

Parent Newsletter

Hurlstone Agricultural High School

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2014 Issue 10 Term 3 - Week 4

6 August 2014

CALENDAR

Term 3

Week 4

Monday, 4th August - Day 6

Yr 10 Mathematics Task 2 Assessment
Yr 12 Trial HSC Exams

Tuesday, 5th August - Day 1

Yr 12 Trial HSC Exams

Wednesday, 6th August - Day 2A

Great Engineering Challenge Excursion
Australian Science Olympiad
Yr 12 Trial HSC Exams

Thursday, 7th August - Day 3

Yr 9 Mathematics Task 2 Assessment
Yr 12 Trial HSC Exams
Australian Maths Competition

Friday, 8th August - Day 4

Yr 12 Trial HSC Exams



Marcus Aurelius is one of my favourite historical figures. As well as being a Roman Emperor he was a proponent and follower of the philosophical movement called Stoicism. This movement, which was Greek in origin, attempted to maintain a state of equilibrium by balancing the concepts of determinism and the concepts of freewill. Stoicism can be summarised by the notion that we cannot always control the events which confront us in our lives but we can control our reaction to those events.

I am very aware that the first paragraph of this newsletter article is not the usual introduction for a Principal's Report but there is method which lies behind this seeming madness. Over the last few weeks I have had many discussions with students who have been distressed by things that are beyond their control or by things that they have perceived as "happening to them". I have had numerous discussions with Year 12 students who are stressed by what UAC might do with their grades to create their ATAR or by what might be in an exam. I have had discussions with students who are worried about what is happening in places like Ukraine, Gaza and Syria and how this might affect their lives as world citizens. I have even had discussions with students who, as a result of the recent visit to the school by The Hon. Victor Dominello, Minister for Veterans Affairs and Assistant Minister for Education, to announce the Gallipoli Tour for 2015 became distressed by not only their chances of going but by the effect of war on both the past and the future. In a community of intelligent, connected and compassionate individuals these discussions are to be expected but it worries me that these issues are often seen through a prism of negativity.

This is where my discussion of the stoics and their philosophy becomes relevant. Even though we cannot control what UAC or the Board of studies might present as exams, even though we do not have immediate input into the complexities of world politics and even though we cannot have direct influence on the ways in which Australia engages with that wider world we can determine how we as individuals let those issues impact on us. However, I am not talking about anything as trite as "positive thinking", a term which is bandied as a means of making people feel better about themselves and others, I am spruiking a process of constructive thinking.

As an illustration of this please indulge me as I discuss a program which ran at a school where I once taught. When I was Head Teacher English at Canterbury Boys' High school we engaged in a program called the Gratitude Project. We encouraged students, rather than approach their schooling with reluctance, to frame their mindset through a filter of gratitude. Before going into a class which they did not like rather than bemoan this fact, we encouraged them to think how grateful they were for the chance to learn about this subject as many young people in the world did not have educational opportunities. We asked them before they had to do an activity which they did not like, for some this was things like sport, to think how grateful they were to be given an opportunity to try something new which they may like or not – it was the opportunity to be able to make an informed choice about the activities which they would do in the future which was something for which to be grateful.

In my experience this method of constructive thinking helped students to engage more with their learning and to better cope with the complexities of the world around them. It was not just telling students, who are faced with a complex and challenging personal and political landscape, to just be positive but to assess what is important to them and to critically choose their reaction.

So, what does this mean for the students I discussed? For those about to sit the HSC we can accept that it will be a stressful time and that they control neither what the Board of Studies will present as exams or the ways in which UAC will devise their ATAR. They can choose, however, to see their reactions as motivation rather than stress and to focus on the fact that these exams are an avenue to broaden their opportunities and life choices rather than an obstacle to them. For those students concerned about the geopolitical landscape they can try to avoid being fearful of some of the horror, both past and present, of which we have all been made aware and focus on the fact that the world, at times such as these, mobilise to discuss ethical and moral humanitarian concerns which can never be taken for granted. They can also realise that what they see, hear and learn can inform their development and ensure that the next generation of leaders have a deeper understanding of equity, communication and respect.

Term 3

Week 5

Monday, 11th August - Day 5

Science Olympiad Incursion

Yr 8 Mathematics Task 2 Assessment

Tuesday, 12th August - Day 6

ICAS Maths

Wednesday, 13th August - Day 1A

Yr 12 Study Skills Incursions

Science Olympiad Incursion

Thursday, 14th August - Day 2

Yr 8 Subject Selection Afternoon

Yr 9 Japanese Task 6 Assessment

Yr 9 Japanese Task 5 Assessment

Yr 9 Japanese Task 5 Assessment

Yr 10 Subject Selection Evening

Yr 11 Music 1 Task 3 Assessment

Friday, 15th August - Day 3

Closed Weekend

Yr 11 Engineering Studies Task 3 Assess.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE Continued

We all have something to learn from Marcus Aurelius and the stoics. Even though they talk to us through the centuries their philosophies can help us to cope with a world which is becoming more broad and complex. It is normal for connected citizens to be concerned about events beyond themselves and the struggle is to decide whether we see the world around as an impediment to, or an opportunity for, our development. I choose to be grateful that being in this place, at this time, in this position that I have the opportunity to work with those around me in the service of Hurlstone Agricultural High School and more widely public education.

I hope that our students can use some of the concepts of stoicism, or any other philosophy with which they approach the world, to find a sense of meaning and purpose in a confronting and changeable life.

I wrote the above article before the school learned of the untimely passing of one of its Alumni, Emma Rice (Class of 2013). I never met Emma but I have chosen to write about her as an addendum to this newsletter article as, from what many people have told me, she seems to embody both the stoic ideal and the concept of gratitude. Many people have discussed with me the fact that even though Emma's time at Hurlstone Agricultural High School was sometimes difficult for her, both socially and educationally, she steadfastly stuck with the idea that her experiences here were an opportunity for which she was grateful and she made the most of every day at school.

One teacher relayed to me the story that Emma, whilst being helped with an essay with which she was struggling, thanked the teacher and said that she understood where she was having difficulties and knew that she may not be able to correct all of the issues but that she was grateful that she had the chance to have this help and that she was grateful that she was enrolled in Hurlstone with "the cream". The teacher, through moist eyes, told me that this story for her encapsulated the spirit of Emma Rice and what she meant for the school.

Many people have told me stories about Emma's involvement in Rural Youth, the Boarding School and how she always lent a hand to any staff member which needed her. Younger students have talked about how Emma was the person who taught them how to handle cattle and to show them both respect and love and therefore parade them at their best. Most people have told me that, even though Emma found it difficult sometimes to relate to people, she was an expert at animal husbandry and that she excelled in both preparing and showing cattle – and that she loved this school and the opportunities which it gave her.

Emma Rice, from what I have been told, lived a stoic life that was full of gratitude and respect. Her journey through school may not always have been easy but she focused on what she could control and made the most of it for herself and, most impressively, others.

There is solace, however limited, in the fact that Emma passed away doing something which she loved – working with the animals which she seemed to understand better than those around her.



I never met Emma but the staff here tell me that I would have "had a soft spot for her" like so many of them developed. From what I know of her, I think the staff are right. We should all learn from her example and be grateful for our lives and the opportunities before us. Vale Emma Rice.

Emma's family wishes to thank the entire Hurlstone Community for their love and care. They have requested that no flowers are sent and people wishing to honour Emma's memory, are requested to make a donation to The Autism Foundation.

<http://aeiou.org.au/>

CALENDAR

Term 3

Week 6

Monday, 18th August - Day 4

Yr 7 Snaketails Incursion
Yr 8I Music Task 3 Assessment
Yr 11 Music I Task 3 Assessment
Frisbee Senior Excursion

Tuesday, 19th August - Day 5

Yr 8 D, A & R Music Task 3 Assessment
Yr 12 Music I Task 4
Bstreetsmart - Olympic Park Excursion

Wednesday, 20th August - Day 6B

Variety Night Rehearsal

Thursday, 21st August - Day 1

Yr 7 Mathematics Task 2 Assessment
Yr 8 English Task 4 Assessment
Yr 8A Japanese Task 4 Assessment
Yr 11 PDHPE Task 4 Assessment
Yr 12 Visual Arts Task 4 Assessment

Friday, 22nd August - Day 2

Country Fair Mufti Day
Daffodil Day
Yr 7 Study Skills Incursion
Yr 8 Gala Day Incursion
Yr 8I Japanese Task 4 Assessment
Yr 9 Sydney Jewish Museum Excursion
Yr 10 English Task 4 Assessment
Yr 12 Enhanced Learning Study Skills

FROM THE DEPUTIES' DESKS

UAC and Early Entry Programs

This is a great time to visit the UAC website, to get information about applications for 2014–15 admissions which will open 6 August

<http://www.uac.edu.au/>

Important points to consider while taking the time to visit the UAC site include visiting each university website and look at early entry opportunities and scholarship applications. All students in Year 12 have been sent an email by Mr Currie to their DEC email address regarding these processes.

During my recent trip to Mudgee Field Days, I was given some information about UNE's early entry program and scholarship opportunities from Amy Crosby.

About UNE's Early Entry Program

UNE's Early Entry program lets you apply for university before you sit your Year 12 exams, so you can secure your place early and take some of the stress out of the exam period. The UNE Early Entry program relies on your school's carefully balanced assessment of your ability to cope with study at university, rather than your ATAR or OP (or equivalent) score.

Successful applicants will receive an offer directly from UNE in November, with no UAC application required - and it's free to apply.

The assessment is based around your personal attributes, such as your ability to work and learn independently, as well as your overall potential for academic success at UNE. Your School Principal will complete the recommendation and rank you on a number of attributes and abilities, which will be used to assess your suitability for university.

There are lots of great reasons to apply for early entry, such as:

- wanting to know early that you have a UNE place to relieve the pressure of waiting for results or so you can plan your big move
- you have studied subjects that won't get you an ATAR or OP, but you still want to go to UNE extra security to make sure you get in to the course of your choice

Applications are open now and close at the end of September.

Agrifood Experience Day

Some interesting information for the Agrifood Experience day @ UNE

- A new degree called Bachelor of Agrifood Systems as from 2014. Entry based on Atar 73.50 + either Cert IV or a school based traineeship and industry experience of 1 year OR has done Cert II Vet PI in schools with 70 hours work placement + another 6 months work experience.
- UNE has over \$1 million sitting in Scholarships accounts that nobody has bothered to apply for. The scholarships on offer are in about seven difference categories, eg academic, sporting, distance isolation.
- There are 28 Country Scholarships offered each year to the value of \$5,000/yr for the duration of the degree based on academic skills, HSC results and involvement.
- Horizons scholarships to the value of \$5,000/yr for the duration of the degree (our ex student Emma Luddington has one of these).
- Austwool Education Trust undergraduate scholarships to the value of \$6,000/yr for the duration of the degree. Only 4 given per year.

DIRECTOR FOR A DAY

Our future school leaders Jack Bush, Brianna Barry, Alex Qui and Hannah Li were an integral part of assisting Lyn McShane carry out the "Director for a Day" leadership program. In this program talented students selected from the region and were given a chance to see what's involved in running a government department. Our students facilitated a luncheon followed by a school, farm and boarding facility tour for the selected student winners on behalf of Hurlstone's education director, Pat Mahony. Lyn McShane thanked the students involved and the selected regional students were appreciative of our time and impressed by the scope, size and complexity of our school site.

Mrs Christine Castle
Deputy Principal - Boarding

CALENDAR

Term 3

Week 7

Monday, 25th August - Day 3

Yr 7R History Task 1 Assessment
Yr 8D & 8Y Japanese Task 4 Assessment
Yr 8Y Music Task 3 Assessment
Yr 9 Agriculture Task 3 Assessment
Yr 10 English Task 4 Assessment
Yr 11 English Extension I Unit Task 3

Tuesday, 26th August - Day 4

Yr 7 History Task 1 Assessment
Yr 8D Japanese Task 4 Assessment
Yr 9 Agriculture Task 3 Assessment
Yr 10 English Task 4 Assessment
Yr 11 General Mathematics Task 3 Ass

Wednesday, 27th August - Day 5A

Yr 8R & 8Y Japanese Task 4 Assessment
Yr 9 Agriculture Task 3 Assessment
Yr 10 English Task 4 Assessment

Thursday, 28th August - Day 6

Yr 8A, 8I & 8R Japanese Task 4 Assess.
Yr 9 Agriculture Task 3 Assessment
Yr 10 English Task 4 Assessment

Friday, 29th August - Day 1

Yr 8 History Task 3 Assessment
Yr 9 Agriculture Task 3 Assessment
Yr 10 Australian History Task 3 Assess.
Yr 10 English Task 4 Assessment
Yr 10 Commerce 100 hours Task 3 Ass.
Yr 11 Computing Applications Task 3 Assessment

Saturday, 30th August

HAHS Country Fair

& Farm Open Day

10am to 3pm

NEWS

2014 Debutante Ball

On the 19th of July Hurlstone presented six girls at the Debutante Ball. It was held in the John

Edmondson School Hall and our Matron of Honour, Ms Christine Castle presented them to our Distinguished Guest Ms Ilse Bowen who was our matron at Hurlstone from 1976-1999. We had over 95 family members, friends and staff members attend this special night. Special thanks to Christine Castle, Fran Campbell, Sandra Hackett, Rob Craig, Damien Geerling and the Maintenance and Dining Room Team for their assistance and support. In addition we were also grateful to Robyn Sherring for making our beautiful Debutante Cake and Caroline Howard for assisting with the catering and decorations. The six girls and their partners were:

Claire Canham	Harry Morse-Evans
Caitlin Cavanagh	Oliver Quirk
Laura Howard	Mark Maksimovic
Alicia Peachey	Andre Forrester
Gabby Sherring	Sid Cremer
Jamie Whybrow	David Webb



Debating

Last week, the University of Western Sydney ran their first ever Western Sydney Schools Debating Day, and both the Hurlstone Year 9 and 10 teams had the privilege of attending. The day was only made possible thanks to the dedicated university students who make up the UWS Debating Club. These people generously donated their time and energy during their holiday break, to educate and equip us with the tools needed to become better debaters.

The day comprised a series of debates, during which teams from the Hurlstone, East Hills Girls and Campbelltown Performing Arts battled it out in front of the UWS students who served as adjudicators. The topics we debated were quite diverse but still very interesting – such as *“That students should write reports on their teachers”* or *“That parents should be punished for the crimes of their children”*.

The highlight of the day was not the actual debates (though they were all very fun) or even the array of mouth-watering pizzas which greeted us during the lunch break, but the invaluable feedback that we received at the end of each debate. This really boosted our team’s confidence, knowledge and understanding of how to approach future debates. I would like to give a huge thanks to both the UWS Debating Club for organising this brilliant day and to our lovely coach Miss Ross for her continued dedication and hard work which facilitated our involvement in this event. It was an extremely rewarding experience which not only really helped our team, but has prepared us to take on the South Western Sydney Interzone final with new found confidence.

Rachel Daniel, Year 10

CALENDAR

Term 3

Week 8

Monday, 1st September - Day 2

Yr 7A & 7Y Music Task 3 Assessment

Yr 9 Commerce Task 3 Assessment

Yr 10 Japanese Task 2 Assessment

Yr 10 Commerce 200 hours Task 3 Ass.

Tuesday, 2 September - Day 3

7D Music Task 3 Assessment

Yr 11 Visual Arts Task 3 Assessment

Wednesday, 3 September - Day 4A

Yr 7 Monty Prior Incursion

Yr 7R Music Task 3 Assessment

Thursday, 4 August - Day 5

Yr 7I Music Task 3 Assessment

Yr 9 Industry Technology Task 3 Assess.

Yr 9M & 9I Geography Task 1 Assess.

Yr 9E, 9N & 9O History Task 1 Assess.

Yr 9 English Task 4 Assessment

Yr 10 Industry Technology (Engineering)
Task 3 Assessment

Yr 10 Japanese Task 5 Assessment

Friday, 5 September - Day 6

Yr 8R History Task 3 Assessment

Yr 9R Geography Task 1 Assessment

Yr 10 Industrial Technology (Engineering)
Task 3 Assessment

SPORT NEWS

All Schools Touch Football Competition

On Friday the 18th of July the All Schools Touch Football Competition was held for Years 7 and 8 at Kayess Park, Minto. Hurlstone entered three teams on the day. (Two Boys teams and one girls team).

All teams participated in a number of games throughout the day and played with enthusiasm. It was fantastic to see the teams bonding and gaining experience and developing their skills.

The Year 7/8 girls team finished in third position, while the boys Year7/8 Team One finished in fourth position and Team Two finished in fifth position.

Thank you to our level 1 student referees who helped out on the day.

Michelle Barry, PDHPE Staff



HURLSTONE URBAN CHALLENGE # 1

On the 27th of July a select group of Boarders and Day students were chosen to participate in the Urban Challenge, an amazing race type event ran through the Sydney CBD. It was a bonding exercise to bring students together through friendly competition and, of course, to have fun.

The year 11 boys, contrary to the popular belief were the rightful winners on the day (and we didn't even cheat), but that wasn't what made it for us. Dashing through the city dressed head to toe in khaki, the new 'wildlife warriors', toting an inflatable kangaroo as our trusty mascot was unimaginably fun. Never mind the odd looks we received from tourists and locals alike as we went about our challenges, the looks on our faces would've said it all, we had a great time, and it was a day well spent.

For the Urban Challenge, the Year 11 girls and Brea Fitzpatrick (year 10) came together with sweatbands and leotards to get "physicool". Four days after our long day of running through the city, winking at strangers, playing ping pong, running to dragon boat racing (having to wait half an hour for the boys to show up), catching ferries around Sydney, rapping to "sticky" lolly store employees and haggling for chinese dinner, we finally found out the winner. Unfortunately, after all our efforts, we lost to the boys (cheaters). Despite the unjust loss, it was a good day and we were all exhausted by the end of it.

By Team Leaders: Mathew Wajzer and Breanna Barry





6 August 2014

Dear Year 12 Parents,

Year 12 Graduation Ceremony

Date: Thursday 18th September 2014

Time: 9am, seated by 8.50am

Venue: Edmondson Hall

I would like to extend an invitation to you to attend our Year 12 Graduation Ceremony and share in your child's achievements. At the conclusion of this assembly, please join us for morning tea in the gardens of Clarke House.

I hope that you, and other family members, can share this special occasion with us.

RSVP: Please phone the school on 02 9829 9222 to confirm your attendance at the Graduation Ceremony by Monday 15th September 2014.

Year 12 Mocktail Party

I would like to extend an invitation to you to attend the Year 12 Mocktail Party prior to Year 12 Formal on Thursday 18th September at 4.30pm. The Mocktail Party will be held in the gardens of Clarke House. I hope that you and your family members can join us for light refreshments and celebrate this special event.

Please fill out the form below and return to Mikala Hewett (Year 12 Year Advisor) by August 22nd if you are planning to attend this event.

Yours Sincerely,

Daryl Currie
Principal

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Mocktail Party Acceptance

Please return this Mocktail Acceptance to Mrs Hewett (Year 12 Year Advisor) in the LOTE Staffroom.

Name of Student: _____

Student's Roll Call: _____

Number of People Attending including Student: _____

EXCELLENCE | OPPORTUNITY | LEADERSHIP | COMMUNITY