



Milpera Volunteer News ~ September 2017

The goal of this monthly bulletin is to share timely news, dates, and happenings about and concerning the Milpera State High School community. If you have received this document in error and/or you wish to unsubscribe, please email the author at mmclo5@eq.edu.au

Diary Dates

- Mon 2nd Oct - Queen's Birthday Holiday
- Wed 4th Oct - First day back for Classroom Volunteers
- Thurs 5th Oct - First day back for S.A.R. and H.O.W. Volunteers
- Mon 16th Oct - Pupil Free Day
- Fri 10th Nov - Volunteer Christmas Lunch
- Wed 6th Dec - Last day for all Volunteers



News from Milpera!

Daisy Chain Project

This term a group of people from Maleny who were the recipients of a regional arts grant came to Milpera every Friday afternoon, to share and teach their circus skills to a group of our students.

The students really enjoyed the interaction and the activities. They grew in confidence and will demonstrate their skills on the last Friday of this term.



Volunteer Morning Tea

Both Julie Peel, our Acting Principal and Donna Torr, our Acting Deputy Principal spoke at the volunteer morning tea. They said that there were 195 students at Milpera at present, but that there had been a decrease in numbers over the last three terms and that the percentage of our refugee students compared with our migrant students had dropped. Julie said that our Syrian students had had very disrupted schooling and that although their oracy was better, their writing skills needed attention.

Julie reminded us that the schools our students will attend after Milpera are changing. Students can now exit Milpera and go directly to a mainstream high school in their area, as opposed to a school with an EAL/D unit. This may be challenging for some of our students.

Julie also mentioned that we should know by week 8 who will be the next Principal at Milpera. We now know that it is Ian Miller and we congratulate him on his appointment.

Julie also told us that Graceville Uniting Church would be raising our profile by having an Art Show "Our World" in the church show casing 150 pieces of art all done by our students.

She told volunteers about the ROLES ("Respecting Ourselves, Leadership and Education") program. During the term students from Room 21 have visited the Police Academy and worked with new recruits. There have been about five sessions and the recruits became mentors to our students.

Some of the key aims were to work on building relationships between students and recruits and to work at breaking down preconceptions of policing. Last week the recruits came to Milpera and played sport and card games with our students.

Both Donna and Julie praised Ingrid Wood, our Guidance Officer for putting together a wonderful program for

our deaf bilaterally hearing impaired student from Room 21. So many staff at school and from out of school (two ALM – Auslan Language Models) have worked with Hussein to give him skills so that he can progress further and lead a fulfilling life. This is something Milpera does very well. Staff and students get appropriate aid from outside agencies, teacher aides and teachers at school.



Many of the relationships and connections that our students have at Milpera help them to build a strong sense of belonging within Milpera and in the community. All these together make for good settlement and enable students to lead rich and meaningful lives.

Science Week

During Science Week students participated in a variety of activities during lunch time. On Monday students designed a Balloon rocket and competed against each other in the “Make a Balloon Rocket”. During the week students built creations with Lego in the Library and on Friday students made sherbet and ice cream.



COLA Building

On the first day last holiday the work began on our new building – the COLA (Covered Outdoor Learning area). The building project has been progressing well and is expected to be finished early in Term 4. The large covered area will be used for our Exit Parades, as a teaching space as well as a great sports area in the hot summer months.



Numinbah Campers

Rooms 3 and 5 recently visited the Numinbah Environmental Educational centre. They had a wonderful time going on a rainforest walk where they saw strangler figs, vines, spiders and epiphytes. The students also cooked damper, played games and went on a night time expedition to the glow worm caves.

Pushing Barriers

One of our volunteers, Tracy Tucker and two of her friends, have started the charity “Pushing Barriers” to build our students’ confidence and resilience by encouraging our students to try new sporting activities. Specialist coaches for different sports, such as netball and AFL come in and spend time teaching skills to the students. If the student is keen, then they will find a club that they can join. Pushing Barriers will support them financially, emotionally and practically by getting them to training and going to watch their matches. A number of our young people have been registered with their local sporting club.



Sewing in Room 23

Sonya and the students in Room 23 have begun sewing simple skirts and shorts for students in a Kenyan School. Volunteers donated beautiful cotton fabric and Isobel Schwede and Janet Nash have been assisting in the classroom. Cameron and Laura Rush, who currently live in Nairobi will deliver the garments to the students.





Sonya Neville and some of her students who have completed sewing their shorts and skirts.

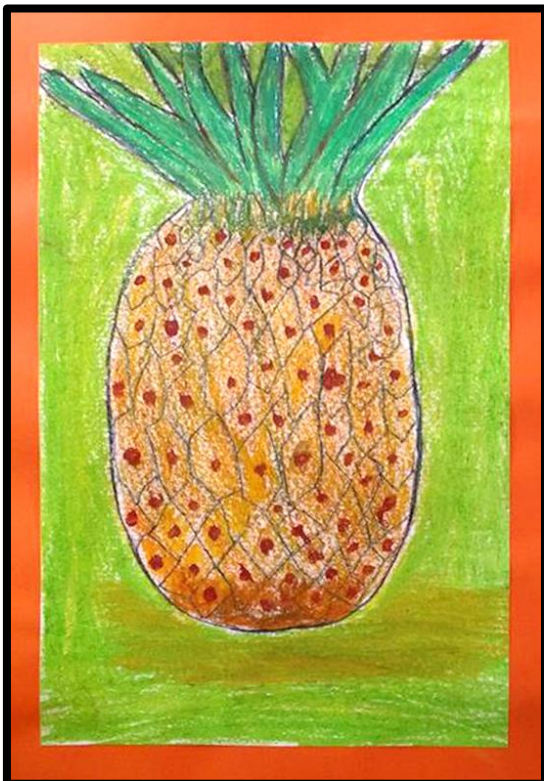
“Our World” Art Show

On the 1st and 2nd of September the Graceville Uniting Church hosted an exhibition of our students artwork. Volunteers helped our talented art teacher, Liana Trujillo, to assemble art works for the show and also to man the front desk at the entrance to the church. There were more than 150 pieces of vibrant artwork on display. There were pictures of tractors, bicycles, houses, bridges, fruit, flowers, creatures and other things. Many works had brilliant colours and many blue boats and ceramic houses were set up near the altar.

Councillor Nicole Johnston and the Hon Mark Bailey MP spoke at the opening ceremony and lent their wholehearted support to Milpera’s partnerships with the local community. Julie Peel, the Acting Principal, thanked Graceville Uniting Church for extending the hand of friendship and for helping to build a sense of belonging for our students in the community. She said that by organising this event and by displaying this beautiful artwork the people from Graceville Uniting Church have valued and acknowledged our students. This helps our students to settle well in this country and to blossom into the citizens of tomorrow. The artwork displayed at the church represent so many

things. In the beautiful works on display we see a visual representation of the identities and cultures of our students. Julie said that from more than 35 different countries they bring to Milpera so many things, experiences we have never dreamt of, languages we do not understand and cultures very different from Australian culture. Yet out of these differences we know emerges great commonality between all cultures. We all want our children to be successful, we all want to be loved and feel special. We all want to learn and belong. Finally, Julie thanked Helen Kielly and Reverend Aaron Moad who conceived the idea for the show. She also thanked their wonderful team for all their hard work.

Room 14 and 24 attended the opening ceremony and Kaissi spoke on behalf of the students. She described what Julie had spoken about and said “we all come from different places, when we all come together it is like magical”.



QATESOL Conference

Recently two of our teachers Margret Sockhill and Ross Railton presented at the annual QATESOL (Qld Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) conference in Mackay. Margret's project with Tina Myrteza (St Peter Chanel, The Gap) on "Building Intercultural Bridges" was presented at the conference. This is a wonderful piece of work and demonstrates the work Milpera does with many of its partner schools. This project has been running for seven years and involves students engaging in thought provoking written and oral activities for the purpose of *Finding Common Ground*, in response to reading "Who You Are" by Mem Fox. Sebastian, one of the St Peter Chanel students said of his experience "Of all the people in the world, the humble ones are of the purest form. The students we met today fall into this category".

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in numeracy was the focus of Ross's presentation, highlighting socially just teaching practices such as creating mixed ability groups, age appropriate curriculum and task based learning.

QUT Project – Digital Stories

In the first week of Term 4 a digital storytelling project will take place with QUT. Stories will be made about students, parents and staff who are at Milpera. -The stories will be made by QUT Creative Industries and the aim of the project will be to share the stories with other schools to show the work that is done at Milpera. Four Milpera staff will also have the opportunity to do a Digital Storytelling workshop.

Volunteer Christmas Lunch

Following the success of last year's Christmas lunch, we have rebooked the same venue for our celebration this year on Friday the 10th November. Further details will be provided as the day draws closer. Please keep the date free, if possible.

With Thanks

Thank you all for being a part of Milpera and for helping our students to move forward and have a sense of belonging. Thank you also for donating money for two bursaries that will be given out at the end of this term. Thanks also go to everyone who brought in the beautiful fabric, and for food and items that were collected to help refugees in the community.



