

Thorndon School Newsletter

37/2009

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Water is life's mater and matrix, mother and medium. There is no life without water.

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

Action List

Are all payments up to date?

Have you returned library books?

Dear Parents

Kia ora. This has been a very pleasant week. First we had the usual weary euphoria that follows the fair and perhaps I should talk about that first. You will all be keen to know how we got on. The weather wasn't as good as it was last year, the crowds were smaller and we are in a recession but we will still net about \$50,000. While this is about \$5,000 less than last year it is still a wonderful result given these factors. Everything ran exceptionally smoothly and this is because of the hours and days of work put in by the organising committee. I am not sure that everyone realises just how much is involved in making sure that everything comes together on the day but it is an immense effort. We all owe a huge vote of thanks to **Carleen Needham**, **Carol Weston**, **Carol Shortis** and **Jacquie McVie** who have been thinking about and working towards this fair since early in the year. We also had a very good response from the rest of the school community to requests for help and resources and I would like to thank everyone for the various contributions they have made.

On the same day we had the school chess tournament and this is reported on further into the newsletter. **Alistair du Chatenier** is the person who promotes and organises chess in the school and participation rates grow every year.



That was Monday. On Tuesday we had the tabloids. A morning of low intensity games for teams of vertically grouped children with the emphasis on participation and enjoyment. The Sports Squad and the Young Leaders Group played a large part in the planning and running of these sports which were organised and overseen by **Natasha Jackson**. These sports, featuring activities like gumboot throwing, also seem to involve lots of water so it is logical that they should be followed by what has, in only its second year, become a tradition - if that is possible.

The water fight. Eagerly anticipated and, on the face of it, totally pointless. Lots of fun though and as school should be about fun as well as about academic achievement, particularly at the primary school level, we probably over achieved. I wish I had had a good camera with a long lens as the expressions on the faces of both kids and adults were worth recording. Perhaps next time. Teachers were, naturally enough, targeted, but age, experience and cunning meant that they were pretty well prepared for what was to come.



Fair and water fight done with we had yesterday's barbecue and carol singing. The sun didn't shine and the wind blew but we had a great turn out for what was a really relaxed and enjoyable occasion. I loved the performances by all the groups and the senior band in particular just gets better every time I hear them. Congratulations to everyone involved and in particular to **Andrew Pennell** who taught the songs, trained and rehearsed the band and organised the evening. Thanks to the staff who manned the barbecues and the bar through the evening.



I apologise for the reports not having gone out when I said they would. I did say at the time that we had set ourselves an ambitious target and it quickly became apparent that it was over-ambitious. Some have gone out already and the last of them will be posted today.

I have one last major job to complete this term though there are lots of other little bits and pieces to finish off. The last major remaining task is to organise classes for next year. The first part of this was to decide on the organisation of the school and the way classes will be made up and this has proved to be more complex than it has been in the past few years. The roll is under immense pressure and so there will be some changes in the way we have grouped our cohorts. One of our primary aims has been to keep classes sizes as low as we can and to allow room for some growth as new children come in. I hope to be able to complete most of this work over the weekend and let everyone know what is happening next week.

And finally, we celebrate the successes of our children in the newsletter quite regularly and it is nice to be able to talk about a staff member's success. Rebecca Brown has been accepted onto the National Aspiring Principals' Programme (colloquially known as Nappy by experienced and established principals). This is a programme that accepts a limited number of applicants and Rebecca is the second member of our management team to be accepted on to the programme as Alistair did it last year. We should feel very pleased at what is an acknowledgement within the education community of the quality of our senior staff. Congratulations Rebecca.

Bill Sutton

Board of Trustees Report.

The Board of Trustees met on 8 December. Bill's report prompted a wide discussion about the school roll, since it has been growing steadily for some time and the school will be effectively "full" at the start of the new year. Although it's a positive sign that the roll is high, it'll be quite a job to organise classroom sizes and year permutations to leave room for growth in the junior school while at the same time not compromising optimal classroom sizes for teaching and learning.

We had an update on our local curriculum progress, National Standards, and reporting to parents. The Board noted that Thorndon already provides parents with student achievement reports similar to those which the Ministry will require under the new National Standards guidelines. However, displaying achievement against the standards will be the challenging part. We also discussed teacher matters, including the excellent result of Rebecca Brown being accepted onto a national Aspiring Principals course.

Other matters included noting how successful fundraising has been this year with The Fair, art auction, entertainment books and seed sales. It's really hard work for all involved, but particular thanks were extended to the team who organised the Fair. It's a huge commitment by a very small team, yet the whole school community benefits enormously. And finally, the Board noted the wonderful news that the Ministry will be giving Thorndon the Kimi Ora site in about a year's time from now.

Have a safe and happy Christmas break.

Mandy

New Children

It seems amazing that we are still enrolling children so late in the year but we have two new pupils to welcome.

They are:

Elaina Neal	Y1	Room 2 - Harakeke
Brandon Takavarasha	Y7	Room 11 - Rata

Elaina joins her older brother Harrison at the school while Brandon and his family have recently arrived from the UK. They had planned to move into an apartment in Hill St on Sunday but the fair – which came as a complete surprise – meant a rapid change of plans.

We welcome Brandon and his family to the school community.

Chess

Also on Monday we held the school's annual chess tournament, something that has become part of the school environment over the last few years.

Eighty children took part which is nearly a third of the school, an indication of how entrenched chess has become.

Results were as follows:

1 st	Taine McKenzie	Y7
2 nd	Noah McGarvey	Y8
3 rd	Logan Jeffries	Y8
1 st girl	Jan Earle	Y8

Nobody went through entirely undefeated and some of the results were very close

Term 4 Calendar

Dec 15	Parent Helper Morning Tea
Dec 16	Y 8 Farewell Dinner
Dec 17	Road Patrol Training
Dec 18	Term ends 12:00.
Feb 3	Term 1 begins
Feb 17	School picnic
Feb 19	Meet the Teacher barbecue
Mar 2	Year 7/8 to Festival event
Mar 3	World Maths Day
Mar 4	Year 5/6 to Festival event
Mar 8	Year 5/6 to Festival event
Mar 15	Year 7/8 to Festival event
Mar 17	Swimming Sports
Mar 19	Year 5/6 to Festival event
Mar 22	Year 5/6 to Stadium Sports
Mar 22	Year 7/8 camp
Apr 1	Term ends

All these dates are tentative at the moment and will be confirmed in the new year. The term is a short one because Easter falls early, and there are only 7 full weeks with the first and last weeks both being short.

Lost

We seem to have two missing RTs from the fair. Both are small Uniden units and these ones were probably used at the fair entrances.

If anyone has found one of these among their belongings we would love to have it returned.



Library

Please ensure all overdue books are returned **IMMEDIATELY**.

All school library books need to be returned before the last Wednesday of the term - 15th December. Bookslips will be coming home. Please help look for these books. If you can't send the books send a note or email as soon as possible. Even if only to say you are still looking.

Our children enjoy the use of an extensive library and we appreciate your help to keep the books available for all the students.

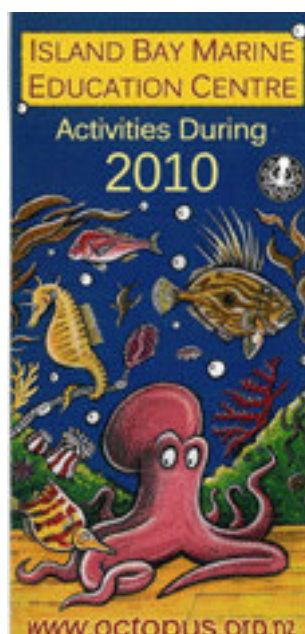
Lost Property

As usual we have managed to collect – or more accurately – your children have managed to lose an astonishing array of clothing.

This is on display in the library and will be for 2 or 3 days.

At the end of the term what is left will be collected and given to one of the welfare organisations. If you get a chance please try to drop in to the library to see if you can identify something your child might have lost.

Holiday Programme



The details on this might be a little hard to read but effectively it says that there are holiday programmes available at the Island Bay Marine Education Centre www.octopus.org.nz

2010 JANUARY SCHOOL HOLIDAY TRAINING CLINICS

**Jan 4th –Jan 8th, Jan 11th–15th,
Jan 18th -22nd, Jan 25th -29th**

Venue: Wellington Table Tennis Association Stadium

Address: Alexandra Road(off Constable St), Newtown

Time: Monday to Friday 9am – 12pm

Contact: Andrew Hubbard on (04) 5637 – 902 or adhubbard36@hotmail.com

School holiday training camps are a great chance for table tennis players 16 years and under to meet new people and develop their table tennis skills at the same time. The camps are suitable for all levels of player, from beginner to competitive.

The January School Holidays training camp will be organized by ITTF accredited coach, former NZ champion and international player Andrew Hubbard.

The cost of the week long clinic is **\$75.00 per person**.

Enrolment forms available from Jane Stocker.

Extension and Enrichment

Bright Pre-schooler? Small Poppies is NZ's longest running extension and enrichment programme for bright and gifted pre-schoolers aged 3 – 6 years, run by the Gifted Education Centre Charitable Trust.

Now coming to Wellington!

Founder and Lead Teacher, Sue Breen, will be at the Johnsonville Community Centre, Johnsonville, Wellington, 26 – 28 January 2010, to hold parent and teacher workshops and to work with children who wish to be considered for the programme. For further information, please contact the Coordinator:

Shirley Lawn, tel 04 232 3523, email: shirley.lawn@giftededucation.org.nz, website: www.smallpoppies.co.nz

Nits

Head lice seem to be rampant again at the moment so it might pay to take a few minutes to check your child's hair. The problem is easily treated but we realise how frustrating it is to be constantly having to treat your child's hair with what is a fairly expensive shampoo.

This is a perennial problem for schools and there is virtually nothing that we can do about it at this end except to let you know. The only comfort I can offer is that they don't actually do any harm.

***LOST/STOLEN
REWARD \$500***

Since 30th Sept 2009.

Mini Lassie

Any Sighting Since Then

Please Ring

04 479 8180

0210233637

Or dog control 3888212

Much Loved thanks

