December 2010

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<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>28/11</td>
<td>Intensive Swimming</td>
<td>Helen - Principal’s Day</td>
<td>Intensive Swimming</td>
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<td></td>
<td>28/11</td>
<td>Year 6 Retreat</td>
<td>Intensive Swimming</td>
<td>UHCM concert 7pm</td>
<td>Intensive Swimming</td>
<td>Swimming Carnival Merriwa</td>
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<td>Presentation night 7pm</td>
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<td>4.30 Carolling Merriwa Town Christmas Party</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>12/12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>28/11</td>
<td>End of Year Mass Yr 6 graduation dinner</td>
<td>Last day for students</td>
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<td>Last day for staff</td>
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<td>SCHOOL HOLIDAYS</td>
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<td>Week 1</td>
<td>30/1</td>
<td>31/1/2011</td>
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<td>3/2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>28/11</td>
<td>Students commence Term 1</td>
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REFLECTION

You do not know what is coming or what to expect, so stay awake and be ready! The prophet Isaiah warns that failure to listen to God will bring doom and disaster. The only way to salvation is to trust in God and live holy lives. And for Paul and Matthew that equates to righteous living! Act now by living justly, loving tenderly and compassionately.

God is to be found at a time you least expect!

*Stay awake, stay awake, the time is coming.*
*Stay awake, stay awake, God is coming.*
*Be prepared! The unexpected might happen, be ready!*
Our thoughts and prayers are with Helen and her family at this sad time, following the loss of her sister Mary. May they be comforted knowing that she is in God’s care and they are surrounded by those who love and care for them.

We were very excited to hear about our successful results in the Newcastle Herald School Newspaper Competition in which we won two awards at last week’s presentation ceremony. St Joseph’s Merriwa was awarded a Highly Commended in the Best Primary News Story and followed that up with Best Primary Newspaper Overall! What an accomplishment! There were 96 schools competing in the competition this year so we are very proud of our small school’s achievement! Brydie has included an account of the day’s events below. We are very proud of our 5/6 class. All your hard work was worth it and we look forward to your entry next year. You will need to keep your journalistic eye open.

**Newcastle Herald Presentation 2010**

This year, 5/6 wrote six articles plus an editorial to go into the Newcastle Herald Schools Newspaper Competition. Brydie Moore, Tasia Martin, Hamish Cameron, James Hagley traveled with Mrs Cameron to attend the Presentation on the 23rd November 2010, in the Crusader Room at Energy Australia Stadium. Here we took out the award of Highly Commended Best Primary Article for our story entitled - ‘Hopping on Eggs-press’ about Merriwa’s Papanui Eggs by Brydie Moore, Tasia Martin and Hamish Cameron. We also took out Best Overall Primary Entry!

Our newspaper included - ‘Ambulances to the Rescue’ by John Cronin and Callum Telfer discussing ambulance availability in Merriwa; ‘Getting Back in the Game’ by Georgia Cameron, Jacob Medd, Jack Inder, Austin Constable, Bailey McNaught and Pieta Cassar, following up our editorial from last year on football and netball competition in Merriwa; ‘Fear rises over Plague of Locusts’ by Luke Cronin, Isabelle Burge and John Cronin; ‘New Bridge over Creek under Construction’ by Georgia Cameron, Jacob Medd, Jack Inder and Bailey McNaught telling the tale of our new bridge over Witneys Creek; ‘Windy Days ahead for the Town’ by James Hagley and Brydie Moore exploring the pros and cons of the Wind Turbine debate and of course ‘Hopping on Eggs-press’ By Brydie Moore, Tasia Martin and Hamish Cameron talking about Merriwa’s Papanui Eggs. In addition to all of these stories we had our Editorial – ‘Need for Place to Revive and Survive’ by Jack Inder, Jacob Medd, Georgia Cameron and Bailey McNaught.

We all enjoyed a lovely buffet lunch following the Presentation.

We even got to celebrate by calling in to Newcastle beach for a quick paddle! Thanks very much to Mrs Maria Cameron for driving us all to Newcastle to be a part of this wonderful experience!  

Brydie Moore, Year 5

Last weekend we celebrated the beginning of the Church’s liturgical year with the commencement of **Advent**. The Advent season is a time of great celebration and anticipation. This Advent we are focussing on the many and varied ways our God acts in us, in our lives and in our world. Let us be open to God in whatever ways God wishes to reveal Himself to us. At this time of year we need to think of others who are not as fortunate as ourselves. We are collecting for the St Anne’s Annual Vinnies Christmas appeal. Any non-perishable goods or presents can be left at the school to be distributed within the local community.

Last Saturday, the **St Joseph’s Fair** was held in our school grounds. With the help of some very dedicated members of the P&F the event was a wonderful opportunity for people to come together and have a wonderful time with good old fashioned games and events. Some of the events were the yabby races, face painting, balloon art, pony rides, jaffa basha, sumo wrestling, book fair, silent auction, ironman competition, plant stalls, cake stalls as well as some delicious food stalls to satisfy our hunger..... The students and staff appreciate all that you do. A special mention to the organising committee - Jayne Cronin, Shane & Brooke Constable, Yvonne McNaught and Marissa Edens-Rosa for their wonderful work and dedication in making this a successful event. Another special mention to two local businesses who donated our major raffle prizes – Ray McConnell of Merriwa Hardware and Michael & Penelope Hynes of Hidden Valley Homestead. Your generous support is very much appreciated. Huge thanks to all the families and community members who supported the fair by working, donating and/or attending the event. Well done!

Winners of the major raffle were:

1st prize – Four burner hooded bbq, outdoor setting & umbrella (kindly donated by Merriwa Hardware) - Maria Cameron

2nd prize – Dinner for 4 at Hidden Valley Homestead (kindly donated by Hidden Valley Homestead) - Jack Shannon

3rd prize – Lunch for 2 at Hidden Valley Homestead (kindly donated by Hidden Valley Homestead) - M Bevan

Cake stall raffle
Beautifully decorated Christmas Cake (many thanks to Fiona Wightman for her kind donation) - won by Maria Cameron
During Weeks 8 and 9 of this term children will be involved in **Intensive Swimming** sessions. These sessions are designed to improve water confidence and provide some basic swimming skills that will help to ensure children are safe in and around water during the school holidays. Our **annual swimming carnival** will be held after these sessions on Friday 10th December to allow the children to practise the skills they have learnt during Intensive Swimming sessions. This year all of the Upper Hunter schools have committed to holding their carnivals before school breaks up so as to ensure the Regional carnival is thoroughly organised before school returns. Holding the carnival before school breaks up ensures that children will know which events they will be competing in at a Regional level and can focus any training they partake in around such events. We will be seeking helpers for the carnival so please try and keep this date free. Please contact me if you have any queries regarding Intensive Swimming or the carnival. We will be seeking helpers for timekeeping, recording, marshalling, starting and the BBQ lunch. Please fill in the permission note from the newsletter and return it by Monday, 6th December.  *John Lannen*

We would like to invite families and friends of the St Joseph’s School Community to our **Annual Presentation Night** to be held on Tuesday 7th December 2010 in the St Joseph’s School grounds commencing at 7.00pm. On this evening we acknowledge the great work done by the students throughout the year. We also welcome our new families for 2011 and farewell any families who have finished the primary stage of their children’s education journey with us. Please RSVP to Sally or Helen on 65482035.

**Street Christmas Party** - on Thursday 9th December children from combined local schools will be singing carols at various business houses in town between 4.30 and 5.30pm. Children will dress in a Christmas theme for this event. Last year we had an absolutely fabulous time spreading Christmas cheer throughout the town. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Secret Santa**
Ho ho ho! Each class will be holding a Secret Santa on Tuesday 14th December 2010 in their classroom. Students will be given a student to buy for. The presents are to be no more then $5.

**End of Year Mass**
The End of Year Mass will be celebrated on the Monday 13th December at 6pm. This is a special event for the whole school community and each child is expected to attend. Students will be given special roles to carry out during the Mass.

**Lost uniform items**: a green and gold school jacket and a green bomber jacket have been lost. These are small sizes that would fit a K/1 child. Would you please check to see if your child may have accidentally brought these items home and return to the school office if found. Thank you!

**Service to community** is a very important part of our education at St Joseph’s. Service activities have been planned for the children’s last day of school on Wednesday 15th December. They include visiting the long term residents at the Merriwa Multipurpose Centre (hospital) and the Gummun Place residents. We always enjoy our visits and we know the residents appreciate them also. We ask parents who normally drive or walk their children to school to drop them at the hospital where they will be met by a teacher. We are asking the buses to do the same. This will save the long walk up the hill first thing in the morning. Please fill in the permission note included with this newsletter and return to school by Tuesday 7th December.

**End of School Year Financial Closure**: As the end of this term is also the end of the school’s financial year, all accounts need to be settled by Monday 13th December. Please ensure any outstanding payments are sent in to the office prior to this date.

*Anne Marie Peebles*

Year 5/6 have recently completed a unit called “Living Justly”. Throughout this unit they explored Jesus’ teachings based on love, justice and peace. We looked at the different and unique ways each individual person contributes to the world and wrote prayers for those who are treated unjustly. The highlight of this unit was the writing of present day Beatitudes. Year 5/6 studied the Beatitudes and re-wrote them so that applied to our class and modern day society. It was interesting to note that our Beatitudes did not differ in principle to those of the original, but were written in a language that we today can relate to. We then listed the different ways that people act and think that can prevent others from acting unjustly such as greed and selfishness. The most important aspect of this task, however, was listing the ways we can counteract these bad qualities.

This week we move into the season of Advent. We will study the story of John the Baptist and discover the origin of Christmas cards. As we focus on the importance of Christ and the birth of Jesus, we will complete a number of activities in relation to the season of Christmas and remember those who go without at this special time of year.
Hello from the weary Fair people.
We hope you all enjoyed the day as much as we did. To the people who managed to attend the afternoon, thank you for coming. To the wonderful helpers who worked at the various stalls and all the behind the scene workers, thank you, thank you, thank you. Without your generosity it couldn’t have all come together. I would like to personally thank the children who organised the games and activities and especially to the children who helped set up for the Fair on Saturday and then again on the Sunday to help clean up. Let’s hope that Santa is especially kind to you all this year.

Some of the winners on the day were:
- Maria Cameron won the barbecue package donated by Merriwa hardware, as well as the Christmas cake donated by Fiona Wightman.
- Jack Shannon won the dinner for 4 at Hidden Valley Homestead donated by Hidden Valley Homestead.
- M Bevan won the lunch for 2 at Hidden Valley Homestead donated by Hidden Valley Homestead.
- The lucky jellybean guesser with the correct number of 527 was Mrs Helen Whale.
- Lucky door winner was Wendy Thomas.
- Charlie Rose Carrall and Lizzie Hagley won the Junior and Senior Passport Scooters.

We said our focus for this Fair was for it to be a family oriented fun day. The feedback from people in the community is that this was delivered. The passports seemed to be a great success.

We are curious as to what you thought about the Fair. We want to hear your comments on what you thought worked well and if you have any constructive criticisms then we want to hear those as well. This is an event that only happens every two years, and while this one is still fresh in your minds, we want to gather everyone’s thoughts now. This way the planners for 2012 will have loads of creative ideas for their venture. You can call or email Jayne Cronin on 6548 2264 or jacronin2@bigpond.com or Yvonne McNaught on 6548 2842 after 3.30pm or maxscountrycuts@bigpond.com with your thoughts.

P&F STREET STALL

Our next street stall will be on Saturday 11th December, from 9.15am outside the IGA in Bettington Street. The proceeds of this stall will go to our wonderful Sisters of St Joseph who do so much for our community.

We have asked the members of the parish and wider community to contribute cooking and produce on this occasion. This stall will include a massive plant sale so come along and pick up some great gardening bargains!

If you would like to help on the stall please call Sally Hagley on 6548 2446. Thank you!

**CANTEEN ROSTER**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Afternoon Tea</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st Dec</td>
<td>Amanda Parker-Olive: Volunteer needed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Clare Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th Dec</td>
<td>No Canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td>10th Dec</td>
<td>Swimming Carnival - Helpers needed!!</td>
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<tr>
<td>17th Dec</td>
<td>No Canteen</td>
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**BUS ROSTER**

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>4/5 Dec</td>
<td>Peebles family</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/12 Dec</td>
<td>Nairne family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td>Redgate family</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/6 Feb</td>
<td>McNaught family</td>
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**THANK YOU...**

to the Martin and Ninness families who have given up some of their valuable time to clean the Aberdeen Bus.

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**AWARDS**

Congratulations to our award winners for weeks 6 & 7:

**K/1**
- Nicole Martin – for showing us Jesus forgives others in Religion
- Claudia Parker-Olive – for wonderful neat writing during spelling
- Claudia Frampton - trying very hard with her sounds
- Lauren Redgate - for being an independent worker

**2/3/4**
- Oliver Towell – for a great effort in spelling
- Clancy Moore – for writing a good recount of his weekend
- Kasey Cassar – for a settled approach to his work
- Ty Riley – for trying hard with spelling
- Clancy Martin – for his willingness to help in all situations
- Cameron Ninness – for his great work with his tables

**5/6**
- Austin Constable – for being a friendly and helpful member of our class
- Anastasia Martin – for her willingness to learn new things, especially in Grammar
- Luke Cronin – for his excellent help at the Fair
- Jack Inder – for an impressive factual description on Merriwa