

Thorndon School Newsletter

39/2010

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Have a happy Christmas and a wonderful summer

Action List

Have you brought your accounts up to date? Do you know when Term 1 starts?

Dear Parents

Kia ora. I can't see how we can get a newsletter out next week with school finishing at 12:00 and a final assembly at 11:00 so this will be it for 2010. This has been another busy year and has, I think, largely been successful. The introduction of the standards has been the catalyst for a great deal of discussion, some angst and a fair bit of controversy. They will continue to vex us for some time to come. A little snippet on student achievement. Yesterday the results of the 2009 PISA study were released. PISA is an international assessment of the reading, science and mathematical literacy of 15-year-old students and takes place in 3-year cycles. The study takes place in 65 OECD countries and nearly half a million students are involved. In the latest round of testing New Zealand came 5th in Reading and Science and 11th in Maths, once again performing significantly better than most other countries including the US, the UK and Australia all of whom are following a national standards/national testing regime. Finland, which consistently features at the top of PISA and other international studies, tends to take a different approach. I have put a link on the curriculum page of the website to an interesting story in the Guardian about Finnish schools. New Zealand has an education system which is, on any objective measure, one of the best in the world and we should celebrate this.

Last night we held our end of year barbecue, Guitars on the Grass, and the turn out, especially given the sudden return to wintry temperatures, was impressive. Thank you all for making the effort. We deliberately made it a low key, relaxed affair, focussing on the the accomplishments of our children, notably in music and visual arts. We have a lot of very talented performers. Some of those children who were up singing and playing in the bands are shy, quiet and lacking confidence in the classroom but blossom on the stage. Performance music is clearly a way through for some children, just as visual art, dance or sport is for others. One of the challenges for teachers is to work out how to use these talents and interests to develop the core curriculum.

Reports, class lists, stationery lists and term dates will all be posted out on Monday. It has taken longer than anticipated to get through all the reports with all sorts of competing time demands but they will all be done and ready for posting then. Class lists this year have been more difficult than ever before but I think that this morning I have arrived at a finished set! No changes now.

I would like to thank all the staff for their efforts this year. They have, as they always do, put in much more time than required, giving up evenings, weekends and holidays to organise and supervise school teams, to plan and organise school activities and to take part in professional development. It is a pleasure to work with them. Their efforts are evident in the achievement levels of our children, particularly in literacy which is a real strength in the school. Hela and Julie in the office keep things ticking over and, as first points of contact for the most, provide a great first impression for visitors. Thanks too, to Alistair for taking over while I was away. It is great to be able to leave the school confident that everything will continue to work as it should. It has also been a pleasure to work with a board which is forward looking and has identified student achievement as its primary focus. They set direction for the school and support the staff by making sure that we have the resources we need to deliver the curriculum.

I hope we all get the summer we want, that everyone has a wonderful Christmas and New Year and a great summer holiday. Good luck and best wishes to those who are leaving us and we will see everyone else back here on February 2, 2011.

Bill Sutton

Term 4 Calendar

Nearly there!

Dec 13	Reports posted
Dec 14	Parent morning tea
Dec 15	Year 8 farewell dinner
Dec 16	Term ends 12:00.

2011 Calendar

We haven't added to this since last week so it is still the definitive calendar – though everything is subject to confirmation.

Jan 27	Staff at conference - Palmerston North
Jan 28	Staff at conference - Palmerston North
Jan31	Teacher only day
Feb 1	Teacher only day
Feb 2	Term 1 begins
Feb 18	Meet the Teacher – school barbecue
Feb 23	School Picnic
Mar 1	Gardasil Vaccination – Year 8 girls
Mar 17	Y 1-4 to Capital E Arts Festival
Mar 22	Y 7-8 to Capital E Arts Festival
Mar 24	Y 5-6 to Capital E Arts Festival
Apr 15	Term ends
May 2	Term 2 Begins
Jun 6	Queen's Birthday – School closed
Jun 27	3 Way conferences begin
Jul 15	Term ends
Aug 1	Term 3 begins
Sep 29	Gardasil Vaccination – Year 8 girls Boostrix Vaccination – Year 7 boys and girls
Oct 7	Term ends
Oct 24	Labour Day – School closed
Oct 25	Term 4 begins
Dec 4	The Fair
Dec 8	School Barbecue and Carol Singing
Dec 14	Year 8 Farewell
Dec15	Term ends.

Staff Movements

There will be little change to staffing at the end of this year with only one person moving on.

Jimmy Metherell, one of our Teacher Aides, is leaving us for his OE. Jimmy has been with us for two years and has done a fantastic job for us. He has given us a great deal more than the teacher aiding and has added much to the music scene at the school working alongside Andrew Pennell.

We hope he has a wonderful time while he is away – working for at least part of the time on a luxury yacht in the Med – and we look forward to hearing about all he does. Or most of what he does. Or even some of what he gets up to.

He will be hard to replace and we wish him all the best.

The Fair

I have sent out an email thanking everyone but not everyone is on the email list. The fair was very successful and we have made about \$3,000 more than we made last year, in spite of not having the 2 barbecues. We were prepared to take a bit of a financial hit by not having them so we were pleasantly surprised. It certainly made a huge difference to the organisation, making life much easier.

This year's fair seemed to run more smoothly than ever and this is a tribute to the organising committee who have it down to a fine art. Thanks you to *Carleen Needham, Carol Weston, Carol Shortis* and *Jacquie McVie*. Every year they talk about this fair or the next one being the last and I think that in 2011 there will be some shoulder tapping and mentoring going on as they prepare to step down.

We also need to thank those volunteers who worked at some of our school activities in spite of having no children at the school. Vicky Jeffries, whose son left last year, worked on the Quick-fire raffle all day as did Mason Branch, Suzanne Race and Geoff Lerwill who have only the loosest connection with the school through friendships with one of our parents.

There were others too, who have one degree of separation. Husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, cousins, - thank you to everyone who helped. It is always a relief when it is over and even more of a relief when everything works properly and the money is right!

Library Books

COULD WE PLEASE HAVE ALL SCHOOL LIBRARY BOOKS RETURNED TO SCHOOL BY MONDAY.

Phoenix Game

I have 90 tickets to the game between the Phoenix and the Newcastle Jets at Westpac Stadium on Saturday 18 December. Westpac will host children and adults – at a ratio of 2 children per adult – in the Westpac Lounge. Non-playing reserves will join the group beforehand and Westpac will provide pizzas and drinks before the game.

Those going are asked to meet outside the entrance at 5:45pm for a 7:00 game. Because it is after the end of term staff will be all over the place so I'm making it a first come, first served opportunity. If you want tickets please fill out the form at the end of the newsletter and return it to school **TOMORROW**. Because it is being offered through the school it is important that we get the ratio of at least 2 children for every adult.

Lost and Found

A couple of things have turned up after the fair.

1. A black Kathmandu jacket with a blue lining – size 10.

2. A plastic shopping bag with a wooden train set inside. New and probably bought at the fair.

If either of these belongs to you please come in and claim them.

Successes

Earlier this week two children from Thorndon competed at the Regional Athletics representing the Central Zone following their success at the Interzone Finals earlier on.

Max Leuga came 1st in the Quoit Throw
 Alex Gooch came 3rd in the Y8 Girls 100m.

This is a new event and takes the athletics competition to one more level. These two did exceptionally well just to get there and to get a podium finish is even better. Well done both.

Children's Pottery Classes

4 mornings (10-12 pm) or afternoons (1-3 pm) on the 17th, 19th, 20th, 21st Jan 2011 at Wellington Potters Rooms, Grant Rd., Thorndon
 4 x 2 hour sessions. \$80.00 includes clay and firing.

Maximum 9 students, ages 7 to 14 years
 Phone 233-0003 Rosemary O'Hara, Potter and Registered Teacher.

Theatre for Kids:

Classes for ages 5-7
 Professional and fun classes for kids to experience the ins and outs of creating theatre, using imagination and personal expression to develop group skills, spontaneity, co-ordination, physical confidence and self awareness.

Term Fee \$100 (8 week term). Classes available in Brooklyn, Aro Valley and Island Bay. Registrations are essential. For more information or to confirm your place contact Thomas LaHood.
 E: thomas@barbarian.co.nz
 P: 021182 7852

Laserforce Wellington

Laserforce has moved to 133 Tory Street at the end of the Warehouse in the Tory Street Complex. We have the same phone number and email so get in quick to book the amazing \$10 per player sessions every week day of the school holidays. Session times are 10am-12.30pm or 1pm-3.30pm. That's 2 ½ hours of entertainment for the crazy price of \$10 per player! We have a new custom built Laserforce maze and new targets to find. Also plenty of video and arcade games to play inclusive of the \$10 price! AMAZING VALUE! Christmas and New Year Sessions start on Monday 21st of December 2010.

Bring in a group of friends or your family for some fun at the New and Improved Laserforce. Look forward to hearing from you to book your session. Phone 3844 622
www.laser-force.co.nz

Successes

The other night Wellington Girls College held their prize giving and a number of former pupils were called up on stage.

Adelaide Gleadow, Steph Bremner, Aisa Allen all were awarded prizes.

Sophie Hunter is the Head of the Student Learning Committee and executive prefect, Saloti Talagi is on the Student Cultural Committee and is a prefect and Katie Sutherland is House Leader.

Congratulations to all of them.

There are probably others whose names we haven't got and there may be prize winners at other schools. We would love to hear.

Phoenix Tickets

Yes, I would like tickets to the Phoenix game on December 18.

Adults

Children

Name _____

Bluebridge Straitsman Open Day

Bluebridge are having an open day this Saturday in Wellington. This is a great chance to walk through their new Cook Strait ferry, the Straitsman, and have a look around. It will be a fantastic day with lots of entertainment, raffles and prize draws. Entry is by gold coin donation which will be donated to the Wellington Children's Hospital.

Open day details

Date: Saturday 11 December
 Time: 11am – 3pm
 Venue: Bluebridge Terminal on Waterloo Quay (opposite Wellington Railway Station)

Come along to the open day to have a look around the new ferry and show Bluebridge our appreciation for offering great deals to SNZ members. You can find out more information about these deals by contacting Bluebridge on 0800 844 844 and quoting the SNZ discount code (SWIMMINGNZ).

Drama Holiday Programme

For children aged between 5 -13 years of age at the Karori Baptist Church.

The Summer Holiday Programme runs at the beginning and end of the school holidays. Students are grouped for activities according to age and experience. Check our website for the topics timetable to choose which classes suit your child. Come to one, or all 5!

When:

Christmas holiday programme: 20th Dec – 23rd Dec

January holiday programme: 24th January – 28th January

Time: 9am – 12pm. Drop off anytime from 8.40am.

Where: Karori Baptist Church, 181-183 Karori Road, Karori, Wellington.

Price: Only \$15 per three hour session.

Enroll your child on the drama club website, or email me at bridie@dramaclub.co.nz. Alternatively you can contact

me on **021 054 2593** or **04 889 049**

Newtown Movie School

Making stop motion movies in the school holidays

Monday 17 to Wednesday 19 January 2011
 (3 days - 9am to 5pm)
 Cost \$200

Programmes are limited to 12 children aged 9 to 15.

Registration forms and examples of our previous movies are on our website -

www.acumen.net.nz/pages/MovieSchool.html

Or contact Craig Lauridsen
 (04 389 1000 / 021 966 277) or
craig@acumen.net.nz

Bubble Dome School Holiday Programmes

Have you ever wondered how computer games and 3D movies like Toy Story are made?

Learn the latest in 3D Animation and Games Design on a Bubble Dome School Holiday workshop this December and January.

For students aged 6 to 15 years.

Tel: 0800 GET BUBBLE (438-282)

or

Email: info@bubbledome.co.nz

or

Visit: www.bubbledome.co.nz .

