and
Ella Kain combined well in goals, and received pinpoint passes from Gorgia Robbie, Lucy Butler and Katie Colbert. Aliza Pfitzner and Amy Wetherall battled hard in defence, taking on their opponents and forcing them to shoot from outside their range. Joanne Drury took some excellent intercepts and provided plenty of run out of defence.

The girls were very courteous to their opposition and the umpires, as well as accepting all coaching decisions without argument or attitude. Their easy-going nature certainly made everyone’s job very easy!

We had excellent support from parents, staff and students. Thank you to Rachel Murphy, Lucy Tonkin, Sharon Freeman, Heidi Kain, Sarah Walker and Fleur Roachock who all played large roles on the day to support our girls. We have some very talented netballers at this school, and I look forward to next year’s competition.

**Scholarship Winner**

Our congratulations go to former student, Natasha Hutchesson, on receiving a Terry Roberts Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded by Wattle Range Council to support regional students studying at Flinders University. Natasha is in the first year of a double degree in education and disability studies.

**Year 12 Chemistry Trip  30th July**

The combined PHS/MHS Year 12 Chemistry class visited Portland Aluminium, where we were warmly received by Ron Jeffries, recycling manager and long term supporter and organiser of our visits. Process engineer, Jim Harpley, welcomed the students and explained the processes carried out at Portland Aluminium and career opportunities in the aluminium industry in some depth. The students visited the recycling centre and then underwent a brief induction to enable them to tour the site – resplendent in safety gear. As part of the tour, students were able to view the pot room and were lucky enough to see spent anodes being removed from the pots.

With industries being forced to look closely at budgets and productivity and the (necessary) emphasis on workplace safety, we are most fortunate to still be allowed to visit industrial sites. Our students made excellent ambassadors for our schools, both by their good manners and by the interest they showed in all that was provided for them, and this is undoubtedly one of the reasons why they are still welcome.

**Open Boys Basketball  31st July**

By Scott McCulloch

We chose an experienced line-up for our Open Boys Basketball team. It consisted of Tom Price, Luke Gray, Scott Merrett, Sam Burgess, Cameron Merrett, Cory Oconnor, Gus Eckerman and Bailey Walker. The team had a total of fewer than 100 games of basketball played between them and at least 75 of these belonged to Cory who called in sick on the day. A quick competition was run between Will, Tom and Charlie to see who would win the elusive spot on the side and with the team needing height Will was being cheered for by all. Unfortunately, Tom Walker went rock and Charlie and Will locked in scissors to give Tom the position and, SPOILER ALERT: this made Tom the only person on the team to win anything all day.

Bryan Tonkin was kind enough to be tricked into umpiring and transporting a group of boys to the event in Mount Gambier and we set off for the Ice House. Our first game was against Tenison Woods College who had a slightly more experienced and taller team whose members fully understood positioning on the court and the rules in general. You could see the fear in the eyes of the opposition as Scotty (Kevin Durant) Merret drained the first 3 pointer of the game and Thomas
Price got open to slot one from close range. Unfortunately that is where it stopped and we only scored 2 more points for the entire game: the score line finished 77-7. The highlight of the game was clearly Tom Walker out rebounding two 195cm players who he was giving at least 50cm to. He was able to do this with determination, skill and the fact that they let the ball go for each other.

The second game was a hotly contested affair against Millicent High School where we went down in another close one: 65 – 12. Luke Gray, our tallest player, was given the task of getting under the ring and rebounding but in the heat of battle he forgot all this and was playing the Point Guard position (nowhere near the ring) so the job of rebounding went to Scott Merrett who battled out the entire game against people much taller than he and his willingness to contest at all times and a total disregard for the rules meant he got his fair share of rebounds.

Millicent and Tenison ended up playing each other in the final, largely due to either the tight contest we gave them or the fact that they got to rest players, we may never know the true reason. Our final game was against Grant High School and it was Gus Eckerman’s time to shine, he was dropping points from everywhere, driving to the basket and stepping back with impeccable skill. Bailey was able to drop a 3 and Tom, who thinks he is Derrick Rose, was looking brilliant but the ball just wasn't dropping for him. We went with Grant for a half but ended up going down 34 – 22 to end a very enjoyable day. The boys then loaded back into the cars and I would like to think a few had a nap on the way home.

**Debating Eisteddfod 1st August**

Jackie Poumako and Suzanne Gray took two teams of Year 9 students to the Debating Eisteddfod held in Mt. Gambier at the Wehl St Theatre and were elated with the outcome. Students had prepared thoroughly, working on their speeches in class and in their own time.

Their efforts were crowned with success when the Penola 1 team of Samantha Sims, Kaitlin Cornish and Ella Kain won their debate against Naracoorte High school as the affirmative team on the topic of, "There is too much emphasis on fitness in schools."

The Penola 2 team, comprising Camryn Schriever, Daniel Meek and Aliza Pfitzner also performed well losing their debate by a narrow margin.

The true icing on the cake came when Samantha Sims was named Junior Debater of the Day at the presentation ceremony.

Student feedback has been positive and we hope to build on this year’s success in the future.

**Sarah’s Success**

Congratulations to Super Sarah SSO on becoming the region’s SSO Winner in the SA Excellence in Public Education Awards.

**Year 9 Initiative 4th-8th August**

The 2014 Year 9 Initiative culminated with a showcase of students’ work attended by many parents. Students presented a range of final products and spoke about their learning journey, discoveries and developments throughout the production process.

Planning for the Initiative began in term 3 Learning for Life sessions with students identifying an area of interest or passion. Students were assisted to narrow this into a focus area and develop inquiry questions for investigation during the Initiative week. A range of areas were investigated including Epilepsy, Photography, Forensic and Sports Sciences, Food and Hospitality, and You Tube Content.
Camryn Schriever investigated You Tube Content Creation, constructing his own web video as his final presentation. Another outstanding presentation was by Amy Weatherall, who prepared thoroughly by interviewing community members involved in sports science. Cortney Lovewell delivered an excellent presentation on animal photography, while Bradley Tregenza demonstrated excellent knowledge of aerospace engineering. Darnielle Reddan investigated graffiti art while Hamish March and Callum Sutcliffe created some interesting animation characters and logos for their Graphic Design topics. Many students visited work places within the wider community.

Students developed skills and knowledge through the self-directed learning undertaken throughout the Initiative. The calibre of students’ final presentations was excellent and each student who participated grew through their experience in the Initiative. We are indebted to parents and community members for their support.

**Year 10 Work Experience 4th-8th August**

The Year 10 students had their first taste of Work Experience in week 3. This is a valuable opportunity for students who are able to explore career pathways of interest and develop their workplace skills while meeting some of the requirements of the compulsory Personal Learning Plan SACE unit. This program could not operate without the support of many in the business community and we are grateful for their support for our students.

**Maths Quiz Night 6th August**

Our recently revamped Hall provided a great venue for the annual Maths Quiz Night. About 130 students, in thirty-six teams, supported by teachers and parents, gathered to enjoy an evening of Maths and General Knowledge quiz questions. Twenty-three of our students were joined by students from Grant, Mount Gambier and Millicent High Schools, St Martins Lutheran College, making their Maths Quiz Night debut, and Tenison Woods College.

Throughout the evening, students worked together to solve Maths problems, answer general knowledge questions, sort jumbled words and tackle an extended Maths problem. There was much discussion, debate, friendly argument and enthusiastic conversation.

As well as providing a different setting for tackling Maths problems, the evening provided students with a great opportunity to get together and share a good time with friends. We were delighted when our team of Lewis March, Ben Martin and Alex Male won the Senior General Knowledge section.

**UNSW Science Competition Results**

Five of our students undertook the UNSW Science Competition earlier in the year, and we congratulate them on being prepared to have a go and invest their effort in this enterprise. Our particular congratulations are extended to Alex Male who received a credit and Bradley Tregenza who was awarded a Merit Certificate.

**Shared ACARA Activity 12th August**

Teachers from Millicent High School joined our teaching staff to moderate student work and share resources and understanding of the Australian Curriculum. Teachers worked in subject area groups and many productive discussions took place. The work session was followed by a shared meal at Rendezvous restaurant.

**PPS Transition Visit 13th-15th August**

29 students from Penola Primary made a lively addition to our school community as they visited us for three days as part of their transition program. Students were involved in a variety of classes as they received a taste of what life in the ‘big school’ is like. They were an enthusiastic bunch and
engaged with the activities offered. We look forward to the arrival of many of them on our shores next year.

**Cyber Safety Presentation 14th August**

Kristen Bence and Rob Thornett travelled to Naracoorte with the Year 8, 9 and 10 students to attend a presentation by Susan McLean of *cybersafety solutions*. Ms McLean is extremely well qualified to deliver this training to young people: an ex-member of the police force, she has extensive cyber space experience beginning with cyberbullying and extending through her training with the FBI to her work with elite sports clubs and other organisations. Ms McLean has a reputation for engaging her audiences and our young people were no exception.

**Library Visits and Kids’ Time for Book Week 18th-22th August**

The theme for this year’s Book Week was ‘Connect to Reading’ and it was celebrated in our library with a number of visits from feeder school classes and Kids’ Time. One of the shortlisted books, ‘Windy Farm’ was used in all sessions, with the younger children also meeting ‘Ruby Red and Banjo’ while for older classes, ‘Jeremy’ was chosen. A number of engaging activities were undertaken. Children wrote the names of those to whom they are closely connected on slips of paper which were then joined into a long chain to demonstrate the connections between community members who work together and all of us who read. A particular highlight in each session was provided by Silvana Stephens who, armed with a pedestal fan, a tiny wind generator and an LED, ably demonstrated the connection between the wind and the electricity we use in our daily lives. Library staff were particularly impressed by the children’s responses to Silvana’s presentation, as the children asked many sensible questions. The children made their own mini-windmills and the littlies enjoyed putting electricity to good use to make the pikelets they shared for morning tea.

**SACE Information Evening 20th August**

A small audience of parents and students gathered in the seminar room for the SACE Information evening. Fleur Roachock welcomed guests and spoke briefly about the importance we place on ensuring each student is assisted to find the best possible pathway through the senior years and into the world beyond. She emphasised this time as one of transition rather than there being a full stop at the end of Year 12. Mike Hentschke spoke of the nitty gritty of the SACE and the necessary undertakings for its successful completion and Kevin Gritton, apprenticeship broker, spoke about vocational pathways – VET, ASBAs and traineeships. Parents were encouraged to ask questions.

**National Literacy and Numeracy Week 25th-29th August**

This week in National Literacy and Numeracy Week and we are joining in the Nationwide celebration with a range of activities. Details will appear in the next ‘Governing Council Staff News’.