Alstonville High School Newsletter

Developing future citizens and leaders of the community – life long learning!

Cawley Close Alstonville Phone: (02) 6628 5222 Fax: (02) 6628 1223 Web: www.alstonville.schools.nsw.edu.au

Issue 5 03 April 2013

Alstonville High School

Our community values integrity in all aspects of life

Values

We value and support:
- A positive, healthy and safe learning environment
- Respectful attitudes and actions
- Diversity
- Pursuit of personal excellence
- Service to community
- Team work
- Quality learning and teaching
- Initiative, leadership and self-discipline

Learning

We aspire to be:
- Life-long learners
- Creative and critical thinkers
- Effective communicators
- Skilled in literacy and numeracy
- Independent and organised
- Competent and innovative with technology
- Environmentally, socially and culturally informed
- Caring and compassionate

Alstonville High School P&C

Last week the Alstonville High School P&C held its AGM. The P&C plays a very important role by working with the school to improve opportunities, processes and resources for our students and families. Last year was a very productive and successful year for the P&C. Not only did they increase donations to the school to $30,000 but they also contributed by upgrading the school canteen and constructing a new integrated uniform facility. The new school uniform is completely implemented, Hospitality students are working in the school canteen and the P&C supported a large number of very important school and community events. The P&C has helped the school develop policy and supported new educational initiatives such as the Boys’ Education Program. I would urge you to read the President’s report for 2012 which will be loaded onto the school webpage. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the outgoing members of the P&C for all their hard work – we will not only miss their contributions but we will miss their presence around the school. They have contributed countless hours to volunteering at the school.

On behalf of the school I would also like to thank and congratulate the new P&C executive team. They include:

- President: Annette McGrath
- Secretary: Christine McNally
- Treasurer: David Kirsh

I know that they are also very keen to work to support the school and our students. They cannot do this alone and I join with them in encouraging all parents to come along and contribute to the work of the P&C. The more people we have involved the lighter the workload and the stronger the message we send to our students that their education is important. Actions speak louder than words.

Congratulations Connor Floyd

Next week I am flying to Sydney to attend the presentation to Connor Floyd of a Nanga Mai State Student leadership award. Connor was nominated by Alstonville High School and North Coast Region to receive this prestigious award and we continue to be proud of Connor’s achievements.

Parent Teacher Night next Tuesday 9th April

On Tuesday 9th April we are holding our first Parent Teacher Night for 2013. This night is open to all year groups and you can make a booking to see teachers online at www.sobs.com.au. Parent Teacher nights are only one opportunity we make available for families to communicate with teachers about the progress of our students. We
appreciate that not all families will be able to make bookings for the 9th and that in fact it might not be appropriate for all situations. We can also provide feedback through phone calls, email and through meetings arranged at other times. We look forward to a busy night and the chance to meet with parents to talk about how your child is progressing.

**Students as partners in learning – the importance of habits of mind – something to think about**

Over the summer holidays and during Term 1 there has been some media focus on studies questioning the effectiveness of students engaging with regular homework. Some of these studies have suggested that homework is of no significant use to students.

It is the case that homework can be of little use, or in fact can be quite damaging if it is not properly thought through. Good homework, like good lesson material, should be engaging for students. It should challenge their thinking, help build core skills and knowledge and be relevant.

What a lot of the research about homework doesn’t look at is the cumulative effect of developing a habit of completing regular homework and revision. It doesn’t look at the impact over time on students who move into senior school without having developed these habits. Anyone who has worked hard at developing a particular skill or knowledge knows that there often comes a point where what is required is repetition and regular practice to allow individuals or teams to move to the next level. Think of the role of drill in sports or the amount of repeated practice required of talented musicians.

It is of course very important to balance this kind of repetitive hard work with opportunities for creative application or acknowledgement of achievement. What is often overlooked is that by establishing a habit of doing regular revision and drills, of acquiring the habit of reviewing performance and setting new goals establish the foundation for future success.

Anyone who has worked with a senior student who has not acquired the habit (and skills) of completing regular study and revision, who hasn’t established the habits and skills associated with effective time management knows that this student is going to find further study of any kind more difficult and stressful than students who have developed these habits of mind.

Studies have shown that students who have regular chores in the home, who participate in regular after school activities such as sport, music or community work and who also have established regular patterns of study and homework are generally happier and engage more successfully with learning (both at and beyond the school level). They are less likely to report that they feel ‘bored’ and are more likely to develop individual initiative and responsibility. Once again the issue of balance is obviously important but this does go to indicating that habits of mind developed through the home can have huge positive impact on the wellbeing of young people.

**Working Bee - Sunday 7th April**

We are holding a short working bee on the morning of the 7th of April. The main aim of this working bee is to do a quick tidy up around the school focusing on:

- Cleaning hard surfaces
- Picking up litter, broken branches and other relics of the recent rough weather
- Tidying garden beds, raking mulch and minor weeding
- Minor pruning of trees

The more volunteers who can contribute some time to the day the neater, tidier and safer our school will be. We currently have about 17 families indicating they will be attending – it would be terrific if we could increase this level of support.

Any students who attend and volunteer can have this time accredited to your volunteer record and added to your CV.

Below is a link to an online survey tool where you can very quickly register your name, the amount of time you might be able to attend, and your preferred activity. Having this information beforehand will help us more effectively plan for the morning.


If you can’t attend on the day and would like to volunteer at another time or register your apologies please also use this link to register your information.

Please come along and if possible bring a friend!

**School Parking**

The car park at the front of the school (near the gas tank) is for staff and visitors to the school only. Anyone using this car park needs to go around the roundabout to use this area (do not cross the solid white lines)

Neither car park is to be used as a drop off zone for students at the beginning or end of the day. We suggest that the quietest and safest drop off zone is the one on Coral Street (students can use an umbrella or raincoat on rainy days).

We have applied for funding to construct an additional covered area at the front of our school and if we are successful we will be looking at other strategies to keep the front of our school as safe as possible.

Students also have a responsibility if they are walking or driving to ensure they are careful arriving and leaving the school.
ANZAC Day
ANZAC Day falls during the school holidays this year on Thursday 25th of April. Alstonville High School will once again be supporting the ANZAC Day ceremony being held in Alstonville and would urge as many families as possible to come along and help us demonstrate our support for this important community event. Every year we receive great feedback about how the community appreciates our students and staff attending the ANZAC Day ceremonies and this sort of positive feedback reflects well on our students. Mrs Wiggins is coordinating our involvement, supported by a team of student volunteers and can answer any questions students might have about where and when they can meet. We ask that as a mark of respect for this event that all students who do attend please wear formal school uniform.

Alstonville High School Cross Country – 5th April
Our annual Cross Country Carnival is on this Friday. This is an important event in the school’s calendar and comprises part of how we meet our obligations to cover the mandatory physical education requirements for all our students (this is particularly important for all senior students). This event is always a very enjoyable day and is a normal school day for all students. Attendance is compulsory and we can arrange for alternative activities for those students who cannot participate in the fun run due to injury or other health reasons.

Year 12 Exams Term 2
This year we are trying something new to support Year 12 students completing half yearly exams. The exams will commence during the first two School Development Days and run for the rest of the first week back next term. They will be supervised by the team of external supervisors who supervise the actual HSC exams. This means that we reduce the amount of lesson time lost by Year 12 students and we also provide them with the experience of working with outside supervisors.

School Development Days at the start of Term 2
As you may be aware the State Government has set aside an extra School Development Day at the start of Term 2 this year for schools to work on preparing for the implementation of the new national curriculum. This means that teachers from Alstonville High School will be taking part in professional learning on Monday and Tuesday (29th and 30th April). On the 29th of April we will be hosting a conference that will be attended by teachers from Alstonville High School, Byron Bay High School and Mullumbimby High School (BAM). This means that there will be over 200 teachers and support staff at Alstonville High School who will be working together to prepare for the implementation of the new curriculum. On Tuesday the 30th of April a number of faculties will continue to work with faculty groups from other schools developing teaching programs and resources whilst other faculties will be at Alstonville High School working on other key focus areas from our school management plan all of which aim to support our goal of nurturing a love of learning.

Last Newsletter for Term 1
This will be the last newsletter for Term 1. I hope that everyone has an enjoyable and safe holiday and I look forward to seeing you all in Term 2.
David Silcock
Principal

Peer Support Camp 2013
The Year 7 Peer Support Camp was held at Camp Koinonia, Evans Head from the 20th to the 22nd of March. The Year 7 students were mixed up in groups of 15 students. Each group was supervised by 4 Year 11 Peer Support leaders and a teacher.

The one and a half day camp tested the confidence, ability and courage of many students. It was amazing to see many students perform very well out of their comfort zone. The students must be congratulated in that they all had a go at different activities, even some of the tough ones like Rock-it and rock climbing. They were excellent ambassadors of our school.

The students formed new friendships between themselves and also with their leaders. The Year 11 Peer Support leaders rose to the occasion by demonstrating excellent manners and wonderful supervisory skills. We expect some of them to take our places when we retire.

Special thanks to Mr White and Mrs O’ Brien who helped with the organisation of the camp. Please find some of the wonderful shots taken by Mr Colnan in this newsletter. The teachers and students enjoyed the games presented by Mr Fleming. Special mention also goes to Mr Harris, Mrs McAlister, Mr Weeks and Mrs Allen who helped with the smooth running of the camp.

Anna John / Year 7 Adviser

Sport News
North Coast CHS Golf Championships
On Tuesday 26th March Toni McDuff represented Alstonville High School at the North Coast CHS Golf Championships at Yamba. She competed in the 18 hole event and was awarded Girls net winner of the Jack Newton Shield which was for girls in years 7-9.
Congratulations!

Water Polo
Once again the Alstonville High School Open Girls and Boys Water Polo team have become North Coast champions after
defeating both Maclean and Melville at Grafton last Wednesday. All players performed well and are hopeful of success in the final eight of the CHS Knockout next week in Newcastle.

Many thanks to Mrs Larrescy for driving to Grafton (with an extra 4 hours of duty due to traffic delays) and Mr Moosberger for helping with training throughout the term.

Chris Hill

The “Yummy/ Yucky” world view!

A woman, aged 30, who drank up to 10 litres of Coke a day, died recently from heart disease associated with her high sugar and caffeine diet. Yet coke is so “yummy.” Do you suffer from too heavy a reliance on what I call the “yummy/ yucky” worldview? We naturally are drawn towards things we like, and seek to avoid things we don’t. We like nice sensations and avoid painful ones. This is often wise! I avoid stepping on the nail in the piece of wood. I seek a comfortable spot in the shade to read a good book while having my feet massaged! But to what extent can the “yummy/yucky” world view sustain a successful life? This is a question we raised recently in year ten.

The “yummy” worldview – I grasp all that is pleasurable and fun and avoid all that is painful, dull and boring, is at the heart of many ills in our society. After all, nearly every act of corruption we have read about in sport and politics recently involves a short cut search for “yummy” things – money, sex, winning, fitness, or property deals. Nearly every act of infidelity or addiction is fuelled by something “yummy.”

We need to remember that sometimes the “yucky” things are actually more valuable in the long term than the yummy things. Changing nappies at two in the morning was never a “yummy” experience, but that type of devotion to a baby builds strong bonds of love and commitment that serve a lifetime. The painful sit-ups and push-ups at training enhance athletic quality when the game is played. The hours of study have their reward in a career you love and excel at. What do we want in the end from our sports heroes and politicians; men and women who feel good about themselves, or who are good? Feelings come and go all the time, but being good – seeking to live to the best that your conscience and morality guides you - can be a stable foundation regardless of how you are feeling. Coke is certainly yummy, but we need a diet guided not only by what tastes good, but by what is good. Sometimes saying “no” to the “yummy” distraction or short term pleasure, and embracing the “yucky” alternative may bring a greater reward, and make you a better person.

Note: I recently had my own experience of “yucky,” returning to study last year. Under the new Federal Government Chaplaincy Guidelines, Chaplains are required to complete the minimum educational requirements for identifying mental health issues and making mental health referrals. This I did through two subjects last year, Introductory and Advanced Pastoral Care, through the Australian College of Theology. I was happy and proud to receive a distinction in both subjects but I had to say “no” to a lot of yummy things to get there!

Bruce Fleming / Religious Instruction

Rubbish

Staff from Maranoa Nursing home collected this pile of rubbish from their garden that meets the Coral Street path.

They are hoping we can support them in reducing the amount of litter in this area.

Aboriginal School Based Trainees with Lismore City Council

Lismore City Council General Manager Gary Murphy welcoming new school-based trainees (left to right), Jaihana Roberts, Kyeoma Caldwell and Bindjarla Cook.

Get into the good Books with Book Bonus!

This year, our school has registered to participate in Book Bonus, an exciting online fundraising option directly linked to the NSW Premier’s Reading Challenge.

We believe Book Bonus is an ideal opportunity to encourage students to read books for the NSW Premier’s Reading Challenge.

For more information on Book Bonus and Dymocks Children’s Charities, we encourage you to review the information available on their website – www.bookbonus.org.au.
PEER SUPPORT CAMP 2013
Careers News

- A Year 12 Careers Newsletter will be handed to students before the end of Term 1. A copy of this information will also be placed on the school website and next school newsletter emailed to parents.

Defence Force Information Night
The recruiting team will be conducting an information night for people interested in The Royal Military College – Duntroon (RMC)
Date: Tuesday 9th April 2013
Time: 6pm
Location: Coolangatta Recruiting Office
RSVP: nwenberg@dfc.com.au or tmaher@dfc.com.au or 07 5569 3900
By 4pm Tuesday 9th April

Ballina Community College
Study Skills For HSC Success
Improve your academic performance and results with this intensive two day course. Develop effective learning and organisation tools that can be used in all areas of your study and life, well beyond the HSC. This course will give you the edge in study habits, time management, exam preparation and exam technique.
Fee: $175
Ballina - Mon 15 & Tue 16 April 9am-3pm
Alstonville - Thu 4 Jul & Fri 5 Jul 10am – 3.30pm

Essay Writing Strategies
Learn how to analyse essay questions, research and organise information and write good introductions, paragraphs and conclusions. This course also covers writing clear and concise essays in HSC exam situations.
Fee: $80
Ballina Fri 12th Jul 10am – 2pm

Mary-Anne Meginess
Promotions Officer
PO Box 222 Alstonville NSW 2477 | Tel: 02 6628 5426 | Fax: 02 6628 5315 | Web: www.ballinarcc.edu.au
P&C, CANTEEN & UNIFORM NEWS

P&C AGM 2013

At our AGM held last week we elected our new office bearers for 2013.

OFFICE BEARERS
President – Annette McGrath
Vice-president– Wendy Hoven
Secretary– Chris McNally, Minutes Jo Longman
Treasurer– David Kirsh, Assistant Trish Schweder

BUSINESS SUB-COMMITTEE
Convenor – Jane Sproule
Minutes – Skye Gallop
Treasurer – David Kirsh
Member – Margaret Rigby

We welcome them and wish them well for the forthcoming year.

MONTHLY CANTEEN VOLUNTEER ROSTER VACANCIES

We have vacancies on all Thursdays of the month so please consider joining our wonderful canteen volunteers team
★ Free lunch AND morning tea★
★ Enjoy working with like-minded people★
★ Experience our newly upgraded canteen★

If you can help please contact Sandra Griffiths on 6628 1797

UNIFORM SHOP OPENING HOURS
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
8am - 10am