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23 October 2012

Principal's Pen



There's so much to tell parents about this week but I will be as brief as I can... Having just had the 'Senior Camp' and experiencing the Dr Arne Rubinstein talk and 'Camp Out with Kids' my head is full of great experiences to share.

On the eve of World Teacher's Day I would like to also take some time to honour the amazing people you entrust your children to on a daily basis. Teaching and working in schools would have to be one of the most rewarding and yet challenging professions of our modern world. No two days are ever the same and despite the amount of planning a teacher does, the day's events can unfold in a way that doesn't remotely resemble the plan. That's

because we are dealing with the most precious thing we have – children! Children can unpredictable, interesting, fascinating and gorgeous all in the same minute. We teach children and not a curriculum!!!

“A good teacher is like a candle - it consumes itself to light the way for others.”

The Teachers and School Officers of St Rita's are witness to this quote. I see this day in, day out in the myriad of tasks they perform. Our staff give, give and then give more for the betterment of the children not only academically, but socially, emotionally and spiritually and that's what sets us apart from other educational systems.

The life of a teacher is extremely complex – having to juggle many tasks simultaneously, aiming to meet the immediate needs of each child in their class, aiming to meet the needs of that many parents as well – (imagine having that many clients all wanting and needing you at the same time in your line of work), meeting the expectations of governments with constantly learning and teaching new curriculum, increased demand and pressure with standardised assessments such as NAPLAN, having to do more with less resources, responding to the ever increasing demands of modern society, having to deal with complex family, social and behavioural issues.

Teachers and staff in schools are pseudo parents, educators/facilitators/instructors, judges, investigators, social workers, first aid officers, innovators, nutritionists, fitness trainers, spiritual guides, maintenance workers, workplace health and safety officers... and the list goes on.

What makes teaching in a Catholic school unique is that we have the greatest teacher of all time as our guide and model – Jesus Christ himself. He did it without ipads and whiteboards – he did it through 'who he was' and the example he gave in the stories he told.

What most people who work in schools would say though is that 'they love what they do' – they love seeing the growth in children and are rewarded daily. Our teachers and school officers care!

In anticipation of a flow of gratitude to our staff from our parents this week, I thank you for letting your teacher and school officers know that you appreciate all they do for your children.



Everyone understands how important teachers are and how tough their work can be. But how often do we take the time to say thank you for the wonderful job they do? This is a great way for local communities to show appreciation for their teachers.

This year the prize pool includes:

- A \$20,000 staffroom makeover for the winning school
- Deluxe coffee machine, coffee grinder and coffee supplies for five runner up schools
- An Apple iPad and iTunes gift cards for participants

Instead of voting for their school, this year, participants are invited to give a virtual apple to their teachers. Participants can visit the website – <http://www.staffroomforimprovement.com.au/> – once a day and each time they visit their apple giving power will increase. The competition will run until 5 November.

If you have any questions about this year's competition, email staffroomforimprovement@qtm.com.au

To view a short video of previous winners go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcbzkMngGEI&feature=BFa&list=PLy5JCA0LNbbIQ2EhQL>

SENIOR CAMP – MASTERCARD MOMENTS



Last week was a reminder for me of why I am in the game of education! Mr Garside and I took the senior class to camp with St Michael's Year 6 and 7s. In all 71 students enjoyed the fun times and challenges presented. Put quite simply - Our students shone! It was wonderful to see our students mixing with the others – the staff on many occasions stated that you couldn't tell who was St Michael's and who was St Rita's.

I witnessed so many 'growth' experiences in the children as they had to 'fend for themselves' without Mum or Dad behind them. From setting up the beds and having dorm inspections to meeting other children and getting to know them, to facing the challenges of the activities presented to them. The students engaged in a range of activities which enhanced their communication skills and caused them to attempt to overcome their fears. I was reminded often that this is our Social and Emotional Curriculum at work. When sharing and journaling, one of our students shared with me *"Mr Rick one thing that surprised me today was that when I went on the high ropes, I got really scared and couldn't do it. But I overcame my fear and tried again and did it!"* Now that is something worthy of accolades.

I wish to express my thanks to Mr Garside for giving up 3 days of family time as well as Mrs Lea Martin of St Michael's and her staff for inviting us to join them on camp. Our children are all the better for having gone – many Mastercard moments shared that money just can't buy.



DR ARNE RUBINSTEIN PARENTING TALK AND CAMP OUT WITH KIDS

Your Diocesan P&F sponsored for you last week, a wonderful opportunity for parents to learn some helpful parenting strategies and reflect on your own relationship with each of your children. I was fortunate to have attended both the talk and then attend the Camp Out and I would have to say it would be one of the best investments of time I have made as a parent. Dr Arne is a GP who also manages an organisation called The Rites of Passage Institute. Put very simply, they group parenting into 3 main phases – 0-12, 13 – 18 and then above. He suggests that a child's general state of wellbeing and happiness is heavily determined by the quality of family relationships in this first phase. IN this phase he suggests these 7 parenting strategies for building resilience and connection:

1. Spend regular one on one time with your children (with mobiles and digital devices turned off)
2. Make a habit of acknowledging and encouraging your child... for their individual gifts and qualities and not just their achievements.
3. Share stories with your children about what you did when you were their age.
4. Teach skills of reflection so they can critically assess situations. Use movies, adds and other people as the medium for this. Eg. What do you think about that person over there smoking? As opposed to the lecture on why smoking is bad for you.
5. Support children to solve their own problems to stimulate brain development
6. Connect privileges with responsibility... having chores to earn things... not being given everything
7. When discipline is required separate the child from the behaviour. Teach your child that you love them but no their behaviour choice.

I took my eldest son, Makka to the Camp Out on Saturday night to experience what the process had to offer. I can confidently say that the time was 'magical' for both my son and I. The carefully facilitated activities encouraged communication on a level often not reached in the day to day busyness of life – the fact that my son was saying that it was 'awesome' and wanted to do it every year spoke volumes to me. We spent one on one time, shared stories and had fun away from all the distractions of life. I highly recommend this to all parents and encourage you to look out for it next year.

For more information on this visit www.campoutwithkids.com.au/

It is hoped that with parent support and parental request, the Diocesan P&F will again invite Dr Rubinstein up in the coming years. If you think this is worthwhile then please let our P&F know or our Diocesan P&F delegate, Julie Parker know.

SCHOOL FEE ACCOUNTS

Term 4 School Fees accounts were sent home last week. Thank you to the families who have promptly paid their accounts. It is greatly appreciated.

As we are nearing the end of the year, all accounts must be finalised by the due date.

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From the online version, you are able to easily access the latest school calendar and website. You also have access to the full version of attachments, advertisements and community notices.

FINAL WORKING BEE for 2013 – Change of Date



This will now be held on **Sunday 11 November from 9am**. To avoid clashes of other events we have decided to change the working bee to the following Sunday. It is Remembrance Day and so we will stop at 11am for some silence. Staff will be attending Mass prior and all families are encouraged to attend

also.

Many parents will make for light work and an enjoyable time while getting some important jobs done. Jobs include finishing off the sandpit, turning over the sand in the senior playground and a clean out of the P&F shed. Please consider coming along to help.

ICAS AWARDS

In recent months all Years 3-7 participated in the ICAS Maths and English tests. St Rita's offers this as a way of giving our students greater experiences at such tests and achievement. The students were given their certificates on assembly last week and we wish to acknowledge the efforts of all, but highlight 2 of our students who received Distinctions and Credits, Molly and Darragh Stager. Well done everyone.

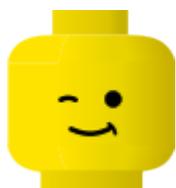


RUN AROUND THE WORLD ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Recently the students received their certificates for Run Around the World. Here are the proud recipients.



FUNNY BONE



I do try these out on my own children first – hope you enjoy them.

Q: Why isn't your nose 12 inches long? A: Because then it would be a foot!

Q: Where does a judge eat lunch? A: At the food court.

Q: Why do bees have sticky hair? A: They use honeycombs.

Have a blessed week and spend some one on one time with your children and see what grows of it.

Cheers Gavin

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING...



Wow, what a week...and it only has 4 days!

Prep/1 started the week off with their Mass which centred around the theme of 'Thanking God for creation'. Those who attended can attest to the many beautiful singing voices which abound within the Prep/1 class.

Tomorrow is our **Crazy Hair and Sock Day**. Come dressed in your craziest hairstyle and craziest socks and bring along a donation for the missions. This will be St Rita's contribution to the Catholic Mission, as we

strive to restore hope and offer material and spiritual support.

Join us for
CRAZY HAIR

SOCK DAY
Wednesday October 24th
& donate a gold coin
to the missions.

Get red, Red, READY for DAY FOR DANIEL

October 26th is our National Day of Action which promotes children's personal safety and provides Australian children with valuable life skills.

The 4 key children's safety messages are:

1. My body belongs to me
2. I am special so are you!
3. Safety is my right – all day and all night
4. I can get help



A curriculum has now been developed for Queensland students which is based around the three core messages of recognise, react and report. This program helps teachers deliver valuable learning experiences so that students can develop the skills needed to better manage their own safety.

The Recognise message encourages students to be aware of their surroundings and to recognise warning clues.

The React message helps students to consider choices that may keep them safe or help make them safe again as quickly as possible.

The Report message encourages students to report unsafe incidents to an adult.

On Friday, our adopt-a-cop Constable Green will address us on being safe and our right to always feel safe. We will also show our support by 'being red' for the day. We will write in red, wear red and the children are encouraged to bring a red lunch (watermelon, cherry tomatoes, red apple, jam sandwich etc). We will also watch a short presentation from Terri, Bindi and Robert Irwin on personal safety.

So 'be red - y' for October 26th.

*Peace and Best Wishes,
Robyn*

ST RITA'S FAITH AND RELIGIOUS LIFE CALENDAR	
October	Month of the Rosary Mission Month
Monday October 22	Pupil Free Day. Find some day today to pray a decade of the rosary.
Tuesday October 23	9am: Prep/1 Class Mass
Wednesday October 24th	Children's Mission Day – Crazy Hair and Sock Day to raise money for the Missions.
Friday October 26th	Day for Daniel – Wear something red and have a red lunch
Saturday October 27	7pm: Vigil Mass
Sunday October 28	8am: Morning Mass.
Thursday Nov 1	9am Whole School Mass. All Saints' Day
Friday Nov 2	All Souls Day
Tuesday Nov 13	9am: 4/5/6/7 Class Mass (Please note change of date)

UNIFORMS

UNIFORM SALE

In an effort to clear some stock before placing next year's order, the following items have been reduced for this week:

Girls Skirts	\$10
Girls Skorts	\$15

Unisex shirts	\$30
Girls Shirts	\$30

If you have not yet returned your order form for new uniforms for 2013, please do so this week.

LIBRARY NEWS

Last term we had a very successful Book Fair. I have displayed 30 new books ready for the children to borrow. There is a good variety to suit the different age groups.

Thank you to the parents for supporting our Book Fair.

Mrs Kurucz Library Aide

PARENTS AND FRIENDS NEWS

The Queensland P&F have released a new online Parent Newsletter called *Parent Chatter* which is available at <http://www.pandf.org.au/2012/20120914/index.html>

I encourage all parents to visit this and subscribe to the newsletter at www.pandf.org.au

RECIPES - PLEASE! PLEASE! PLEASE!

More Gluten Free, International, Christmas, Death by Chocolate, School Lunch Boxes and Household Tips. We seem to have enough family dinners and baking etc. Please send these in ASAP.

World Teachers Day:

"The P & F and all parents want to send out a BIG THANK YOU to all teachers and staff at St. Rita's Babinda.

We appreciate all your great work and the wonderful care you give to our children!"

We will have a little get-together at the school on World Teachers Day, Friday the 26th Oct. at 1.30, if you'd like to join.

The P & F Committee

STARS OF THE WEEK



Prep/1 - Montana Oliveri

2/3/4 - Kadie Saylor

5/6/7 - Shylah Montague

GROUNDS AND GARDENS ROSTER



Thank you Saylor family for mowing last weekend.

Thank you to the following families who are rostered on in the coming weeks:

STAGER - 27th October – 9th November

HARRISON - 10TH – 23rd November

Please be sure to organize to pick up and drop the mower key to the office. Also let us know if the fuel tank is low or any maintenance needed. Thanks

DATE CLAIMERS	
OCTOBER	
24th Oct	Crazy Hair and Sock Day AVA Pet Visit 10-11am
26th October	World Teachers' Day Day for Daniel
NOVEMBER	
6th November	P&F Dinner
11th November	Working Bee – New Date!!!
13th	Prep 2013 Information Evening 7pm
14th November	Total Solar Eclipse
20th November	Prep 2013 – 'Bump Up' Morning 8.30-11am
27th November	Prep 2013 Visit 8.30-11am
DECEMBER	
4th December	School Thanksgiving Mass and Yr 7 Farewell 6pm
6th December	Christmas Concert and Breakup
7th Dec	Last Day of the School Year finish 12pm.

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

Trying times need not drag you down if you'll see them as doorways to new beginnings.

COMMUNITY NEWS

PICTURE THEATRE

FUTURE SCREENINGS

Fri 26, Sat 27, Sun 28 Oct	7.30 pm Admission \$7.00	M
Hope Springs More Information		
Fri 2, Sat 3, Sun 4 Nov	7.30 pm Admission \$7.00	M15+
TAKEN 2 More Information		

Year 8 - 2013 Orientation Day Good Counsel College Innisfail

The College will conduct its Year 8 Orientation Day on Wednesday 24th October from 9.00am to 1.00pm. For more information phone the College on 4063 5300.

Year 8 – 2013 Orientation Day St Monica's College Cairns

Orientation Day for Year 8 2013 will be held on Tuesday 20th November from 8.45am – 3.00pm. For more information please phone the College on 40424800

TACKLING TEENS WORKSHOP

Strategies for parenting pre-teens and teenagers.

Workshops show parents how they can help their child make the right choices and guide them successfully through the often difficult times of physical, social and emotional change. Parents have more power than they may think to influence their child's choices.

Workshop are based on the book of the same name by local author Denise Bewert.

Date of Workshop: 7th November 2012

Time: 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Venue: Aloomba State School Resource Centre

FREE – ALOOMBA State School P & C funded – All welcome!

FREE Well Women's Clinic – Babinda Hospital

Tuesday 6th November 2012

Service includes Pap Smears, Sexual Health Screening, Breast Awareness, also info on Contraception, Continence, Menopause, Lifestyle Issues, Domestic Violence, etc. All services are provided by a specially trained Women's Health Nurse.

For appointments phone 4067 8200