

HILLTOP NEWS

Newcastle East Public School – Australia's Oldest School

Week Eleven Term Four, Tuesday December 17th, 2013

Edition Seventy-four

Merry Christmas and a Safe and Refreshing Vacation

With school resuming after the Christmas vacation on Wednesday January 29th, and Kindergarten beginning on Friday January 31st, our staff wishes you and your family our very best wishes for a great Christmas, and a break which gives you and the family time to re-charge and be ready for the 2014 school year.

School Captains for 2014

While farewelling our departing Year Six students, and our student leaders for this year, we welcome the new leaders, elected by our students and staff. They are: -

Captains

Gus Springthorpe and Lucy Bramhill

Vice-captains

Matt Corcoran and Stella Zdenkowski



Thanks to Our Volunteers

A theme emerging for Monday's Presentation day Assembly was our indebtedness to our many volunteers who make school life so much better for our students. In this category I include our staff, taking on "extra duties" outside normal school hours, our parent helpers in all sorts of capacities, from Canteen to gardening, from reading groups to ethics classes, from sourcing uniform to working bees. Schools are often in the business of creating memories for their students, and very often those memories are made pleasant by the contribution of those little "extras", the out-of-the-ordinary, those events which come on top of the normal lessons, and for many of these we must thank our volunteers.

Our Presentation Day is made more significant for our students by the generosity of our many sponsors, who provide many of the book and voucher prizes. We must thank Newcastle Boys' High School Old Boys' Association, who provide many of our book prizes, along with a duplicate copy of each book for our school's Benson Library, Newcastle Lions' Club, MHR Hon. Sharon Claydon, the Le Goff Family, for the Frank L Williamson Maths Prize, the Squires family, for the Creative and Performing Arts Award, Liz Bugbird, for the Poetry Prize, and the estate of Ruth Whittington, for our Literacy prizes.

NEPS on Vacation

With so much grounds work going on during this vacation, it is wise to keep children away from the school until next year's lessons resume. Much of our playground will be excavated, lined with special enviro-textile, impermeable to asbestos, then re-profiled with new certified asbestos-free soil, before re-turfing. I expect many vehicle movements in and out of the school, making it unsafe for children's play. The reward will be a totally new playground for 2014, completely safe from asbestos, shade over the play equipment, and space to run around. This project will take all vacation.

As well, a French Summer School will take place in the OOSH, each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday during January. Students attending will enter from Tyrrell Street, and be restricted to the play area outside OOSH.

Finally, NEPS is hosting a conference for teachers on January 21 and 22, with Electroboard, Educational Experience, and Apple, with around 120 people attending from all school systems.

Christmas Concert

We saw some wonderful performances by our students at last night's Christmas Concert. Thanks to all who attended, and congratulations to our students for their involvement and energy. This was yet another event organised jointly between our staff and our P and C members, and the result was a great family night, and a very healthy fund-raiser for our school. I am very grateful to the teachers who organised their class performances, exhibited and sold some truly beautiful craft items, helping to brighten up many Christmas trees, and providing interesting little gifts.



In total P and C raised around \$3500, money needed to provide those little extras for our students. Let's keep in mind that some P and C members were still here late into the night, cleaning up after the barbeque, organising food, and so on. Those volunteer hours put in by committee members are often not recognised. We really do need to say a huge "thank you" to them!

The picture shows our Committee reflecting on the year and planning for 2014.

Clap-Out Arrangements

Our traditional send-off for our departing and Year Six students will take place tomorrow, Wednesday 18th, at 2.30, on the COLA. Parents of children of all ages are very welcome, as we make a line from the COLA to the front gate, to clap them out. It is quite atmospheric and memorable for our students. You are very welcome to join us for the clap-out.