Milpera Volunteer News ~ December 2014

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 2\textsuperscript{nd} February - Volunteers return to Milpera
- Fri 27\textsuperscript{th} February - Volunteer Morning Tea
- Fri 6\textsuperscript{th} March - International Women’s Day
- Thurs 2\textsuperscript{nd} April - Exit Parade

News from Milpera!

Enrolments

Our numbers have once again risen and recent trends in enrolments have seen an increase in students from China and Vietnam, and students from refugee backgrounds from Eritrea and Somalia who may have had limited schooling. Five classes will once again exit at the end of this term and the students will go on to their prospective high schools or TAFE.

Milpera’s 30\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary 1984-2014

On the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of October Milpera celebrated its 30\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary. The celebratory afternoon started with the arrival of special guests, Ms Adele Rice who was principal of Milpera for 28 years and The Hon. Scott Emerson, Member for Indooroopilly and Minister for Transport. Together with Tom Beck, Helen Byrne and senior staff they toured and opened the renovated Library and eLearning Centre and K Block.

After this our Principal Tom Beck spoke of the vibrant nature of Milpera with its present students from 42 nations with 53 linguistic groups. He said Milpera had flourished for 30 years and that
education is the key. He spoke of how Milpera teaches students how to thrive in Australian society with programs such as the one on Surf Safety. The students continued with this theme and entertained the audience with a song about an Australian barbeque.

Adele Rice spoke about Milpera, the teachers, the love of learning, the compassion and about how love can change people who are vulnerable. She said that government policy mattered, curriculum mattered and that all staff, teacher aides and volunteers all played an important role and that school was a normalising process for the students. Adele also emphasised that we do things better together and that Milpera works with many other agencies to achieve better outcomes in all ways for the students.

Jane Griffin who runs the Home of Expressive Arts and Learning which is celebrating its 10th Anniversary spoke of how the art and music therapists help students to overcome difficulties through painting, drawing, sand play and singing. All these techniques help them to process their trauma and get on with their lives. She reminded us of the words of Helen Keller, “Although the world is full of suffering it is also full of the overcoming of it.”

Our students also gave speeches, danced and sang and the celebration ended with the cutting of the cake. Staff and friends of Milpera continued to celebrate in the refurbished library.

**Water Safety**

Much has been covered on water safety this year. Some classes have had intensive swimming programs and talks on beach safety. Recently all classes went to the beach to experience many of the things about which they had been told.
The Surf Safety Training took place at Burleigh Beach and Tallebudgera. The students were divided into groups and learnt life-saving skills and beach skills. They had a wonderful time and learnt much while having fun!

On Thursday Milpera had its first swimming carnival in ten years. Both the novelty and traditional events were a big success and so was the teacher/student relay at the end.

**Art Sewing Project**

Our Art Teacher Liana and her pre-service teacher Lisa taught students how to use the new sewing machines. The students made colourful drainage bags which have been donated to breast cancer patients at the Mater Hospital. Thank you to the volunteers who helped with this project and to many who donated fabric.

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**Futures Day**

On Futures Day professionals and trades people came in to speak to the students and to show them real life examples of work activities. This year students gained new ideas and understanding about construction, plumbing, aviation, Woolworths retail, policing, firefighting, agriculture, health and fitness, council libraries, tertiary education and even barista coffee making. The aim of the day was to give the students an understanding of the job opportunities and career pathways that will be available to them when they leave school.

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**Stanley River Camp**

During this camp students from Room 14 and 23 experienced the Australian environment first hand. They learnt about the river and how to canoe.
“Support-a-Reader” & “Help-our-Writing” Programs Boost Literacy

Each day, Room 13 welcomes volunteers and students to the S.A.R. and H.O.W. programs. Currently, “Support-a-Reader” runs two 30 min sessions where students from the Post-beginner classes come to read with volunteers on a one to one basis. This session is greatly valued for socialisation and for learning to read with pronunciation, expression and understanding. Up to twelve volunteers offer their time each day. Four levels of books from both S.A.R. and the library keep students and volunteers engaged.

“Help-Our-Writing” tuition is offered by volunteers under the guidance of the H.O.W. coordinators Ms Catherine Nash and Ms Anna Andersen (supported by HODs Ms Donna Torr and Ms June Fas). Two pathways are offered: the Red Pathway, offering support to students in their development of key literacy concepts, and the Green Pathway, supporting Recount, Information Report and Narrative genres, as taught in the classrooms. The Red Pathway was developed this year by Senior Teacher Ms Margret Sockhill and teacher Ms Fiammetta Stefani.

With thanks

Thank you for the gift of your time so freely given and for the love and compassion you show to our students. It makes them feel valued and helps their settlement and learning.