**Principal's Report**

*Friday, 3rd December, 2010.*

This is our final newsletter for the year and I would like to thank our students, parents and our community for a great year. Over the last two weeks the College has commenced our ‘Academic Year’ and once again it has been a great success. This is the first time that we have implemented this approach across the whole College to prepare and support our students for the coming year. The response from our students was outstanding with great attendance at all year levels. Students can now look forward to 2011 with a greater insight into the year’s study ahead.

As Christmas gets closer I’m often asked if we are ‘winding down’. As you can read above we are well into 2011 with our curriculum in Years 8-12. Last Thursday we had our VCE Arts exhibition, opened by former teacher Meg Dollar. The three day exhibition provided students and teachers with an opportunity to ‘showcase’ creative pieces developed for assessment in the VCE. Alex Lacombe won the College’s award for the most creative piece *The Day in the Life* and the same piece won the public’s vote. I would like to congratulate all exhibitors and their teachers for an outstanding exhibition.

This Friday all 2011 Year 12 and Year 11 students finish their studies for the year. 2011 Year 11 students involved in Peer Support training will return to school on the Monday and Tuesday. Of course on the Tuesday Peer Support Leaders will have a chance to meet the 2011 Year 7 students as part of our Transition Program. On Friday 10th December reports will be issued for Years 7-10. VCE results do not come to the College until 13th and so all VCE reports will be available at our Celebration Evening 14th in the small gym. All 2010 Year 12 students will have their certificates presented to them on stage on the 14th. We would like all those who are attending to be at the College ready to start at 7.30 pm. The Celebration Evening will commence at 7.30 pm and be concluded by 9.00pm.

Congratulations to our Regional Sports Award precipitants, Zara Pearson (basketball), Brock Norwood (swimming) and Siobhan Thompson for Individual General Excellence Award. As mentioned above the College will be celebrating all the achievements of our students on Tuesday 14th at the College gymnasium, starting at 7.30 pm. It is very important that those students who are receiving awards do attend the rehearsal on Tuesday.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Tuesday 7th December is our Grade 6 into Year 7 Orientation Day and we look forward to meeting our new students. Orientation Day is always a day of mixed emotions for our Grade 6 students; whilst excited about the thought of entering the College, most are uncertain on how this transition will take place. Over the last 12 months Echuca College and its partner primary schools have worked hard at reducing the concerns held by students moving from primary to secondary schooling. In 2011, I’m happy to announce that Echuca College has joined with local business, Peats’ Office Equipment to facilitate a laptop program for all students coming into Year 7 in 2011. The College will provide new ACER laptops (with all the DEECD software) for every Year 7 student to access 24/7. Enrolments for 2011 are still open and if families have not enrolled as yet please contact the general office at Echuca College 54821133.
The start to the New Academic Year has been fantastic. It is great to see all the students engaged in their new classes and ready for the year to come. The Year 12 group has started with much enthusiasm and have already voted on a design for their jumper and shirt for next year. A Senior Leadership team has been formed and have come up with some interesting ideas and exciting activities for next year.

At our Graduation Function we celebrated the class of 2010, this was a fantastic evening and the group looked amazing. It is wonderful to see how much they grow and mature over the journey that is Year 12. The class of 2010 were supported by a large number of parents, family and friends, one student was able to share the evening with her Great Great Grandmother.

VCE Results for 2010 will be released on Monday the 13th of December. Our final celebration for the year will be Echuca Celebrates on the 14th of December where students will receive relevant awards.

Important dates for our new VCE students for 2011 include the Flying Start Day on Tuesday February the 15th where students are exposed to a number of speakers and workshops to ensure they are focused for the coming year and all its challenges.

We would like to remind all students to make use of the pathways and transition team during the coming weeks and please contact the school if you have any queries or concerns. The Year 12 Team
CAMPS NEWS
Just a reminder to all students, parents and guardians to return forms and deposits for the Yr 8 Shipwreck coast Camp and the Yr 9/10 Central Australian Camp for 2011 as soon as possible. There is still vacancies available for both camps if students are interested and there is also a change to the dates of the Shipwreck coast Camp. The students will now be leaving on the Tuesday, 19th September 2011 as opposed to the Monday. If you have any questions or problems regarding payments or permission forms Contact Echuca College on 54821133. - Julie Smith Camps co-ordinator

CANTEEN NEWS
A big thankyou to all our wonderful parent helpers during 2010 in our school canteen. Merry Christmas and enjoy your holiday break. We look forward to seeing you all in 2011 and welcoming new parent helpers. Jeanette and Sheena.

YEAR LEVEL NEWS

YEAR 7 NEWS
Year 7 Girls State Volleyball Team - Thursday 25th November
Back- Shannon Elgar, Taylah Morris, Jordyn Cootes, Briony Milne, Miss Butler (coach)
Front- Laura McKellar, Courtney Priestley, Jess Grundy, Madison Davies.
Well done girls for making it state level!

YEAR 10 NEWS
The 2011 team is Mr David Pearson, (Team Leader), and Assistants Mr Andrew Hewitt and Mrs Debbie Dunn. The Tute teachers will be finalised in the new year.
This week the students have chosen up to three friends they would like to be in Tute Group with in 2011 as there will be six groups next year and there were seven this year.
The effort and behaviour in the first 2 weeks of “2011” has on the whole been very good – well done to the students. Over 95% of student courses for 2011 have been finalised. If your child is considering a change it needs to be done before the end of the year. David Pearson – Year 10 Team Leader

YR 10 P.E EXCURSION TO MELBOURNE
On Friday 19th of November 18 enthusiastic year 10 PE students went to Melbourne for a day of sporting fun. First up was a visit to the MCG, were we toured the ground, went to the gallery of sport and relaxed in the sun to watch the Victorian’s play Western Australia in the cricket. We then ventured to the Victorian Institute of Sport where we were taken on a tour of the facilities by Carol Cooke, Australian Paralympian in rowing. Whilst on the tour we ran into some big names of sport including Michael Klim and Liesel Jones. The students gained an understanding into the people and mechanics behind elite athletes, such as the team doctors, physiotherapists, nutritionists and psychologists, sports science machinery and athlete training programs. After a wander into Federation Square for dinner it was back to the new AAMI Park to watch the Melbourne Heart take on Adelaide United. An action packed day saw us return a very tired bunch at 1am. All students should be congratulated for the way they conducted themselves on the trip. A big thank you to Chealy and Adam for their help on the day. Miss Lauren Menz
ECHUCA COLLEGE EXPERIENCE — MAIKE STEINDEL

My time as an exchange student at Echuca College has come to an end and the five months have gone by without me realizing. All the experiences I’ve made and adjusting to a completely different life have made weeks feel like days, because everything is so exciting, so different, so new. All the memories are so intense that they never feel so “long” ago.

At my first day at the College, I was really nervous and expected to stand somewhere, not knowing what to do or who to talk to. But from this first day everyone has been so friendly and curious towards me and made settling into my new life so easy. I have quickly made great friends and it’s hard to already leave them again. As well as the students, especially in my year level, the teachers have also been really helpful and patient with me, trying to make me feel welcome and comfortable. And I can say: You have all done a great job and contributed to making my stay so much better than my expectations were.

But apart from my life at school there is another important part of being an exchange student: The host family. I have stayed with a primary school teacher and her 11 year old son in a house in Echuca East, and they have been the best host family I could have ever imagined. They’ve let me become a part of their life immediately, shared all their family and friends with me and have done their best to show me your beautiful country by taking me places. In this short time I have been to several places in Victoria, like skiing at Lake Mountain and Mount Hotham, spent a great holiday in the Northern Territory including Darwin, Kakadu and Litchfield National Park, and I have just come back from a short trip to New Zealand. I have enjoyed everything I’ve done and would love to stay longer to see a bit more and spend more time with all my new friends and “family”.

A stay like this helps you learn so much about very different things. First of all I’ve learned things about myself that I didn’t know before and my character and confidence have developed a lot with all the experiences, even the bad ones, thanks to all the great people I could share this special time with. My English has also improved and it might sound funny, but it’s become hard for me to speak German again. Even if your culture is not that much different from ours, I have learned to live a different lifestyle and I love to be around all these relaxed and happy people, who are so curious and open-minded and love nothing more than sharing a part of their lives and their homes with people like me.

Of course I have also missed my family and friends home in Germany at times, and now I am looking forward to seeing them again, but I haven’t been homesick at any times. I haven’t had the time and so much else to think about and to enjoy, and yet again it didn’t feel like nearly half a year at all. Besides, technology, like e-mail or Skype, let me forget about the distance between my real and my new home, and it will be even more helpful when I return to stay in contact with my host family and all my friends for a long time.

And who knows, I might come back one day, to this country I have learned to love over the past months, and I will never forget my time here. And my friends can come and visit me any time they want. Special thanks to my host family, their family and friends, my teachers, especially Mrs Anderson and Mr Down, Tammy, Hanna, Tayla, Milly and my other friends (sorry, it would get too long), who have all contributed to making my stay one of the best times of my life and whom I will miss. Thank you for this great experience, I hope I can return one day,

See ya, Maike Steindel.

If you are interested in hosting an overseas exchange student next year, or would like to be an exchange student yourself, contact me within the next two weeks at maikesteindel@aol.com or my organisation Southern Cross Cultural Exchange at scceaust@sccce.com.au, mentioning my name if possible.
Presents a VET Information Session for parents who are new to VET

We invite parents of students who are enrolled in Year 1 VET in 2011 to a VET information session at Echuca College in the Yr 7 Neighborhood on Monday, December 13th, 6pm – 7pm. Meet your child’s VET Trainer, find out what “VET” is!!

How many hours of SWL does my child need to do? What are the class times? Where does my child do VET?

RSVP to Sharon van de Zand – VET Coordinator, ECHUSA COLLEGE

Wheelchair Basketball

On Tuesday afternoon Lindsay, from Wheelchair Sports Victoria, spoke to the Year 1 Vet Sport and Recreation and a Year 11 PE class about what it is like to live with a disability. Lindsay talked about how he ended up in the wheelchair and the way in which his local community rallied and helped him to live with his disability. Rather than let his disability hold him back, within 3 years he has taken up water skiing and basketball, been invited to train at the AIS in the throwing events of athletics and is going to train in America with the Australian Winter Olympics team. Following the presentation, the students experienced what it was like to be in a wheelchair by playing a game of wheelchair basketball. Lindsay’s talk was inspiring and made us all stop and think about making the most of what life offers up to us. Katrina Shirley Head of Health and Physical Education
Community Notices/Events

CYSTIC FIBROSIS AND ORGAN DONATION AWARENESS BBQ

Coen Ashton is a 13yr old boy who suffers from Cystic Fibrosis (CF) the most common genetically inherited life threatening condition affecting young Australians. In Australia a baby is born every 4 days with CF. Coen is now in need of a double lung transplant to save his life.

Coen will be in Echuca on Tuesday 7th December as he attempts to jet ski the length of the Murray River to raise awareness of Cystic Fibrosis and Organ Donation. Come and welcome Coen as he jets into Riverboat Dock at 6pm Tuesday 7th and join him in Hopwood Gardens for a sausage sizzle and show support from the Echuca -Moama community for his amazing effort.

Entertainment and give-a-ways. You can catch up with Coen on his website www.murraycodd.com
Coen has also appeared on Channel Ten’s The 7pm Project.

STRATHALLAN COMMUNITY HALL
CHRISTMAS TREE

Friday 10th December at 7:30pm.
BBQ Dinner.
$25 per family and $5 per person.
Come along and join in the festivities!
Families welcome to bring along a plate of supper.

CENTRELINK - ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS

Centrelink is an Australian Government agency which delivers payments and services, including assistance to students and their families.

Youth Allowance and ABSTUDY provide assistance for young people who are studying full time, undertaking a full-time Australian Apprenticeship or training and/or looking for work.

ABSTUDY is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Study Assistance Scheme. ABSTUDY is paid to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to stay at school or go on to further studies. To be eligible for ABSTUDY, you must be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

Should you wish to test your eligibility or find out more information about Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY visit www.centrelink.gov.au or phone:
Youth and Student Services  13 2490
ABSTUDY 13 2317

When calling please also ask about Health Care Card entitlements.