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NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 34
1st November, 2007

IMPORTANT SCHOOL DATES

November

Monday 5th

Pupil Free Day – No School

Tuesday 6th

Melbourne Cup Day – No School

Wednesday 14th

Book Fair begins

Wednesday 21st

Ready Set Go! Session 1 (prep orientation)

Wednesday 21st

Whole School Photograph



Wednesday 21st

Book Fair ends

Monday 26th

Grade 5/6 Excursion

Tuesday 27th

Italian Day



Wednesday 28th

Ready Set Go! Session 2 (prep orientation)

Thursday 29th

Last Day Junior Swimming

December

Tuesday 4th

Ready Set Go! Session 3 (prep orientation)

Tuesday 4th

Grade 6 Transition Day at High School

Wednesday 5th

School Council – 7.00 pm

Tuesday 11th

End of Year School Concert

Wednesday 12th

End of Year School Concert - Backup

Friday 21st

Last Day of Term 1.30 p.m. finish

2008

Wed. 30th January

Gr. 1-6 chn. commence

Thursday 31st January

Preps begin

GREETINGS FROM KERRIE

Student Achievement

Performing Arts

Congratulations Eva Lazarro!

Eva, Year 6, LA 5, has been successful in being selected for an acting role in the television series 'The Elephant Princess'. Eva had to audition for the part and was able to impress the director and producers with her acting ability. Eva is gaining quite a bit of acting experience as last year she was cast in a major Australian feature film called 'Jindabyne'. Well done Eva, we congratulate you on gaining the part, and look forward to hearing all about the filming experience and then watching you in 'The Elephant Princess'! We are all very proud of your achievement.

Public Speaking Competition

Well done Lydia Di Stefano and Alex Healy!

Our year 5/6 students at our school were required to produce a speaking piece as part of their assessment for English – Speaking & Listening. Their topic was "My Changing World". Two of our year 6 students were then selected to represent our school in a public speaking competition against other primary schools in the area. The competition took place at Northcote High School last week. Alex Healy, LA5 and Lydia Di Stefano, LA7, were our school representatives. Alex gave a speech about 'Skycrapers' and Lydia's speech was 'A Comparison between the last generation and our generation'. Both students spoke really well, keeping in mind all the skills and strategies they had been learning about. Lydia came third! Congratulations both students!

News on Hugh, our Maintenance Person

Hugh is recovering slowly and steadily. He visited our school this week to say hello, and came in with a walking stick. He is able to walk a short distance and then needs rest. Hugh wanted to say thank you to all the children who made him cards.

Parent Opinion Survey winners!

Congratulations to the following parents who were the lucky winners of our draw out of the hat for returning their surveys:

- Kirsty Fotheringham & Peter Cripps (Romany in LA14)
- Deborah King & Geoff Prince (Penelope in LA7)
- Camilla & John Thompson (Jack in LA9)

Thank you to all parents who sent back their surveys to provide us with valued feedback.

From the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Be wary of maths tutorial software

You may have heard advertisements on the radio or seen people in shopping centres selling maths tutoring software.

Mostly the sales person will ask you to sign up for a "free demonstration" or a "free aptitude test". What this means is that they will arrange a time to visit you in your house to sell their product.

Consumer Affairs Victoria has had many complaints from parents who have been pressured into signing on the spot agreements with these maths software companies. Some parents were told that they would harm their child's future, others that their child would not win a scholarship if they did not buy the program. Some parents signed a contract to purchase this software simply because the salesman would not leave.

Even if you do allow the sales representative into your house, you should not feel pressured into signing any contracts. Under the Fair Trading Act 1999, the sales representative must:

- not stay in your house any longer than an hour, unless you give them written permission to do so;
- provide you with a contract that is clear;
- give you a written 10 day cooling off period, during which you can change your mind and cancel the contract. Make sure you cancel in writing. If they do not give you this cooling off period, or do not use the prescribed form, you have 6 months within which you can cancel both the purchase and the credit contract and get your money back;
- not pressure you in any way; and
- leave if you ask them to.

The software they are selling generally costs \$5,000 - \$6,000. If the sales representative offers a credit contract to finance the sale, it will cost a lot more – often between \$8,000 and \$10,000 when you add in the interest payments.

This is a major purchase, so:

- Do not sign anything on the spot. Take the time to make sure this purchase will suit your child. Talk to your child's maths teacher first to see what your child may need and whether the program can provide it.
- Be sure that you can afford it. If you sign a credit contract it will cost you much, much more.
- Be aware that price is no guide to quality, whatever the sales person may say. There are many other considerably cheaper products on the market.

Remember, if you have second thoughts you can cancel the contract within the 10 day cooling off period and get your money back. Make sure you cancel in writing.

If you feel you have been pressured into buying one of these maths tutoring programs, contact Consumer Affairs Victoria on 1300 558181.

- Consumers Affairs Victoria (CAV) is concerned about the operations of a number of maths tutorial software companies. These programs promise remarkable gains in children's maths ability and are pitched at both the primary and secondary school level.
- From no complaints in 2004, CAV is now regularly receiving complaints about twelve companies, all of whom use similar tactics and are similarly priced.
- Complaints to CAV are disproportionately received from vulnerable consumers – low income families, single mothers, people with little or no English.
- There are a number of concerns about these products. They include:
 - Cost
 - Credit arrangements
 - High pressure sales tactics
 - Unconscionable conduct
 - Cancellation
- Parents are encouraged to shop around, not to be pressured into signing contracts and to seek advice from the school.

Warm Regards
Kerrie



PARENT-MANAGED HEADLICE PROGRAM

Just a reminder that we are still looking for volunteers to assist with this program. If you are able to help, please contact Karen or leave a message at the school office.

BOOK FAIR

Our annual Book Fair is arriving soon! For newcomers to the school, it is a 'book shop' organised by Scholastic Books. Books and trinkets, such as fancy pens and interesting rubbers, are available for sale after school, from 3:30 to 4:00. It will be arriving on **Wednesday 14th November** and stay in the Library until the following Wednesday, 21st November. It's a great chance to buy some Christmas presents and help the school library at the same time. The school receives a percentage of the sales and uses that to buy more books for the Library.

To run the Book Fair I need to have some help in the afternoons. It is not difficult – just a matter of taking the money! The trickiest part is using one of those old style credit card machines, and if I can do that, anyone can. If you are able to help for an afternoon or two, please fill in the form below and return it to the office or me, in LA14. Thanks for taking the time to think about this.



Cheers, Anne Lawson, LA14

✂-----

I can help at the Book Fair on the following day/s.

- Wednesday 14th November
- Thursday 15th November
- Friday 16th November
- Monday 19th November
- Tuesday 20th November

Name: -----

Contact No.: -----

Child's name: -----
LA: ____

LOOKING FOR A WAY TO EARN UP TO \$1000? (for the school)

Role : Pre-loved Toys or CDs or Clothes Co-ordinators for the Fete

- Job description:
- : Leave an enormous box outside the office from February onwards
 - : Remind people to donate old stuff to school (use newsletter, website, cattle prod ... whatever you can think of!)
 - : Empty the box regularly (at least twice a week), sort the stuff and store it in secret location at the school!
 - : Price it, and think of exciting ways to entice people to buy it
 - : Set up stall on fete day, do at least a shift on it, pack it up at the end of the day
 - : Hand over all money made to the school for your children's education
 - : Arrange for a worthy charity to pick up any left over stuff the week after the fete

Wage : Nothing

Anyone welcome to Apply

This is the easiest money that the school makes. We currently have someone who has come forward for the book stall, and the Trash 'n treasure (though they will need help).

It costs nothing to run, so everything is profit, and we all love a bargain. Last year the 'Pre-loved' stalls contributed \$3000 to our coffers. If you think you can help please contact Nicky Dulfer at 9489 1439 or nickydulfer@hotmail.com

WALKTOBER

A big thank you to everyone who participated in Walktober. A total of 242.4 kms was achieved by 105 walkers.

Don't forget to send your sponsorship money to the school by 15th November.

CLASSROOM MUSIC SURVEY 2007

Earlier in term 3 our community was asked for their views regarding a classroom music program funded by an extra payment by all families. The survey arose in response to the fact that we currently do not have a specialist music teacher and class teachers take weekly lessons in music. Two surveys (identical) were distributed at different times, due to a hiccup in the distribution of the first one.

Results:

Initial survey: 2nd survey:

Yes – support user pays music program	Yes with concerns	No	Yes-support user pays program	Yes with concerns	No
30	2	5	35	3	10



Key Issues raised from surveys included:

- Outsourcing a great idea
- Outsourcing of any program not appropriate
- Outsourcing music only in preparation for a special event
- Music already adequately covered by classroom teachers
- Class teachers could undertake music PD
- Music program could be integrated into other school events eg: choir, presentations

Summary:

Performing Arts is highly valued in our community, and it reflects one of our core values, that is, “creativity”. The results of the music survey indicate that there are strong views either way to outsourcing programs. All parents who responded to the survey agreed that having a specialised music program was important but not all agreed to a user pays program as results and dot points above indicate.

Outcome from School Council:

1. A policy for outsourcing learning programs be developed
2. The performing arts be celebrated in conjunction with the visual arts in future years



A draft policy regarding outsourcing learning programs is under development by members of the Policy and Finance sub-committee. As it happens, early this term the Department of Education and Early Childhood Education released the Parent Payments in Victorian Schools Policy. Our school-level policy will reflect our core values and be compliant with the Department’s.

Karen Rush
On behalf of Policy & Finance Committee

PREP NEWS

On Tuesday the preps had a special visitor. Cam Walker (Tali's dad) came to talk about habitats and the work that 'Friends of the Earth' does to help endangered animals.



To help raise money for this organisation LA10 will be baking animal biscuits and selling them on Friday 2nd November at lunch time outside LA10. The biscuits will be

\$0.50 cents each. Here are some messages from the Preps:

We're making animal biscuits and selling them for \$0.50 cents to raise money – Xavier

The money goes to 'Friends of the Earth' – Oliver B

For the animals that FOE are looking after – Tali

Tali's dad came in and talked to us. We will make animal biscuits and selling them on Friday (2nd Nov.) at lunch time – Ella

Thank you Cam for coming and talking to us. We learnt a lot – Rebecca

Thanks and don't forget your \$0.50 cents for these yummy biscuits. Reynelle (student teacher)

NEWSLETTER REMINDER

All items for the newsletter must be at the office by Wednesday recess for inclusion in that week's edition.

With the end of year coming up it will be getting extremely busy in the office and time (as per usual) will be running away. Items can be emailed to the school at northcote.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au with Newsletter as the subject line.

Thanks, Jo & Lyn



NORTHCOTE LIBRARY CLOSURE

The Northcote Library will be closed for maintenance from Saturday 17th November to Sunday 9th December. During the closure we encourage you to:

Use our after hours returns chute which will be open 24 hours a day

Visit our Fairfield, Preston and Reservoir Libraries

Renew your items by phone on 1300 655 355 or online at www.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au

THREE BANDS ON ONE NIGHT!

Friday 23rd November at 8.00 p.m.
"303" – 303 High Street, Northcote

Terry O'Reilly's	"One and the Same"
Frank Jones'	"Big Folk"
Pip Pupillo's	"T-Bones"

Parents will be in the yard from mid next week selling tickets. The cost will be:

\$10.00 early bird (pre-purchased) or
\$12.00 on the night

Tickets will be available from the school office only on Friday 23rd November after school.

WE'VE BEEN TO THE ZOO – Grades 1 & 2

The giant tortoises didn't move much.
They were slow. By Joe

**There were three turtles in with a crocodile
and the crocodile wasn't doing much and
the turtles were going crazy!** By Winnie

*I liked the black orang-utans because the son
and the dad were having a fight with each
other. I liked the kid because he was
swinging around.* By Reshaan

I really liked the zebra and the orang-
utans because they were crazy and they
moved a lot. By Nino

*I wanted to see the baboons because they have
funny bottoms. I got to see the butterflies and
I have a secret to make them land on my finger.*
By Remany

*I liked seeing the maned wolf because I
thought it was cute.* By Tessa

*I liked the butterflies because they flew
around and sometimes perched on you.* By
Leah

THERE WERE SOME CUTE MONKEYS IN OUR
LESSON. THEY WERE CALLED SQUIRREL
MONKEYS. I ALSO LIKE THE BUTTERFLIES. I
LOVE THE ZOO. BY JOSEPHINE

I like the orang-utans because I liked it when
they jumped around on the ropes. The baby
jumped on its dad's back. It was really funny.
By Sean

*I enjoyed the picnic spot and my favourite
animal at the zoo was the meerkats and the
bearded dragon.* By Lidia

*We saw giant tortoises, reptiles and lions. We
saw the hyenas but they didn't laugh.* By Alex

**My favourite animals were the
giant turtles because they are
really big.** By Ben

I SAW SOME BIG ELEPHANTS. WE WENT INTO
THE REPTILE HOUSE AND THE KEEPERS
BROUGHT OUT A SNAKE. BY JORDAN.

*The orang-utans were swinging around on the
ropes and the elephants were tying their
trunks. The greatest thing about it was all of
the animals.* By Roy

**I went to see the elephants. They
are big. They have a tail.** By
Joshua

*I liked seeing the dingoes, the lions and the
wolves. I liked the meerkats and the crocodiles.*
By Zach

**I saw the meerkats and the elephants
and giraffes. The giraffes and
elephants were big. The meerkats were
small.** By Jayden

*I patted the corn snake. It felt soft. I felt the
bearded dragon. The spikes felt soft.* By
Shannay

We went to see the orang-utans. There was a
little black one and a bigger black one. The two
were play fighting and everyone liked the little
black one. By Grace

*We got to the zoo at 10 o'clock and then we
passed the bears and the meerkats to get to the
lesson. In the lesson we saw some birds and turtles
and monkeys and lizards. There was a snake
called Rosie. Kierah fed the monkeys.* By
Greta

**We learnt that a red tailed black
cockatoo is endangered because of us.
We are chopping down the old trees
that they live in. So they have to put
their nests on the ground and the
predators can eat the eggs. We must
stop using so much paper.** By Kierah

After lunch we went to the reptiles. Then
we saw the giant tortoises and then we saw
the platypus. They have hair on their tails.
They are fast swimmers. By Hugo