

# SchoolMatters

Edition 5 August 2010

Lateral thinking at  
Gwynne Park PS

Independent  
Schooling Success

## Big Bang!

How student science  
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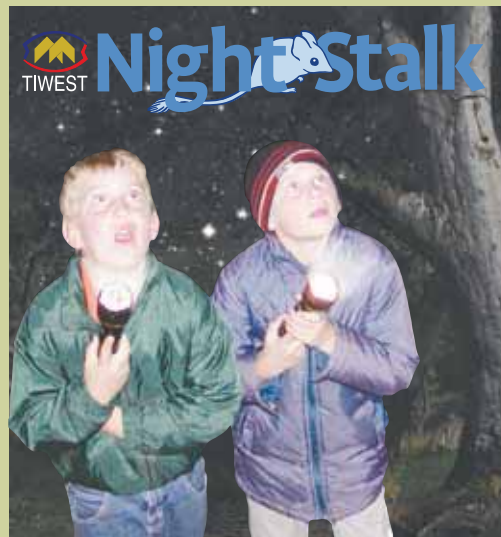


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# From the Director General

With nearly 100 schools now part of the Independent Public Schools initiative, public education in Western Australia is certainly entering a new phase.

Joining the 34 schools which have been operating with more autonomy since the beginning of this year are a further 64 schools which will start as Independent Public Schools from the beginning of next year. The new intake includes clusters of schools such as the Hills Learning Precinct, Rockingham Beach Primary Schools, Woodvale K-12 Learning Community, BBJ Cluster. It also includes education support schools, district high schools, senior high schools, primary schools and a senior college – in fact all the different types of schools that make up the broad public education profile in this State. Certainly the feedback from the first 34 schools has been overwhelmingly positive in the first six months, and the feature stories in each edition of this magazine show how the schools are using the flexibilities. Principals, teachers, support staff and communities are reinvigorated – and this can only benefit students.

Independent Public Schools is one of a suite of three initiatives in the Government's agenda for empowering school communities. Independent school reviews and the reshaping of districts are still being developed to help ensure we continue to build a strong public school system. As I signalled in Classroom First almost three years ago, freeing schools from unnecessary bureaucracy is essential as we work at making every public school a good school, every teacher an effective teacher and every student a successful student. I am pleased that some of the flexibilities which were developed for Independent Public Schools are now being extended to all schools – a prime example is the new Schools Plus online checklist. This is a much simplified process for schools to be allocated resources to meet the needs of eligible students with disability.

A further example is the updated performance management policy. The new policy streamlines processes and offers greater flexibility in managing performance. It is my intention to continue extending flexibilities to all schools as the benefits are demonstrated through Independent Public Schools. As we start Term 3, Science Week (14 to 22 August) is just around the corner and you will see a range of stories and articles in this edition of School Matters about science and technology. Science is such an interesting and challenging part of our daily lives, and our schools have an incredibly important role to play in stimulating interest in the sciences by young people. We need more scientists – and indeed more science teachers – so Science Week is a timely focus for all of us.

*Sharyn O'Neill*

Sharyn O'Neill



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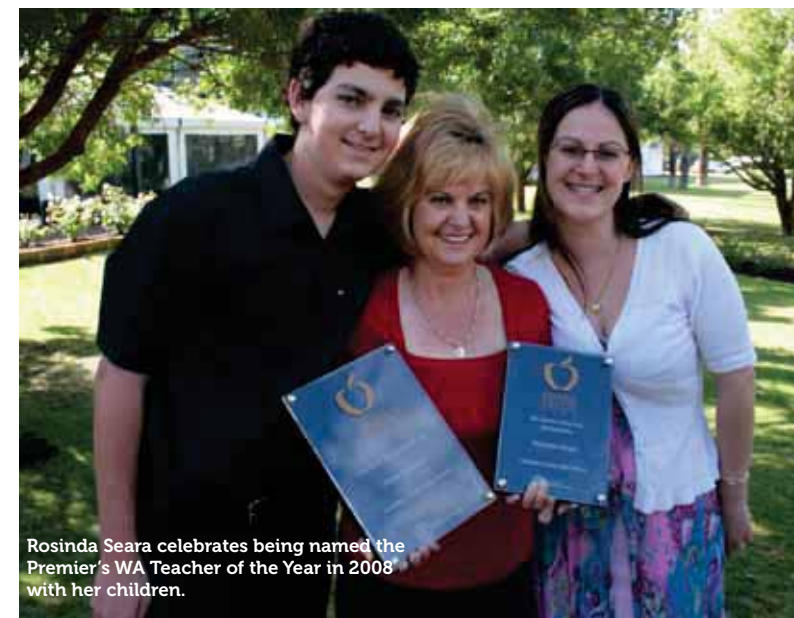
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In the loop with Maria D'Agostino & Rebecca Fraurud

# Making headlines

There are plenty of achievements to celebrate in our schools this month.



Rosinda Seara celebrates being named the Premier's WA Teacher of the Year in 2008 with her children.

## Honour for Hamilton Senior High School teacher

Hamilton Senior High School teacher Rosinda Seara has been awarded the Public Service Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her contribution to education.

She was also recognised for her commitment to the SES Cadets, having revitalised the unit and increased the number of participants. Rosinda, who was the Premier's WA Teacher of the Year in 2008, said she felt gratified that her years of dedication, hard work and commitment to teaching had been acknowledged.

"Winning this award only encourages me to continue my work, whether it is teaching in the classroom or expanding students' horizons by taking them out on excursions," she said. "I feel winning this medal benefits all teachers as it lifts the standing of teachers in the community. In particular, teachers in public schools will receive a boost now that one of us has actually been recognised." Rosinda has been involved in the Premier's Student ANZAC Tours since 2007 and this year was tour leader. In 2008 she was recognised by the government of Portugal for being a person of Portuguese decent who has contributed significantly outside the country.

## Having his say

Narambeen District High School student Jayden Hooper travelled to Canberra in June to take part in the Australian Government's Youth Advisory Group on Cyber Safety. Jayden was one of only 50 students from around Australia to take part and was invited because of his enthusiasm in the school workshops and his contribution on the Youth Advisory Group website.

## Leadership adventure

**FORTY** Year 7 student councillors stepped out of their comfort zones and embarked on a two day leadership challenge camp.

Students from the Westfield Park, Grovelands, Armadale, Kingsley, Kelmscott and Clifton Hills primary schools took the 2010 leadership challenge, the eleventh annual camp since 1999. Kelmscott Senior High School Agricultural Farm hosted the camp, where students solved problems, canoed and built rafts to develop their initiative, group dynamics and leadership skills. Kingsley Primary School deputy principal Mike Devlin said the event was a fabulous opportunity for its school leaders to be challenged and to enhance their team skills.

Course coordinator Norm Hammond said the leadership challenge camp also helped the high school and surrounding primary schools keep in touch. "It prepares students and introduces them to their secondary years of schooling," he said.



## Cheeky boxing champion

Newton Moore Senior High School Year 10 student Nathaniel May has become the national champion boxer for his age and weight division.

Taking up boxing less than a year ago, Nathaniel (nicknamed Cheeky) has established himself as an elite sportsman with a passion for boxing and football. He is a member of the Australian Institute of Sport, South West Football Academy, State team member in boxing and has also made a few appearances on GWN television. Clontarf Football Academy's Merv Kelly said he was proud of Cheeky's achievements.

"We hope he continues to develop his boxing. It has had a really positive impact on him as a person and as a student this year," he said. Nathaniel will represent Western Australia in the upcoming boxing national championships in Queensland.





## Bringing cultures together with Annual World Day

Poignant stories of kidnap and escape, starting a new life in a foreign land and the beauty of a person's homeland were part of Greenwood Senior High School's annual World Day.

Deputy principal Terry Dunn said the event gave students a greater appreciation for their classmates' cultural heritage and previous experiences. "World Day is important to promote cultural diversity and harmony within the school and local communities," Terry said. Understanding helps to break down barriers between students and encourages greater inclusion.

"The richness of our students' vast cultural backgrounds was highlighted through storytelling and artistic expression." Several students shared their experiences of leaving their families and friends behind for a new life in Australia, with one sharing how her father was kidnapped in Iraq, his escape and the family's eventual move to Australia.

Students dressed in traditional clothing from their countries of origin and performances were given by Intensive English Centre students. The acts included choreographed Chinese, African and Philipino dancing, the playing of a traditional Chinese stringed instrument, the Erhu, a Thai kickboxing demonstration, traditional Maori Haka and a song written and performed by a Romanian student. Performances were also given for local primary school students, invited guests and parents. This year the event was expanded to include arts workshops led by students from Edith Cowan University. The day concluded with a singing, dancing and drumming workshop led by a group from Ghana called African Beat.



Greenwood Senior High School students wore traditional dress when they celebrated World Day.

**Murdoch mentors** Maylands Peninsula Primary School is giving student teachers hands on experience and preparing them to teach the next generation of students. Murdoch University is trialling a new initiative, the Murdoch Mentoring Model, to give student teachers the opportunity to spend a full year attached to a single primary school, rather than several short term placements.



## New experiment reaps rewards

Students excelling in science at Joondalup Primary School are getting their hands on some high tech equipment at a neighbouring secondary school as part of a new program for high achieving science students. Thirteen students showing enthusiasm for science take part in the program every Wednesday evening over six weeks. Their hard work was rewarded when they visited Belridge Senior High School to conduct science experiments in the school's labs and work with teacher Brett Crosbie.

Brett showed the primary students how to make gases in different ways by heating liquids and solids, reacting acids and carbonates, decomposing solids and depressurising liquids. Joondalup Primary School teacher Tammy Hanrahan said she started the program so high achieving science students could use the more sophisticated equipment at the secondary school. "It is the first time students have been in a secondary school environment and they are all really passionate about science," she said.



## Teachers awarded for excellence

Two teachers are in the spotlight after receiving National Excellence in Teaching Awards in Melbourne recently.

Fiona Farren from South Bunbury Primary School and Paul Fuller, formerly from Orange Grove Primary School and now teaching at Landsdale Primary School, were presented with the awards in the Community Engagement category. Fiona has dedicated herself to helping improve children's early education. She developed the Linking Education and Families program which helps children in the transition to school as well as raises parental awareness of the importance of the early years of learning.

"We have developed a friendly, inclusive environment where more than 70 children and their families are made welcome every week," Fiona said. "We consider the child's family as integral to our understanding of the individual, and consider the time we invest in developing a collaborative relationship with them as well spent."

Paul has been empowering his students and community to develop their own voices. His flagship project is Podkids Australia,

the most successful school-based podcast in the country. Podkids Australia provides an authentic worldwide audience for students' writing and has subscribers in more than 50 countries. Student work has been downloaded more than 60,000 times. Paul also holds regular parent and community workshops for anyone wishing to develop further technological skills. He also mentors other teachers in how they can use the latest technologies. Paul said technology was not simply a 'gimmick' to increase engagement.

"When used properly, digital tools enable students to learn more effectively and develop competencies that are essential for the 21st century," he said. "Our class podcast enables students to become active citizens, using their newfound global voice to help achieve valuable social, environment and cultural goals."

"The result is a community of learners producing outstanding work that is showcased to the world."

W: [neita.com.au](http://neita.com.au)

## Dalwallinu goes back in time

The town of Dalwallinu turns 100 this year and Dalwallinu District High School joined the celebrations with a 'back to school' day for staff and students. Students came dressed as they would have 90 years ago, with some making dresses and hiring costumes to represent that time in history. The town of Dalwallinu will officially mark the historical event with celebrations on 11 and 12 September. Dalwallinu District High School, the community centre and town oval will have displays and celebrations throughout the weekend.



# School spirit thrives



Bold, Creative, Caring. That's the motto at Belmont City College. And with a range of successful new flexibilities as an Independent Public School, the college is being just that. Maria D'Agostino reports.

"Throughout my eight years at Belmont City College, firstly as an associate principal and then as its principal, I have strived for a greater sense of ownership and belonging among our students," says principal Trevor Hunter. "In 2010, as an Independent Public School, one of the major impacts has been the changing view of our students and the community toward us." It's not hard to see the truth in Trevor's words as I walk around Belmont Community College.

There is a real sense of ownership among staff and students as they go about their classes. When I visit the drama class, teacher Jessica Bromley is enthusiastically directing her students for a performance that will be given to Year 1 to 6 students from Belmont City College's feeder primary schools. The students performed for 2,200 students last year and the drama program will expand next year when the school employs a graduate teacher.

"There is a greater sense of community as you walk around the college," says Trevor. "A greater sense of community that in no small part is due to the feeling that we are our own school in our own community and we have become uniquely Belmont. I believe that in the minds of many within our community this change has come about due to being an Independent Public School."

Hospitality teacher Lyn Scantlebury is showing her students the art of baking when I enter the kitchen where the school's Hospitality Specialist School Program is held – the only accredited specialist program of its kind available in Western Australia. Lyn agrees that the students have a greater sense of community since the school became an Independent Public School.

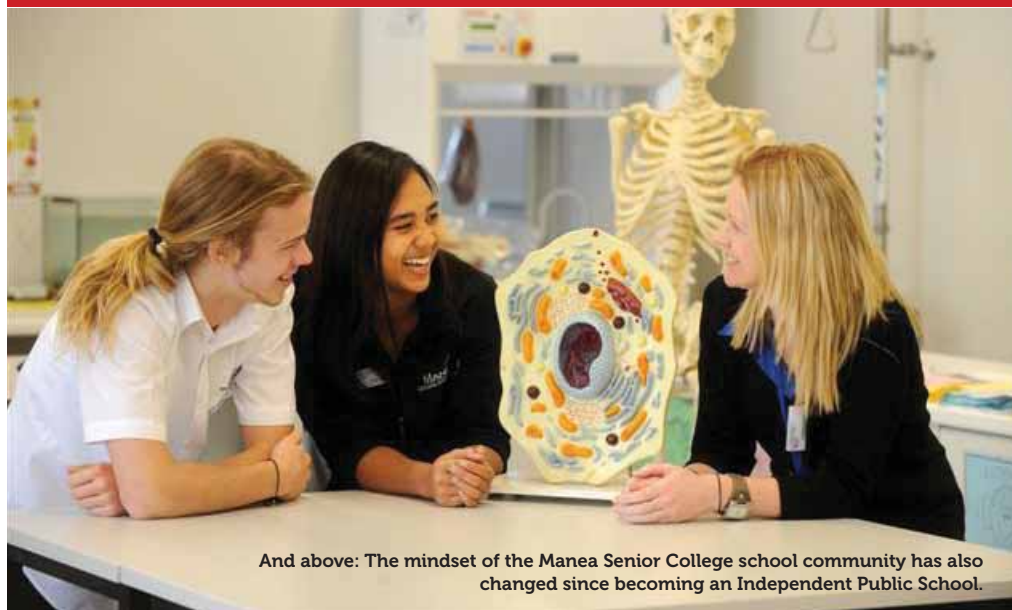
"The students here are really down to earth and loyal," she says. "If you do the right thing by them then they will do the right thing by you. Belmont City College is quite unique. Education here is personal and, once you establish a relationship with the students, it's a lasting one." Lyn isn't wrong. So strong are





## Independent status A FURTHER 64 INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL BEGIN IN 2011.

Each receive networking, training and workshop opportunities over the next five months as they prepare for flexibilities. The Director General urged schools that were unsuccessful during the first and second rounds to seek feedback on their applications. Details will be provided throughout the year about a third intake to begin in 2012.



And above: The mindset of the Manea Senior College school community has also changed since becoming an Independent Public School.

the relationships she has developed with her students that she is still in contact with them once they leave school and has even been asked to make wedding cakes for some.

Belmont City College has been in the process of school renewal since 2004, and the decision to become an Independent Public School was based on the need for flexibility, particularly the ability to employ support staff to work with students at risk. Trevor says the capacity to employ a different range of staff was working extremely well and was creating greater stability. The chance to be more flexible with the school's budget has also been successful.

"We have offered employment to graduate teachers before they have completed their final year in advance of private schools, and we have employed a more diverse range of staff to support our students in the areas of pastoral care," Trevor says. "We have also used

finance flexibilities to put funds into areas of the college that have needed support but previously we were not able to do so."

Some of these areas are the teaching and learning support group which includes chaplains, a youth worker, social worker, school psychologist, literacy specialists, and Aboriginal education workers. The college also received \$80,000 in funding through a partnership with the City of Belmont and Department of Immigration to employ staff for its culturally and linguistically diverse/English as a second language program.

South of Perth, 180 kilometres from Belmont City College, another public school is relishing its independent status. At Manea Senior College, the mindset of the school community has also changed since becoming an Independent Public School.

"In the past, we were a little reluctant to think laterally but anything is possible to consider," principal Paul Mathews says.

As with Belmont City College, the ability to be more flexible when employing staff has proved very beneficial to Manea Senior College. This year, the college has recruited 15 new staff, and the positions are slightly different than at other schools. A youth worker has been added to the staff while the Aboriginal and Islander education officer role has been combined with a teaching role so the Indigenous teacher can provide leadership for Indigenous students. Managing staff leave and selection of all staff are also working well at Manea Senior College.

The college now employs tutors when areas of student performance needing improvement are identified. Paul points out that redirecting school funding into those things that are needed is one of the great benefits. "We have our own innovation grant where \$20,000 is offered to staff who would like to start a special project for their students," he says. "The successful applicants for the first round have to show how their innovative approach to curriculum delivery will improve outcomes for students." Staff have used the money to install LabQuest data loggers, used in chemistry and physics courses for accurate data collection in processes such as motion experiments and heat involved in chemical reactions.

Another successful grant involved purchasing graphic tablets to be used in courses such as applied information technology. These help students design and draw, and the work is then transferred to a computer. One teacher secured a grant to work with training lecturers to introduce the content from theory components of training courses into the English and maths courses that the vocational pathways students are studying.

"We have no feeder schools so we have to think differently about how we do things," Paul says. "That's why the opportunity to embrace being an Independent Public School was so significant. We're now able to take on new staff in a more flexible way to prepare for the impact of the half cohort when it hits Year 11, and we can match our staff with the ethos and vision of the college. This was really important to us."

The changing perspectives of students, staff and the community are key to the success of both schools and no one knows this better than Trevor who remembers his school before it was Belmont City College. He and his colleague Lyn are former students of Belmont Senior High School, and both have seen first hand the long way the school has come. "If anyone had told me when I was a student here that one day I'd be the principal I would have laughed in their faces," Trevor smiles. ●



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# A new horizon

The day 53 asylum seekers arrived at Leonora District High School will be remembered for its historical significance as Principal Greg Fisher tells David Mitchell.

Greg Fisher is reminiscing how, as a junior copy boy at *The West Australian* in 1980, he was probably the first person in WA to learn of the death of John Lennon when the news first came through on the wire.

And while the arrival of 53 asylum seekers at Leonora District High School may not have the same resonance internationally, Greg, now principal at the school, feels he is again part of an historically significant event. “In years to come, people will talk about when the asylum seekers came to Leonora and we’ll all be able to say ‘I was there,’” he tells staff on the eve of day one. If ever there was a case of ‘it’ll be all right on the night’, this is it. Ever since the Australian Government first announced in early June that immigration detainees, primarily from Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, would relocate to the town, it’s been a round-the-clock effort to get the school ready for its new arrivals.

However, with seven new teachers raring to go, all with expertise in teaching English as a Second Language, and three demountable

classrooms firmly in place, Greg and his staff can finally get on with the important business of educating a student population now more cosmopolitan than ever. The sense of excitement is palpable. Crammed into a rustic drama hall as their swelled numbers have now rendered their usual staff meeting area too small, new and experienced teachers talk animatedly about the challenge that awaits them.

For graduate Joanne Lewis, newly arrived from Bunbury, the wider debate surrounding asylum seekers pales into insignificance when compared to the prospect of working with the children themselves. “At the end of the day, these are children and every child, no matter what their background, wants to learn. So I’m excited to make their first encounter at a school in Australia a positive one,” she says. “It’s a real privilege to be part of this adventure, to give these children something that many of them have never experienced before.”

Part of that adventure is the sense of unknown. With a group of students from six to 17 years old, some of whom may never

have had formal education before, the first day is going to be a learning curve for all. What will the students’ English skills be like? How will they mix with other students?

Year 1 teacher Fifi Harris is hopeful they will mix well. Born and bred in Leonora, she witnessed first-hand the students’ orientation day towards the end of last term, and was heartened by what she saw. “Our students showed the new students around; they were really enthusiastic – and that didn’t surprise me at all,” she says. “The students here are very accepting. People are people – it doesn’t matter who they are, we give them a chance. And I hope that when people see what we’re doing here it will encourage everyone to be accepting.”

Junior primary teacher Joanna Schapel only finished her teaching degree on in mid-May and has come straight from the airport to her first staff meeting. “I’m really conscious that the experience must be as normal as possible for the new students,” she says, “But you often find that children are more adaptable than adults.”

Day one arrives and, with it, the inevitable media scrutiny. As the minibus carrying the new students from their camp drives past the front entrance and confused, excited faces peer out of the windows, journalists and photographers scurry to get a picture. The attention is a little overwhelming for some as they step off the bus and head to their first class in an Australian school. For some, perhaps their first class in any school.

Touring the classrooms and meeting the students for the first time, Larry Hamilton is impressed. Like everyone, the Goldfields Director Schools hadn’t been sure what to expect. “Many of the students have excellent English skills,” he says. “One was very interested in the television program *Little Dorrit* and was writing very fluently about that. There are gaps, of course, and the challenge for the school will be to assess the different stages the students are at and to develop programs for them.”

He is less surprised at how warmly the asylum seekers have been received. Leonora has a long history of being welcoming to immigrants and indeed the town was once home to Afghan cameleers. His hope now is that, while the students are already mixed for non-academic subjects such as drama and home economics, the school will be able to integrate them into mainstream academic classes sooner rather than later.

At first recess, on a chilly morning under a milky Goldfields sky, the oval is packed



Goldfields Director Schools Larry Hamilton and Leonora District High School principal Greg Fisher are delighted the community has reacted so positively to the new asylum seekers.

with Aboriginal students, non-Aboriginal students, Afghans, Sri Lankans and other nationalities all playing excitedly. Natural segregation inevitably happens at first but, by the time the siren goes, the asylum seekers have learned a thing or two about Aussie Rules, and in turn their tricks with a round ball

and prowess with a cricket bat have generated impressed looks from the local kids.

As politicians and commentators debate the rights and wrongs of immigration policies, children are just getting on with being children. ●





# Promoting potential pioneers

The Chief Scientist for WA, Professor Lyn Beazley, outlines her enthusiasm for the many and varied science programs being undertaken in WA public schools.

When appointed as Chief Scientist of Western Australia, I selected science education as a priority. I am so glad I did as it has proved to be an opportunity to promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics. We are entering a new world in terms of renewable energy, improved agricultural practices, and more efficient and safer practices in the resources sector, to name but some of the future opportunities and challenges. However, for a sustainable future, we need a well informed, caring community with a highly skilled workforce which means an excellent education for all our young people. I am the product of public education - and a great supporter of it. My school, back in the United Kingdom, enabled me to be the first family member to receive a university education. So I feel strongly that public education must give every young person the chance to reach their true potential.

It is therefore extra special for me to visit public schools throughout Western Australia and witness science education in action - not just in the classroom and laboratory but via

extra enrichment programs. At Esperance Primary School, a Climate Watch program monitors local plant and animal communities. At Kununurra District High School, staff from the Department of Environment and Conservation are working with teachers and students to establish a Bush Ranger program. Many schools participate in the Water Corporation's excellent Water Wise program. Another marvellous initiative is the aquarium at Busselton Senior High School. Long may these and other excellent initiatives flourish.

One particularly exciting initiative is the BioGENEius program, supported by the State Government and an international pharmaceutical company. With expert supervision, students have undertaken original biotechnology research in universities, research institutes and the Western Australian Museum. Each year two students, selected by a panel including Nobel Laureate Professor Robin Warren AC, travel to North America to compete against international students at a major biotechnology conference. Two of our always highly competitive students even met

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Who knows, the students may become leaders of an expanded biotechnology industry here in Western Australia.

I can't finish without mentioning two things. One is the fantastic work of the Science Teachers' Association of Western Australia (STAWA), now housed at Curtin University of Technology. The second is a potential opportunity in the field of radio-astronomy for our budding scientists, engineers and information technologists. Australia and New Zealand are competing against a consortium of eight African countries to host arguably the world's largest scientific facility ever built: the Square Kilometre Array of 5000 radio-telescopes. It is great to see schools working with the SPICE program at the University of Western Australia to promote astronomy using a telescope accessible remotely by students across the State. (See story on page 10).

May our public education system go from strength to strength, receiving the support it richly deserves; because, quite simply, our future will soon be in new hands. We must ensure these are highly capable and caring hands. ●

Mt Lawley Senior High School Year 10 student Gur Ashish Singh Bhatia and his science teacher Richard Meagher are at the forefront of one of WA's newest science innovations.

They are working with The University of Western Australia's Centre for Learning Technology to commission a new robotic telescope that will change the way astronomy is studied. "This is such an exciting project as it will give WA students authentic astronomy opportunities, offering them the possibility of making new discoveries and collaborating with students in other schools and locations," Richard said. Located on the roof of the University's physics building, the telescope can be remotely controlled through an internet browser, allowing students across the State to image astronomical objects hundreds of millions of light years away.

When the telescope is officially launched later this year, students will be able to use the instrument in real time or upload lists of targets to be imaged while they sleep. This means they can conduct their own astronomy investigations using a research grade telescope from their computer at school or home. Gur Ashish is determining the age of star clusters by looking at photos of them through different coloured filters. He is piloting one of the lessons Year 10 science students will participate in once the telescope is commissioned.

His work is helping astronomer and developer of the Internet Telescope Project, Paul Luckas from The University of Western Australia, to identify any bugs in the system. Paul said he hoped science students would be able to use the instrument for their own astronomy projects and investigations, as well as make important contributions to science. "Students using the telescope will be able to participate in a number of research projects from minor planet research to supernovae discovery," Paul said. Teacher resources will be developed using the internet telescope as a context to teach science in lower and secondary schools. The resources are being developed as part of the SPICE program, a secondary science teachers' enrichment program that is a partnership between the WA Department of Education and The University of Western Australia. ●





# The perfect pact

Most teachers begin their careers with a strong desire to make a difference. A group of seven principals south of Perth is doing just that, and, as Kym Coolhaas found, their innovative collaboration is turning lives around.

When four principals got together in 2006, none could have foreseen that, four years later, they would be heading up a system where more than 100 students travel between six campuses every Wednesday to access courses of their choosing. The principals - Jenny Firth of Safety Bay Senior High School, Kerry Chipchase of Rockingham Senior High School, Graham Butler of Gilmore College and Syd Parke of Warnbro Community College, had a common goal - to improve Year 12 results. The group began to meet regularly to work out how to lift student aspirations and improve education outcomes. The initial talks were a meeting of minds, according to Syd Parke. "We gelled immediately with a common goal to improve the outcomes for our students," he says.

Fast forward to 2010 and, with Comet Bay College and the education support centres at Warnbro and Rockingham joining the alliance, students take part in 'PACT Wednesday' (PACT stands for Peron Alliance Curriculum and Teaching). This weekly event sees 119 students travel between six campuses to attend classes for subjects that they would not have been able to access at their home school. The 19 courses include Indonesian, modern history, mathematics, literature, engineering studies, nursing, politics and law, physics and marine and maritime technology. Running courses across six campuses sounds like a logistical nightmare: "But it has been remarkable in the number of mistakes we haven't made. We were keen not to jump too far too fast and made sure we got the fundamentals right: 2008 was the year for planning. In 2009 we started with the first course (Specialist Mathematics 3A/3B) and went on a study tour to the eastern states," Syd says. "The work of the deputies in translating our plans into reality has



been outstanding, and while it is a significant workload - mainly administrative - most teachers involved in PACT classes have enjoyed the professional experience."

Syd is keen to praise staff at Fremantle-Peel district office, particularly Julie Woodhouse, for their support: "It has been invaluable having someone like Julie in our corner and backing us up when it counts." He explains that the students find their own way between campuses. "When we spoke to principals over east, some said you must have a bus while others said it didn't matter. We have found that transport between campuses has not been a significant issue. All the schools, except Gilmore, are located on the same road so it is relatively easy to get from one school to another." To ensure a smooth transition for staff and students, each school had to align timetables, fee structures, assessment policies and exam periods. The principals meet every fortnight and the deputy principals meet every alternate fortnight. One deputy is chosen as a coordinator and goes to both meetings. This position operates on a rotational basis, with Warnbro Community College deputy Mark Brookes in the hot seat this year.

Students are generally based where the best resources are located. Warnbro has a fantastic engineering facility, Gilmore has a new drama resource and Rockingham has the best facilities for nursing. However, in order to minimise movement, numbers from each school are also considered. Understandably, students are enthusiastic about the program.

Craig Dutton, a Year 12 student at Warnbro Community High School is excited about the competition generated by being around students of similar abilities: "I enjoy the healthy competition you get being with other students of the same ability. You can help each other and solve problems together," he says. Students all claim that the variety and opportunities offered by the alliance are invaluable. "My PACT course has given me a tremendous learning opportunity and I have really enjoyed the variety," Gilmore College student Kia Martin says. "I have been able to gain more knowledge about the career I want to pursue and I have developed a wider circle of friends."

Plans are underway to allow students to access tours by other PACT schools, to Canberra, Borneo, NASA in the USA, Europe and Singapore. "Teachers find that the students who choose PACT courses are motivated," Graham Butler explains. "They also like the fact that their subjects are more sustainable." While the idea of sending students to other schools for specialised subjects can run the risk of creating 'elite' teachers, the experience of PACT has shown that this is not the case. "One of the central ideas behind PACT was to identify the best teachers for each subject," Graham says. "That does not mean that teachers not involved in PACT courses are left behind; the beauty of PACT is that teachers are able to share the load and build capacity. For us as a school it's great - it allows us to access science and specialist maths programs we wouldn't normally be able to offer. The result is that

Students can now access a wider range of courses.



we now have some students able to consider university. That is the real success behind this program."

Jenny Firth, who has been principal at Safety Bay Senior High School for five years, believes the potential offered by PACT is huge. "I spent a year teaching in the United States in 1996 which opened my eyes to the benefits of being part of a system. Over there, there was no innovation, no support - you were on your own. It really made me realise the need for collegiality, mentoring and support," Jenny, whose background is in mathematics, is particularly passionate about the outcomes generated by the Specialist Mathematics 3A/3B class at Murdoch University and the networking occurring in this learning area. "None of the schools had sufficient numbers to justify running this course but collectively it was possible," Jenny says. "The results have been outstanding and moderation with other schools is indicating very sound scores will be forthcoming."

The future for PACT looks bright. Next year will see the number of courses expand to 35 and students will be offered the opportunity to enrol in various Murdoch University foundation units. With a new senior high school in Baldvis due to open in 2013, Syd sees an opportunity for PACT to expand. "The opportunities for improving outcomes for students are almost endless," he says. "The development of a website, brochure, video and presentation is well underway thanks to a \$50,000 School Innovation Grant and we have received queries from both intra and interstate on how our alliance works. While not everything we have done is universally transferable, the interest other schools and collaboratives are showing, augurs well for public education." ●

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## Partnership schools



Gwynne Park Primary School principal Lee Bates uses apples to discuss the concept of halves with students.

# Domino effect

Gwynne Park Primary School in Armadale leveraged funding from the Smarter Schools national partnership, Building the Education Revolution program and School Innovation Grant to create new opportunities for its students to succeed in life. Priscilla Fouracres reports.

Never underestimate the power of the domino effect. Gwynne Park Primary School principal Lee Bates and his team used it to full advantage when putting into motion a plan that might not have been possible without lateral thinking, dedication and infectious enthusiasm. At stake are the school's literacy and numeracy achievement rates - among the lowest in the metropolitan area - and the success of its students. But if the possibility for improvement ever existed, it is now. Lee, with a long career working in low socioeconomic schools in remote areas, moved to the Armadale school in 2007 and began building a team committed to working together to make a difference. In fact,

*Working Together* became the school motto.

Working together are staff, students, their families and the local community - from fruit growers donating apples for students, to parents getting more involved in the school. "We have a supportive parent body and are building a relationship with families who have previously felt marginalised," Lee said. Lee describes the 'we' at Gwynne Park as "the administration team and the cluster leaders who form the backbone; but the teachers do all the work. We try to enable the teachers to get on with the work they do."

While making headway with behaviour management, things really started to gel when the school received Smarter Schools national partnership and Building the Education Revolution (BER) funding. "When we applied for BER funding, deputy principal Peter Elstermann and I initially asked for classroom refurbishments but eventually negotiated a new library and multi-use assembly area. At first we were disappointed but then we realised what we could do with the old spaces," Lee said, explaining how the first domino was pushed to start the flow-on effect.

Lee and Peter used lateral thinking and collaboration to organise new spaces in the school such as dividing the old library into four areas - one for a computer lab and the other three as much-needed dedicated learning areas where teachers and education assistants work with small groups of students to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. This complemented their low socioeconomic school communities national partnership strategy, a five-part plan designed to be sustainable after the special funding runs out. As part of the strategy, Peter restructured staffing timetables to improve staff to student ratios during key literacy and numeracy sessions. "Part-time staff returning from maternity leave were scheduled to work during key learning times. Instead of coming in for one day a week they come in during key times over a number of days to work during literacy and numeracy sessions. This provides more intensive attention for students," Lee said.

**The new learning spaces are used during these peak activity periods.**

Science also got a boost through the BER capital works program and national partnership funding. In addition to a new library, undercover assembly area, music room and canteen, Gwynne Park also received a purpose built science/art room. Science specialist teacher, Michael Munninger, will provide tailored science lessons for all primary classes as well as collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure literacy and numeracy are a key focus in his lessons.

**Michael conducted a science show for students to generate interest in the subject.** "We did snazzy science things like making lights glow and doing fun things with spaghetti. Now all the students want to do science."

Michael has also been a key player in another component of the Smarter Schools national partnership strategy known as Teachers as Tutors. Using the Director General's School Innovation Grant, deputy principal Sam Prodonovich designed and negotiated a project which gives Gwynne Park teachers the opportunity to work as tutors at Murdoch University, providing authentic teaching perspectives to trainee teachers and developing networks with students who will be looking for schools to work at when they graduate. The funding is used to pay a relief teacher one day a week while the Gwynne Park teacher is tutoring. Lee said the program improved teacher quality and was intended to be a model that could be taken on across the system. Hillman Primary School joined the project in semester two this year, becoming the second school to have a teacher tutor.

**Mentoring is important for retention and the school has appointed curriculum leaders to support classroom teachers.**

The tutoring, mentoring and curriculum leadership programs are designed to improve teacher quality and the lessons they provide.

**The remaining two components of the national partnership strategy are targeted at the families of Gwynne Park students.**

A trained social worker is at the school two days a week to provide case management support, connecting students' families with service agencies in the community to help meet their housing, financial, nutritional and other social needs. A long term project expected to make a difference for students when they enter formal learning is the School Readiness program currently being developed by the school. It is designed for the younger siblings of Gwynne Park students, who are too young to attend school, and their parents/carers. "Forming relationships with families before the children come to school is important for their future success," Lee explained. "Many of our students are two years developmentally delayed at three years old. Even if our teachers do really well and the students make great gains, they will still be behind the rest of the students at the end of the year."

"That's why we need to engage the parents of children from birth to four years old. We plan to conduct activities in the early childhood centre on alternate kindergarten days. When parents or carers bring older children to school they can stay with the baby in the pram and their younger children to

do an activity such as pizza making. During this activity, we will discuss shapes such as circles, learn simple counting and numeracy language such as more and less, and show how to set boundaries that are expected in classrooms such as 'please sit down'. Learning the language of school is important. "We are currently looking at different models for our School Readiness program and planning suitable activities."

Lee and the staff know there are no quick fixes for many of the learning difficulties their students face or for the academic achievement rates that are targeted for improvement. He anticipates it will take three to five years for work started this year to begin showing up in test results. Instead of feeling pressured to achieve improved literacy and numeracy results under the national partnership, Lee said the funding enabled everything to start falling into place.

"We already knew what we wanted to achieve and were chasing the outcomes - which is for every student to progress through their education and get a good job at the end - and this funding allowed us to start putting it into action. Funds from this program freed up other money that allowed us to do even more," he said. "I love working here and in other schools like Gwynne Park because, when you make a difference, you make a big difference. The students we help most are those who would likely be going in a very different direction, but we are often able to turn them around. And if we are in a position to offer life changing opportunities to everyone and only three take it up then we have significantly changed three lives."

When all the dominoes have fallen and the strategies have had time to work, expect to see results showing Gwynne Park Primary School has helped significantly more than just those three students and their families. Gwynne Park Primary School has been nominated for WA Innovative School of the Year as part of the WA Education Awards 2010. ●



# Schools sparked success for top apprentice

WA and Australian Apprentice of the Year at the 2009 WA and Australian Training Awards, Blake McCarthy, has come a long way since attending Willandra Primary School. At only 20 years old, he is now a trainee process plant operator and sure to meet with even more success.

I am a firm believer that education is what you make it. If you want to learn, regardless of what school you go to, people will be more than willing to teach you and this was especially the case at my secondary school. My schooling started at Willandra Primary School in Seville Grove which is where I developed the basics to set me up for life. Years 1 to 3 were life changing years for me, as my skills rapidly developed through the help of two teachers, Mrs Snook and Mrs Kell. They had a strong emphasis on education especially in the maths area.

I went to Cecil Andrews Senior High School from Years 8 to 10. When I started I was involved in the specialist performing arts program. The teachers soon recognised the people who had a desire to excel and had a strong willingness to learn. I still believe to this day that this is where I developed strong self confidence, along with the ability to feel proud about my achievements and capacity to talk with people on a variety of different levels regardless of their situation. It has definitely helped me with my current traineeship and has been particularly invaluable at the public speaking events that I have been involved in since being named the Australian Apprentice of the Year.

The excellent structure of Year 10 included advanced classes for all areas of study which allowed me to excel beyond my actual high school years. This is one of the reasons why I think I have been able to complete successfully an electrical apprenticeship with distinction and had no problems along the way. The teachers gave me the opportunity to push myself and study higher level maths and English.

## Last year was a pretty special one for me.

When I handed in my application for the 2009 WA Training Awards as an apprentice electrician, I didn't really have huge expectations. But I'm really proud of what I've achieved and am thankful for the career opportunities that followed my success. Now I am doing a traineeship as a process plant operator with Apprenticeships Australia in conjunction with the Energy Apprenticeships Group and Woodside. It is one of WA's most competitive traineeships with only 20 positions offered to more than 980 applicants. I was also the youngest ever to be selected for the traineeship.

For the first few months I have been studying at the Australian Centre for Energy and Process Training and now I do workplace training at the Woodside Operated Karratha Gas Plant. I will then move to the



new Pluto LNG Project in Karratha to take part in the commissioning of the brand new LNG facility. Just being chosen for the traineeship was an achievement in itself. The selection was really thorough and involved a three month recruitment process during which I had to prove my success in my last job and demonstrate my skills.

When I decided to leave school my teachers strongly encouraged me to stay as I had achieved high academic grades, received numerous academic awards, and had already selected my TEE subjects for Year 11. Even though I left school at Year 10 I still achieved more than the goals I had set for myself. Without the work experience program that the Dean, Mr Rod Blair, organised for me I may not be where I am today. The program definitely allowed me to gain hands on experience and made me realise what being an electrician was all about. I continually set further goals for myself and I cannot praise the teachers at Cecil Andrews enough for the support and knowledge that they gave me. It has been a huge contributing factor to my success. ●

## The science of life

GETTING STUDENTS INTERESTED IN SCIENCE IS ABOUT MAKING THEM AWARE THAT SCIENCE IS ALL AROUND THEM. CURTIN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH PROFESSOR LÉONIE RENNIE SHARES HER PASSION FOR THE SUBJECT AND HOW IMPORTANT IT IS IN SCHOOLS.

Students can find the relevance of science in almost all of their daily activities. "So much of what is around us is based on science," says Léonie. "It is important to help students recognise this when they are dealing with science and for teachers to tune them into it so they can see how it can be used in their daily lives. If this happens, I can't see why students wouldn't find science compelling." Léonie herself is surrounded by science every day. As well as her job in the field, Léonie's husband is a dedicated science communicator offering professional development and science programs to teachers and the couple's two children are both scientists. A former Department of Education teacher, Léonie is interested in why people like science and why they want to learn about it, and is using that knowledge to improve science education in schools. Her research concerns the processes and outcomes of learning in science and technology projects with school-community connections.

Some of the school programs she is currently working on include Science and Technology Education Leveraging Relevance (STELR), Science by Doing program and Beyond the Beaker. STELR is a national program on renewable energies in lower secondary schools and is being run in 14 WA schools, while Science by Doing looks at professional learning for teachers to promote an inquiry-based learning for students. Beyond the Beaker is a travelling Scitech outreach program inspiring students to pursue careers in science. These programs, Léonie says, help support science teachers: "I have seen so many fantastic science teachers doing great things in primary and secondary

schools," she says. "Programs such as these and Primary Connections are doing a great job in supporting teachers and giving them the confidence to teach science.

"The Department's principal science program also set up networks for teachers and made a huge impression for science in primary schools which was evident at last year's WA Education Awards. She has done a fantastic job in schools." Léonie said teachers could find inspiration for teaching science beyond the classroom.

"Science teaching is not about knowing all of the answers; it's about exploring the possibilities with your students and does not have to be taught in a lab," she says. A member of the panel for the 2009 and 2010 WA Education Awards' WA Science School of the Year, Léonie says one of the great things coming out of public schools was their sustainability programs. "Last year I really noticed the great things schools were doing with sustainability," Léonie says. Applications for this year's awards closed on 30 July. Léonie says she can't wait to see the amazing things schools were doing. "The WA Science School of the Year award is a great way of recognising the entire school's efforts in outstanding science education," she says. "What I like to see is how schools are making a difference. This year I hope to see more applications where the whole school is involved in making a difference." ●



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# Pointe of perfection



Perfecting ballet techniques is a challenge but for John Curtin College of the Arts Year 11 student and 2009 WA Junior Sport Star of the Year nominee Sophia Natale it is one of the best things about being a ballerina.



## 1 What is a normal day like for you?

I get up in the morning, go to school, have normal classes, than usually two ballet classes. After school I have WA Academy of Performing Arts classes where the tutors come here to John Curtin. I do calisthenics training until 9.30pm and fit in homework after that. I try to make use of as much class time as possible so I can fit in plenty of work during the day and not have too many late nights doing homework.

## 2 How has the Gifted and Talented Education program helped you?

I came here not knowing much about ballet and now I know as much as some of the other students who have been doing it since they were three

years old. The program is great at keeping you updated about the wider dance community. I do calisthenics as well and I've won a few State titles and been to national competitions. I recently went to Canberra in July and placed second in the national physical solo. Being nominated for the WA Junior Sports Star of the Year Award was amazing. It felt really good to be up there with girls like Alana Slater, who everyone knows.

## 3 Who are the teachers who have helped you get where you are today?

There isn't just one teacher who has helped me. All the ballet teachers at John Curtin are great. They have their own unique qualities to motivate you and they want us to be the best that we can. There are four ballet

teachers at the school and we have some from the WA Ballet who come and teach us and perform with us as well. It is such an amazing experience to work with professional dancers and be able to dance with them.

## 4 What's your dream? Can you imagine doing anything else?

Ballet is definitely something I want to pursue in the future. It didn't used to be. But the program at John Curtin has definitely helped me make my decision. We're given the opportunities to do as much as we want and it's like a dance company. The teachers are great. Now ballet is definitely something I want to do when I grow up. If I didn't love dancing I would probably do physiotherapy or sports science. I would stick to something to do with the body because I know so much about it from doing ballet.

## 5 How do you balance your passion and school work?

I'm in Year 11 so it's hard! You really have to schedule your time well. I have to balance school work, ballet classes and socialising, if I have the time, so you have to be really organised which often I'm not. My mum helps me out and I couldn't do it without her to be honest. I am so busy but I get by because of her.

## 6 What is your favourite thing about being a ballerina?

The feeling that you get when you master a step or a move. It's like with anything that you're trying to accomplish, that feeling of finishing an assignment for example. I like the challenge of it. It's not easy and you have to work to achieve it.

## 7 What is the best advice you have ever received?

I have a quote that I really love: A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. It is a Chinese proverb that comes from a book I read recently about a young Chinese boy who moved from a small town to Beijing to learn the piano. He became one of the best pianists in the world. I can relate to it because my first step starts here at John Curtin and hopefully it's the first step toward a successful career.

## 8 What is your favourite movie and what are you reading right now?

Pearl Harbour. I'm not sure why it is one of my favourite movies but it's a good one. It has a good story and I like learning about history. For English I'm reading "Tell Me I'm Here". It is about a writer who is also a mother. Her son had schizophrenia and I learnt a lot that I didn't know about it.

## 9 Who inspires you?

I sort of inspire myself in a way. I think you are only as good as you want to be and as you think you can be. So if I'm going to do something I want to do it the best way that I can. In class, if someone is doing something better than me, then that makes me want to be better, so my peers definitely inspire me as well because I want to be the best in my class.

I've been dancing since I was three but I only did my first ballet class when I came here in Year 8. It took me a while to start loving ballet but I love it now more than anything at the moment. My favourite ballerina is Sylvie Guillem. She's amazing! Her technique is perfect and her leg extension is amazing. She has really long legs and I've been told that I do too so she is someone I can aspire to.

## 10 Any other tips for other students who want to follow their dreams?

You have to get your priorities right. Don't let your social life get in the way, even though it's tempting to let that happen. You shouldn't let people tell you what you can't do. If you get an idea in your head then you should work toward it as much as you can even if it seems really hard to reach because you're so young. ●

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# Fostering future leadership

Preparing educators for leadership roles is vital to meeting future challenges and inspiring excellence. That's why a new professional learning institute is being established. Nadia Miraudo reports.

Creating a culture that fosters career aspirations is something former school principal Lindsay Hale is so passionate about that he is dedicating his own career to pursue it. Lindsay, recently appointed as managing director of a new professional learning institute to be launched later this year, says the importance of boosting the skills of principals, school administrators, teachers and support staff is vital in meeting future challenges.

With a vision to inspire excellence in public education and a mission to provide high quality professional learning, the institute will be dedicated to attracting and retaining staff by providing pathways to career advancement. "The journey of my career has been supported by people who have fostered my development," Lindsay says. "Those opportunities, and my own continuing studies, had a significant impact on how I work and how I look at the world." Lindsay, who was principal of Belmont City College before spending the past three years as Director Schools in the Swan education district, says it is this experience that forged his determination to help others.

"My experience, particularly in schools, is that you can make a real difference and significant change when staff come together with a sense of passion. When that happens, it leads to success and to people having a real sense of the intrinsic value of what they are doing," he says. "That can be anything from a whole school undergoing a dramatic renewal to seeing an individual student make an achievement that for them is significant."

The new professional entity, which is hoped to also include a formal education centre, is unique to public education in Western Australia. The institute, which was yet to be named at the time of printing, will provide professional learning for school leaders - and those who aspire to leadership - by providing practical programs that, in many cases, will be accredited. "We are looking to deliver

professional learning that takes into account system and school needs but is tailored to the individual person in the context of their work," Lindsay says.

Future plans for the centre include formal education opportunities for those seeking academic qualifications and the possibility of a scholarship program. Lindsay hopes the institute will help meet future challenges, including an ageing population and a predicted shortage of staff. There is also a growing need to build a workforce with a new style of leadership that celebrates an increasingly flexible and empowered school environment.

"It's absolutely imperative to develop high quality leaders in an era where there is increasing local authority in schools," Lindsay says. "High quality professional learning and support are fundamental to people understanding their work and having the capacity to do their jobs well. They are also fundamental to people's job satisfaction and sense of wellbeing."

He says examples of who may benefit include relief teachers and those who want to remain in the classroom. "This will take teachers on a path to promotion should they seek it. It also recognises that we want to retain good quality teachers in the classroom because we place a high value on them and want to support them to stay in a profession they love."

The institute's goal is to raise the professional standards of all staff, including those in support roles. "As a principal I saw the need for whole-school collaboration focused on school improvement and support for student achievement," Lindsay says. "Every adult on a school site makes a contribution to the learning environment and the school experience. "It is essential that everyone in public education has an understanding of that importance and a sense of how their work contributes to the overall effort. We want to create a culture where there's more professional support between colleagues. It's also a call to the next generation of leaders to help them see and identify their potential."



Lindsay Hale

Several effective programs already established will continue. These include the Aspirant School Leaders' Program which helps participants plan their career pathways, as well as the successful Graduate Teacher Induction Program and Certificate in Front Line Management for registrars, business managers and school officers. The institute has also developed a workshop for relief teachers, recognising the need to support those working on a casual basis. ●



**Aspiring to lead** Today's increasingly flexible school environment calls for a new style of public school leadership - one that is responsive to the needs of students and school communities. That's why it is important to identify, support and encourage aspiring leaders of the future.



Anne Christodoulou and Vicki Moir

The two day Aspirant School Leaders' Program fits the bill. Principal of East Claremont Primary School, Vicki Moir, speaks highly of the skills and knowledge she gained from the program: "It was clear that transition from classroom teacher to effective school leader required different knowledge and skills." Vicki's career journey combined teaching with school curriculum leadership, acting deputy principal positions, and roles in district and central offices before her current appointment as principal.

As an aspirant school leader she was one of the first to go through the program in 2008, having volunteered to trial the modules being developed at that time. "The program gave me an understanding of what underpins school leadership - the skills, knowledge and behaviours of an effective school leader; I felt more confident in my capacity to face the challenges," Vicki said. For aspirants like Vicki, the support doesn't end there. Newly appointed school leaders can access a specially designed school leaders' induction and a range of leadership modules including finance and budgets, human resources, leading curriculum and understanding Department policies.

Anne Christodoulou, Vicki's deputy principal, was also keen to move from what she called a teacher leader role to administrator role. "The modules helped me with the multi-faceted nature of my role, especially in areas such as finance and human resource management, and enhanced my strategic leadership in school planning and accountability," she said. "I especially like the link to the leadership framework and still use this tool for self reflection. After the initial modules, I felt that they were the best kept secret professional development in Perth and remember saying this to colleagues."

The institute's range of leadership programs will enable aspiring leaders to pursue their professional journeys. "The dynamic nature of public education means that there are always new opportunities around the corner," Vicki said.

More information on leadership programs: T: 9242 6318 ●



**Wednesday  
22 September 2010**

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Suitable for years PP - Y7  
Only \$8 per student

## A call to action for the International Year of Biodiversity

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- Presentations from 20 of Perth's leading environmental organisations.
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- Nyoongar dance and storytelling.
- Brand new theatre shows, *Professor Bio-di Versity's Mad Cap Race Against Time* and *Wildflower Wonderland*.
- Spectacular Birds of Prey display and other Australian animals.
- Wandering Wildflowers and other roving entertainment.
- Teacher information pack with student quiz and prizes to be won.





# International dignitary inspires

It's not every day you host an international dignitary. However, Mt Lawley Senior High School students made it seem like a regular occurrence when East Timor's First Lady Kirsty Sword Gusmão called in for a visit.



Students from the school's community outreach Interact Group extended their hospitality by presenting Mrs Sword Gusmão with \$580 and children's clothing they had collected from a fundraising drive. Mrs Sword Gusmão, wife of Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, said the students' efforts would greatly benefit women and children in East Timor.

"The clothing you have collected will go into maternity packs for mothers who give birth in hospital," she said. "Most of them are so poor they cannot even buy a baby wrap. These packs will encourage mothers to give birth in a hospital because many of them aren't aware of the health benefits of doing so and this is reflected in our infant mortality rates."

Mt Lawley Senior High School also plans to establish a sister school relationship with an East Timorese school. Principal Milton Butcher, who was recently in East Timor as an Army Reservist, is setting up an informal relationship with the September the Fourth secondary school at Matadouro, a suburb of the capital Dili.

Acting principal Stephen Spice said sister school relationships and visits from international dignitaries benefited students by personalising issues faced by people living overseas. Mrs Sword Gusmão is also East Timor's Goodwill Ambassador for Education, a position she was appointed to by President Jose Ramos Horta in 2007.

She said education of teachers and parents was at the heart of her role: "We have virtually no trained and qualified pre-primary school teachers and low standards of education. "When the troubles happened in 1999, all the teachers, who were Indonesian, left the country. Once things settled down we had to get anyone who had any form of senior education, and that included many high school students - some of whom have gone on to further study. But it's a slow process."



Mrs Sword Gusmão's journey to becoming East Timor's First Lady started in Melbourne and Bendigo where she was brought up. She attended Melbourne University and completed honours in Indonesian and Italian. She also obtained a Diploma of Education. From 1992 to 1996, she lived and worked as a teacher and human rights campaigner in Jakarta, Indonesia. It was during these years that her work for the East Timorese independence cause intensified and she met independence leader, Xanana Gusmão, who was serving a 20 year sentence in a Jakarta jail. They married in 2000. She has lived in East Timor since October 1999 and is the founder and chairwoman of the Alola Foundation, formed in 2001 to address the needs of East Timorese women and their families. ●



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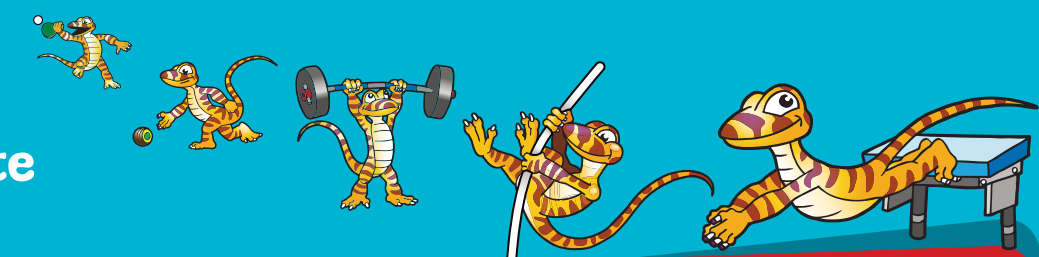
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## XIX Commonwealth Games 2010 Delhi



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# Science success heating up

With a new science building on track for 2011, anything is possible at Ardross Primary School. Learning area coordinator Lindsay Macmillan shares just how important science is for the 2009 WA Science School of the Year.



were used as an additional teaching tool. We wanted to make classroom programs hands on with the Earth and Beyond focus. In addition to the study of earthquakes, students also looked at volcanoes, and Year 5 students went to the Pompeii exhibition at the WA Museum. Sun, earth and moon concepts were also studied as well as robotics, fossils and rocks with Julia Ferguson from Scitech. Teacher Auriol Heary is also planning a Science Expo for Term 3.

Life and Living will be the focus for Semester 2. Topics to be studied include iconic species such as whale sharks, elephants, orang-utans and biodiversity to raise student awareness of the unique environment in WA. We will do this through looking at the Western Shield Program (baiting introduced species); climate change (the science behind extinction which looks at changes in habitat such as threats to wetlands where 90 per cent of wetlands around Perth are filled in); and greenhouse gases (one cow produces 700 litres of methane a day).

Our sustainability programs are developing rapidly and complement the curriculum. We aim to increase our students' knowledge of local plants and animals and will also study the Aboriginal names and usage of these plants. As for our new science building next year, we are brainstorming the best way to use it. ●

in our school, and the network of teachers involved has increased.

Curriculum development in science continues to grow at Ardross, with a new whole-school science plan for 2010. Most teachers are using Primary Connections and are incorporating elements of the new Australian Curriculum into their classes. Teachers have also received information sheets describing key features of the K-10 draft and how it is similar to and different from State curriculum. The whole-school focus for Semester 1 was Earth and Beyond. Teachers were provided with science learning programs to help encourage sequential content in each year level, and Smartboards

Investment in science education is important for Australia's future. Being the 2009 WA Science School of the Year has helped us focus even more on science education. Winning this prestigious award means we now have more cooperation and shared partnerships in developing the practical aspects of teaching science. There is a better development of the content areas, recognition from the community is stronger and our sustainability projects, such as Wastewise and Waterwise, have complemented classroom programs. These projects have contributed greatly to our success. The Primary Science Project has worked well to improve science teaching

## Students get feel for science under pressure

Chemistry is alive and well, with Curtin University hosting a major competition that pitted 230 students from more than 30 schools against each other.

Associate Professor Mauro Mocerino said the Titration Stakes contest offered students interested in science an opportunity to work in a real lab under real pressure. "Hopefully the experience will help inspire some of these students to continue studying science," he said. Held at the Curtin Resources and Chemistry Precinct for the first time, the contest was also a good test of key scientific skills. "Titration involves measuring levels of acidity in a solution and is a basic skill if students are to go on and work with complex chemicals," Mauro said. The competition usually involves teams of three secondary school students working together to determine the levels of acid in three different solutions of vinegar. Mauro, from Curtin University's Department of Chemistry, is also chair of the RACI WA Chemical Education Group.



## PRINCIPAL LEVEL 4

Luke Breman to Dampier Primary School



Luke Breman has spent 18 years teaching students in rural and remote schools before being appointed as principal of Dampier Primary School. He has taught at Watheroo Primary School and Moora Primary School, and was principal of Jerdacuttup Primary School and Kalumburu Remote Community School and deputy principal at Kununurra District High School. He was deputy principal at Tambrey Primary School for the past five years. "There is a strong sense of community at Dampier Primary School as it is the central hub of the town," Luke said.

"Parent support and involvement is strong and I look forward to continuing this partnership and encouraging parents to be actively involved in their children's learning journey." Luke wants to foster relationships between the school and the mining industry, which is a major component of the town. "I want to shape the school into one that supports the needs of all students, that fosters learning in as many and diverse ways as possible, and that gives each student a voice as a learner," he said. "It is important to ensure that rural education is of the same standard as that in the metropolitan area."

## PRINCIPAL LEVEL 6

John Stone to Central Midlands Senior High School



Having spent several decades of his teaching career in rural schools including Narrogin Senior High School, Corrigin District High School, John Willcock Senior High School and Busselton Senior High School, John Stone says it is refreshing to return to a country senior high school.

His role at Central Midlands Senior High School in Moora comes after deputy roles in two large metropolitan schools – Woodvale Senior High School and Applecross Senior High School. He was the acting principal at Central Midlands Senior High School for 12 months before being appointed as principal in May 2010.

"My goal is to make the school a collaborative and vibrant educational community. We want to be in tune with the values of the wider community and respond to the needs of individual students so we become an excellent school of choice where all students are motivated to achieve their best and realise their potential," he said. "By building strong partnerships with our parents, community and industry, we are on the way to achieving this, ensuring that all students have access to innovative and flexible options for learning."

## Appointments Leading our schools

## DEPUTY PRINCIPAL LEVEL 4

Catherine Winfield to Broome Senior High School



Cath Winfield joins her husband Brett as deputy principal of Broome Senior High School. She held the acting deputy's position during Semester 1, after three years as the school's student services manager and four years as head of learning in health, physical education and the arts.

She has spent the majority of her career in the north of Western Australia – her 13 years at Broome were preceded by 10 years at Carnarvon Senior High School and two years at Morawa District High School. "The key to improving student outcomes is developing positive and respectful relationships between staff and students and forging partnerships with families," Cath said.

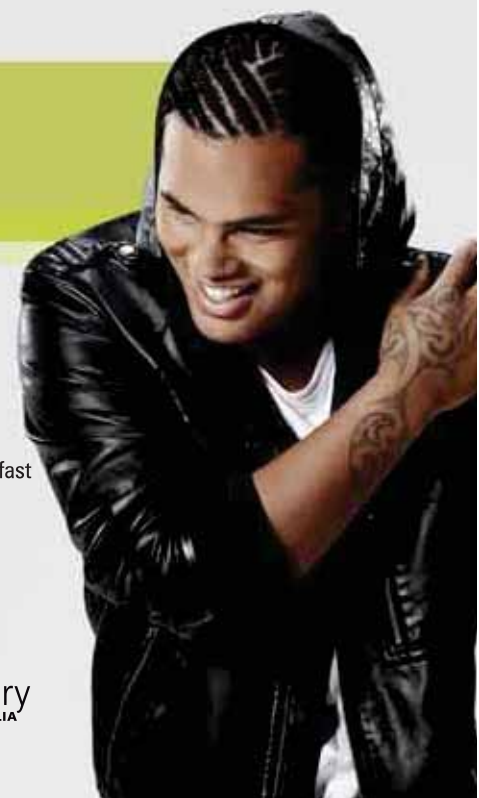
Her student services background underpins her desire to make a difference in students' lives and she aims to help students take responsibility for their actions through the use of restorative practices. "I am thrilled to win this position because Broome Senior High School is a great school that provides a high quality education for the students of Broome and the wider Kimberley," she said.

## Our School in HISTORY

What do **Australian Idol** winner **Stan Walker**, your school and the **State Library Foundation** have in common?

We want your school's history by the end of Term Three and you will go into the draw to WIN a LIVE performance by **Stan Walker** (winner of 2009 Australian Idol) at your school! The winning school will host one of the biggest pop artists in the country with **Lisa, Baz and Sam** from the 92.9 Breakfast Show broadcasting their show live at your school. Each week there will be all sorts of fabulous prizes from Sony, Disney's new movie **The Sorcerer's Apprentice** and other sponsors! (Conditions apply). The kids will be 'nagging' once the ads start rolling out so get in early and register your school.

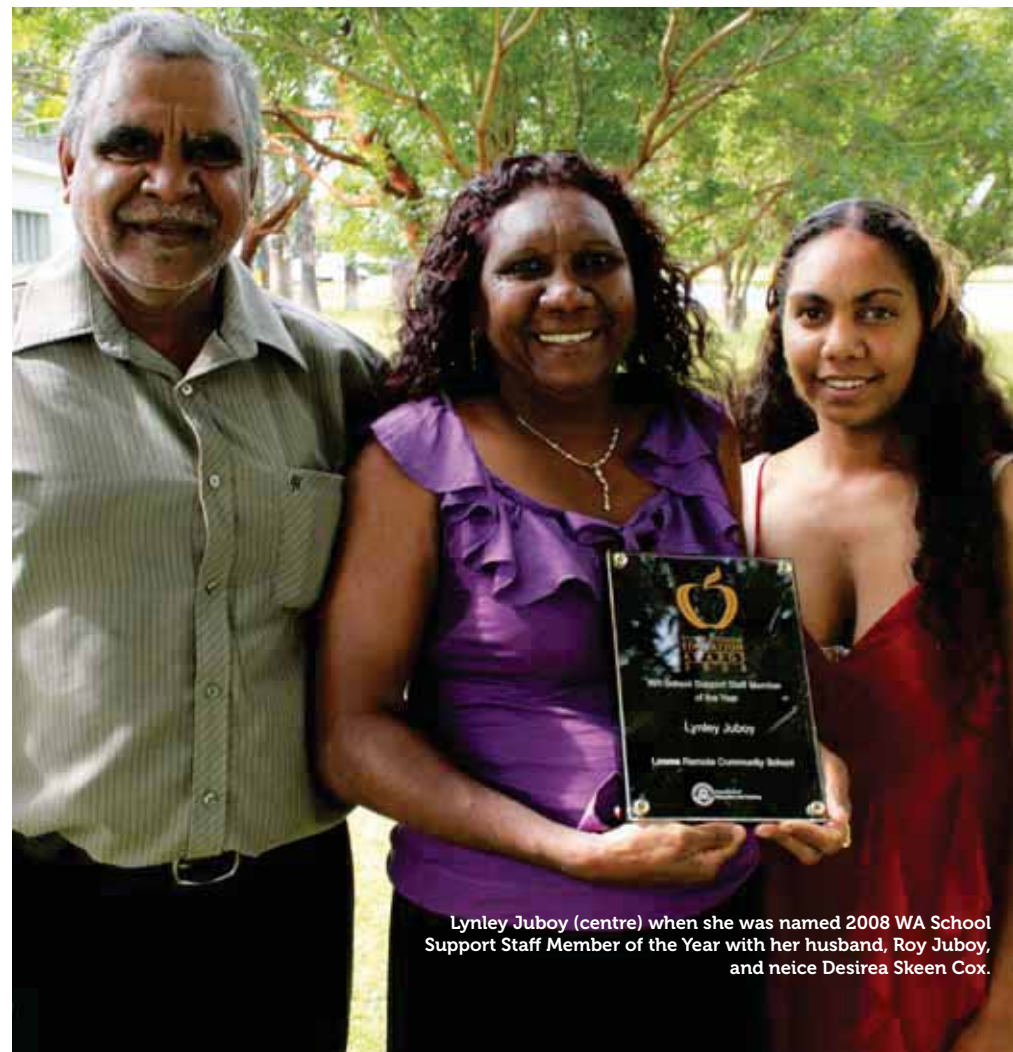
Visit [www.ourpageinhistory.org/themes](http://www.ourpageinhistory.org/themes) and register your school now!





## Turning points

# From Looma with love



Lynley Juboy (centre) when she was named 2008 WA School Support Staff Member of the Year with her husband, Roy Juboy, and niece Desirea Skeen Cox.

Aboriginal and Islander education officer Lynley Juboy tells David Mitchell how her childhood experiences and work at Looma Remote Community School gave her a passion for public education.

**I remember having my mouth washed out to make me speak English.**

My Dad worked on a cattle station and my mother often went where we worked, so I was mainly with my grandparents in my early years. My grandmother spoke the traditional Nyikina language and that was the only way I could communicate with her. When I first went to school in the 1960s, my friend and I were in the same language group and it was pretty much all I spoke. I just thought it was normal when I was taken to the toilet and had my mouth washed out with a bar of grey soap. The next thing I knew I was staying up at the house a lot more, spending time with my parents, speaking to them, often listening to an old record player – I didn't realise at the time it was all a way of getting me to speak English.

**I had to take on a lot of responsibilities from an early age and this increased after the death of my Dad.**

As the older child in the family, I had to look after my younger brother and sister while Dad was away working on the roads and Mum was working in the local nursing home. I used to

at Holy Rosary School where the sisters took a real liking to me. They tried to teach me piano but I'd get into trouble because I'd go off to a lesson when I was supposed to be making sure my brothers and sisters got home. When I got home I'd have to wash the clothes and put them through the wringer, get the food ready, water the plants – I had to do it all. We had moved around for a few years between Derby, Halls Creek and Kununurra, wherever the work took Dad. He had gone back to cattle mustering but tragically, in June 1973, he was knocked off a horse and broke his neck. I was only 10 years old. Shortly after we moved here to Looma.

**Coming to Looma the first time was a huge culture shock.**

The community was still getting established then and there was no real housing. Coming from an environment where we had our own home, and I had my own bed, to here in the bush, I just thought, 'I can't live like this.' I said to my mother that I needed my own space and we found a room in a hostel back in Derby. In my schooling I got halfway through Year 12 but I was still dealing with the loss of my Dad, my mother had turned to drink and I suppose I was a bit of a rebel myself. I thought I could go it alone, so I left school to look after myself and her.

**When I first came to work at Looma Remote Community School I felt I was bringing my home life to work.**

I had done various jobs since leaving school, mainly book-keeping and working in offices and shops, but around 1985 I saw the job advertised and applied. It was basic work at first – I'd come in, set up the obstacle course and the classroom activities, cut up fruit, wash and clean. It was like bringing my domestic life into the workplace and I certainly wasn't involved in making any decisions. I used to

think 'I'd really like to read a book to the group' and I used to do it when the kids had their general play time. One day the teacher saw me doing this and said 'Would I like to take a story class with them?' I loved doing that, and that's when my confidence started to grow and I started to become more involved.

**A chance encounter on a trip to Perth showed me the value of support when you go to an unfamiliar place.**

My daughter-in-law was very ill in Royal Perth Hospital and I had travelled up there to help look after her. I was struggling, I didn't know anyone and I thought 'I wish I had someone here who can help me.' I didn't know where I was going to stay, all the hostels were full and I felt very helpless. I was taken down to meet a social worker and as we were talking she suddenly said 'Are you from Looma? Are you Lynley?' It turned out I worked with her daughter at the school and she knew of me and straight away I had a friend who would help me. I often think of that when the new teachers come up here, I can see how nervous they are. They don't know what to expect and it's very different for them. I think about where they have come from and what it must be like, and I support them. I often tell the kids how we must all respect each other – one day they might have to go to Perth, and I know they would be looked after.

**I believe strongly that when working in remote community schools we have to go that extra mile and reach outside of the school.**

I often stand at the front of assembly and talk about the importance of coming to school for the kids' future. I say 'Be thankful – your school is only a hop, skip and a jump away.' But it's the same for teachers too. It's only a walk from school into the kids' homes. Some teachers may just see themselves as an education deliverer and that might be fine in a suburban school, but I

believe here you need to take a little step out of the comfort zone. Getting our kids to school is the biggest challenge and if that means getting into the community and talking to them about why it's important that they get an education, then that's what we must do. I think really I'm always working because I'm always out there in the community, talking about the school, making sure they are all getting involved. It's what I love to do.

**Being named the 2008 WA School Support Staff Member of the Year was the biggest honour of my life.**

When I went up to say my speech I just could hardly speak, I was so overwhelmed. I had to pinch myself – I thought 'Wow, I wish the other AIEOs all across the Kimberley could feel what I feel right now.' I felt that this was for them too. All my hard work, the sharing, the giving, the taking, had all paid off. I think there are so many people who deserve an award like this and people really need to take the time to nominate someone because it is such an amazing honour.

**If I could make one big change in education, I would offer professional development to parents.**

Parents, particularly in communities like Looma, need to understand why school is important. I consider myself so lucky because it is through professional development that I've not only broadened my skills and knowledge but I have also come to really understand the need for education and regular school attendance. But parents don't have that option and many of them are struggling. I am really just one of them but I've had these privileges and we need to help each other here – if we can build that bridge by providing them with the development that I have been able to receive, we'll go a long way to solving some of the problems we face. ●

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## Children unite

On 27 October, Universal Children's Day, thousands of students from around Australia will join together to celebrate UNICEF day for change, a day where students dedicate a day to raising awareness and funds for UNICEF work in achieving the ambitious millennium development goal 2 – providing universal education for all by 2015. Register your school today and receive the new UNICEF day for change registration pack.  
**W: [unicefdayforchange.org.au](http://unicefdayforchange.org.au)**  
**E: [education@unicef.org.au](mailto:education@unicef.org.au)**

## Work expenses

The Australian Taxation Office has developed a guide to help teachers get the most out of their tax returns. The guide, Teachers: Claiming work-related expenses (Nat 73368), includes valuable information about what work related expenses you can claim, such as car and home office.  
**W: [ato.gov.au/occupations](http://ato.gov.au/occupations)**

## Problem solving

Applications will be accepted in August and September for the 2011 Edith Cowan University mathematics problem solving program. The year long program operates after school at ECU's Mount Lawley Campus. Classes will be offered at five different levels, providing challenging experiences for able students aged 10 to 15 years.  
**W: [chs.ecu.edu.au/courses/mpsp](http://chs.ecu.edu.au/courses/mpsp)**

## Climate visions

Young Australians from primary school to university are invited to share their views on climate change in a new competition. Following the success of last year's competition, the 2010 Shout Out For Climate Change competition will

now include university campuses in addition to primary and secondary schools. Entries close on Friday 10 September.

**W: [climatechange.gov.au/shoutoutforclimatechange](http://climatechange.gov.au/shoutoutforclimatechange)**

## Bust a cancer myth

Cancer Council Australia is asking Australians aged 12 to 17 years to get creative to 'bust a myth' about skin cancer. Enter a short film, image or creative writing piece to correct a misconception about sun protection. You can win a great prize. Entries close on Friday 24 September.

**W: [cancer.org.au/sunsmartcompetition](http://cancer.org.au/sunsmartcompetition)**

## Book sale

The University of Western Australia's 46th Annual Save The Children book sale will be held from 20 to 25 August. More than 100,000 books in 40 categories, CDs, DVDs and sheet music will be on sale. Money raised helps disadvantaged children in Western Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao Pdr, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. If you would like to help, telephone 9387 6215.

## Write a song

Australian Idol's Dicko is a judge and ambassador for this year's national song-writing competition, run by the Australian Children's Music Foundation. Open to students from Kindergarten to Year 12, winning compositions will be selected to perform at the first night concert in Sydney next January. Monetary prizes are awarded to be used for musical equipment or tuition for both individuals and their school. Entries close Friday 24 September.

**W: [acmf.com.au](http://acmf.com.au)**

## Valuing heritage

The National Trust of Australia (WA) Valuing Our Heritage Photography and Story

Competition for students aged 5 to 15 is open. Students are invited to embrace their local heritage through story writing and photographs for this annual competition. The competition closes 24 September 2010 and will be judged in three categories: years 1 to 3; 4 to 7 and 8 to 10. Prizes for each category will be awarded and the overall state winner will be presented with a digital camera.  
**T: 9321 6088**  
**W: [valuingheritage.com.au](http://valuingheritage.com.au)**

## Heritage day

Heritage Perth Heritage days will be held on 13 and 14 November. A program of activities is planned to make the weekend Perth's biggest ever heritage event that will showcase the city's history. There will be tours of Perth buildings, walking tours of colonial and indigenous sites, 'ceremonial regalia' displays, photographic exhibitions and indigenous stories of Perth with traditional dance and music, as well as talks, tours, performances, music and activities. Activities will be free for the whole family.

**W: [heritageperth.com](http://heritageperth.com)**

## Count me in

The Disability Services Commission has opened nominations for the 2010 Count Me In Awards. The awards reward and recognise projects and initiatives that create more welcoming communities for people of all abilities. There are seven categories within the awards and this year the commission has enhanced the schools award to include post school education and training, splitting the award into two sub categories – primary and secondary, and post education and training. The education and training award is open to schools and education training providers that have enhanced access and inclusion for students, staff and family members with disability. Nominations close 5.00pm on Friday 1 October 2010.  
**W: [count-me-in.com.au](http://count-me-in.com.au)**  
**E: [cmiawards@dsc.wa.gov.au](mailto:cmiawards@dsc.wa.gov.au)**  
**T: 9426 9264**

# Support staff step up



Marcia Farkas, Justine Wells and Violet Saxton learn new techniques to teach numeracy.

School leaders and teachers are changing their thinking about how school support staff can use their skills to more effectively help low achieving students.

Professional learning workshops are making a world of difference to education assistants from four primary schools in the Canning and Pilbara area. The schools are the only ones in the State taking part in a literacy and numeracy pilot program to increase the skills of education assistants and Aboriginal and Islander education officers (AIEOs), leading to more effective collaboration between paraprofessionals and teachers to boost student learning. As part of their involvement in the pilot funded through the Australian Government's Literacy and Numeracy Pilot Projects program, Gwynne Park Primary School, Grovelands Primary School, Baler Primary School and South Hedland Primary School are re-thinking how they use paraprofessionals in teaching literacy and numeracy.

Since the beginning of Term 2 in 2009, education assistants and AIEOs from the four schools have attended regular professional learning to increase their skills and knowledge in literacy and numeracy instruction. With increased skills and confidence, they can then work more closely with teachers to case manage students and design literacy and numeracy programs. Coordinator of the program at Gwynne Park Primary School, Sue Newland, sees many

positive results. "The program is a two-way street, because not only does it enhance the skills of education assistants and AIEOs, but it enables them to work more closely with teachers," she said. "Teachers get to see them in a new light, recognising their skills."

Education assistants and AIEOs are valued for their role in engaging, nurturing and supporting students most at risk. However, the pilot program models and measures the contribution they make to improving student learning outcomes. "We've already seen the growth in confidence of the four staff we have on the program," Sue said. "They are more empowered and the students benefit because there's a stronger understanding between them and the teacher of a student's developmental level. This ensures a student progresses at a level and pace that best suits them."

The program's professional learning team encourages the education assistants to record ongoing thoughts and ideas, and consider which new learning activities work best for low achieving students. They document the outcome of various approaches, gather resources and, over time, increase their repertoire of teaching strategies.

Enthusiasm for the program is evident, with all education assistants appreciating the added skills and recognition it brings.

At a joint numeracy workshop facilitated by the Department's curriculum officer, Penny Reynolds, for support staff from Gwynne Park Primary School and Grovelands Primary School, two of the participants commented on how the professional development was helping them. "It certainly is helping me. This professional development is more indepth than my university course because it is subject specific," said Justine Wells, who trained at Edith Cowan University two years ago.

Marcia Farkas, a five year education assistant veteran, also appreciates the extra knowledge. "It enables us to think about things differently and to take the option of trying to do something differently." While conclusive data about the effectiveness of different education assistant deployment models on student achievement is yet to be released, school principals agree that the pilot's professional learning has had a positive impact on classroom practice and the confidence of their staff. The education assistants and AIEOs are more willing to try new literacy and numeracy strategies with their students and this has provided an opportunity for whole school change. ●

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Michelle Calder prepares some tasty treats. Far right: The judges have the tough job of choosing a worthy winner.



Debbie Whittle plates up.

# Battle of the canteen cooks

Canteen queues at Churchlands Primary School look set to spill out the gate after its tuckshop cook Michelle Calder became the best in WA!

After a tense cook off between chefs from public and private schools, Michelle took out the top prize at the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Canteen Conference at the Perth Convention Centre. With the three contestants at their cooking stations and a mini shopping trolley of mystery ingredients hidden under the conference's canvas carry bags, the inaugural Canteen Cook-off began. Their brief was to prepare a recess item in 15 minutes and a lunch item in 40 minutes. The items had to be categorised as "green" in accordance with the Department of Education's Healthy Food and Drink policy.

With copious amounts of chopping, bamixing, sautéing, roasting and boiling, the contestants prepared a variety of dishes from pancakes to cannelloni. The cooks had a lifeline in the form of Chef Dale Sniffen who had previously held a masterclass with the three canteen cooks to instil in them his mantra "allow the food to do most of the work".

The cooks also had a demerit system which consisted of three coloured pegs attached to their collars which they had to surrender if they had a cooking mishap. The judging panel, which included two school children, had to assess each dish on the criteria of presentation, taste, transferability (could the dish be used in a canteen context?) and creativity.

Each contestant had their own supporters in the audience to encourage them during the cook-off. When Michelle was announced the winner she was sashed and crowned (with a wreath of ivy) for her recess dish of apples, custard and crumble topping, and her lunch dish of cannelloni and salad. ●

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## Feature

# Weighty words

The rate of underweight secondary school girls is rising. Two school captains reveal the underlying pressures. Rebecca Fraurud, a Curtin University student doing a Public Relations practicum with the Department of Education, reports.

Morley Senior High School captains, Courtney Hrabar and Suanlee Farrer, blame the media for the increasing number of female secondary school students classified as being underweight. Courtney and Suanlee were speaking at the launch of the Child and Adolescent Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (CAPANS) at Morley Senior High School.

Sport and Recreation Minister Terry Waldron presented the full report, which focuses on the alarming statistics surrounding secondary school girls. The report, resulting from a survey of 1,827 Western Australian students, outlined their physical activity levels, dietary habits and body size measurements.

The words 'media pressures,' 'society's expectations,' 'airbrushing,' 'negative body image portrayal' and 'supermodels' were key themes raised by Courtney and Suanlee, who

were asked by journalists what they thought were the reasons for the increased underweight classifications. "The main pressure for girls comes from the media, where unnatural and airbrushed supermodels take front page on magazines," said Suanlee.

"There is pressure to look and behave in a certain way and 'follow the pack'. There needs to be a push for healthier-looking people. Stereotypes must be banned to allow girls to be their own person," said Courtney. "There are body-image expectations in Years 8 and 9, so it is important to create awareness of the problem."

Both discussed how netball or walking to school, combined with healthy eating, would encourage girls to maintain a healthy weight. A voluntary industry code of conduct encourages fashion, media and advertising industries to use natural images of people and disclose images



which have been digitally manipulated. "CAPANS has shown approximately 10 per cent of girls are classified as under a healthy weight, which is an increase from 5.5 per cent to 9.4 per cent in secondary school girls since the 2003 CAPANS," said Mr Waldron, who is also chair of the Physical Activity Taskforce. "The taskforce will be recommending further research and analysis of the results."

CAPANS research was undertaken by Edith Cowan University in 2008 and collected data from primary school students in Years 3, 5 and 7 and secondary school Years 8, 10 and 11.

W: [beactive.wa.gov.au](http://beactive.wa.gov.au)



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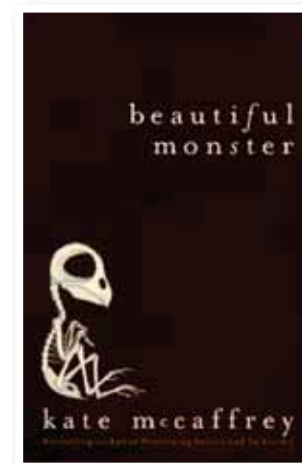
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**Beautiful Monster**  
By Kate McCaffrey

It only takes a few bloodstained moments for Tessa's life to change forever. Her brother is dead and her mum is so deeply enmeshed in grief she might as well be too. Tessa is left with no-one to turn to but Ned. He's been her staunchest ally, privy to her deepest secrets. Ned is like her other half, and he has the answer. If Tessa can just be perfect, life will get better. Based on the personification of anorexia nervosa by its sufferers, Kate McCaffrey's third book for young adults is a sinister thriller about the imaginary friend from hell. Kate is regularly used by the media as an expert commentator on cyber bullying.



**90 Packets of Instant Noodles**  
By Deb Fitzpatrick

Australians eat 150 million packets of instant noodles every year. That's about seven packets each. But Joel is a teenager who goes to extremes, and 90 packets may not be enough. Joel and Craggs are in it together but when Craggs is sent to juvenile detention and Joel to solitary confinement, Joel has 90 days of fending for himself in a remote bush shack, 90 days of his own company and his own cooking, and 90 days of instant noodles...



**The Magic Fair**  
By Sally Morgan

The magic fair has a lot more than just fairy floss and fun rides; it has cakes that jump and pies that fly. Enter – but beware! Kayla and her cousin Peter soon find out that not all the surprises are nice ones. When Peter is mean to Kayla, the Fair takes matters into its own hands in a very unusual way.

This book is part of the Waarda series for young readers which promotes literacy in children and introduces talented new Indigenous storytellers. With the help of the Fogarty Foundation and Indigenous Literacy Project, these books will be distributed free to remote Indigenous communities throughout Western Australia.



## For young readers

**Barclay!**  
By Cheryl Kickett-Tucker

Sometimes grown ups tell scary stories to teach kids a lesson. And sometimes those scary stories turn out to be true. Sarah, Jay and Rene find out the hard way what sort of tale their nan's woordatj story is when they wander off into the bush despite her warnings. Another book in the Waarda series designed to support the literacy needs of Indigenous students in primary schools. Indigenous Literacy Day is on 1 September 2010. A day of free art workshops, writing tours, art tours, book discussions and debates will be held at the State Library of Western Australia and the Art Gallery of Western Australia. W: [freemantlepress.com.au](http://freemantlepress.com.au)



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## A total of 450 students put on a grand show for Opus 2010 at the Perth Concert Hall in June.

The Combined Schools' Jazz Band, which represented Western Australia at the World Youth Expo in China, performed as did the Brass Ensemble which includes public school students and WA Academy of Performing Arts students.

Also participating were Rossmoyne Senior High School Guitar Ensemble; combined choirs of Nedlands Primary School and Wembley Primary School; Churchlands Senior High School Chorale; Manjimup Senior High School Rock Band; Opus Combined Schools' Orchestra and Instrumental Music School Services staff; and combined bands of Shenton College and John Curtin College of the Arts.

The Brass fanfare performance included the China Jazz Band, while the Combined Schools' String Orchestra included Churchlands Senior High School, Perth Modern School, Mount Lawley Senior High School, Shenton College, Rossmoyne Senior High School, Kelmscott Senior High School, Applecross Senior High School, Willetton Senior High School and Leeming Senior High School.

Opus is organised by Instrumental Music School Services which provides specialised tuition for instruments and voice to some 15,000 students in 400 primary and secondary public schools across the State. ●

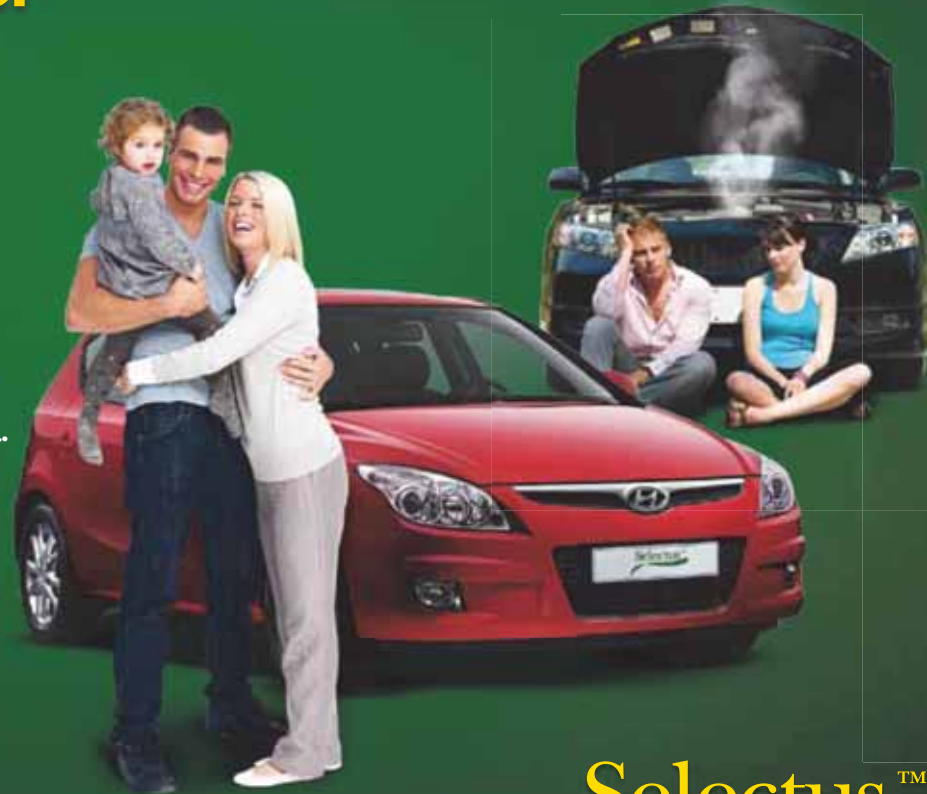




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Extra

# Step right up!

**Your insider's guide to what's happening in and around schools this term. Don't miss some of these great opportunities.**

## Football leads to England

Safety Bay Senior High School student Rebecca Galbraith will move to England after scoring a spot in Chelsea Football Club's women's academy.

Rebecca is one of only 16 girls chosen for the academy and will move with her family for two years while she plays for the under 19 squad and completes a Diploma in Sports Science. She first tried out for the club in 2009 and received a call this year about being selected as a midfielder. As the first Australian woman to go in to the Chelsea training club, Rebecca said she was excited and pleased that the profile of women's soccer is increasing. "I'd love to play for my country one day, but at the moment I'm looking forward to becoming a better as a player," she said.



Photo courtesy of the Community Newspaper Group

## Forest ramble unearths the past

Get out into the bush and explore Outridge Wetland as part of two weekend events for families. Discover frogs, peer down microscopes and walk in the tuart woodlands. Grab a spade and brush to excavate for bones under the forest floor, learn about what roamed and what plants are still alive from the dinosaur period. Morning tea included. For more details telephone Mary Rayner on 9524 1150 or email: [mary.rayner@det.wa.edu](mailto:mary.rayner@det.wa.edu).







Vicki Jack. Photo courtesy Ashton Bawden and Pilbara News.

## Education staff join the fellowship

Teachers Judith Hill and Veronica Lake and director of the Pilbara district education office, Vicki Jack (left) have been awarded 2010 Churchill Fellowships to pursue their passions.

Judith from Baldivis Primary School will study child-centred environmental projects in New Zealand, the United States, United Kingdom and Brazil. Applecross Senior High School teacher Veronica will visit theatre companies in the UK and Canada to investigate their education programs for connecting Shakespeare to young people in the classroom.

Vicki Jack received the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation Churchill Fellowship to explore models of education delivery that are encompassing and respectful of cultural obligations specifically related to rural and remote Indigenous communities. Vicki has worked in the Pilbara for 30 years and has seen many programs that offer an education to young Aboriginal people that match their lifestyle. But she said more can be done to make a difference. "I have looked into other Indigenous groups such as the people of northern Sweden and Finland who face parallel issues to Aboriginal people; some successfully others not so successfully," she said. "I want to contribute something in a positive way, hopefully a big way, to shaping the delivery of education for Aboriginal children and young people across this State."

## Get your news online

A new online news site, Ed-e-News, has been set up by the Department of Education. It aims to keep educators informed about what's happening around the State, providing schools with an additional outlet to promote their activities and achievements.

Unlike its print cousin, School Matters, the Ed-e-News site will provide instant news and information. Articles are published three times a week. "There's a big difference between the content in School Matters and Ed-e-News," said the Department's Director of Corporate Communications and Marketing, Jane Machin-Everill. "We needed to get some news and information out quickly, and that's where the new site fits, whereas School Matters is for more in-depth coverage of trends and issues."

"We recognise that not all material submitted to School Matters can be published. Ed-e-News will hopefully make it easier for schools to get across their messages." Ed-e-News is at [det.wa.edu.au/edenews](http://det.wa.edu.au/edenews). Material can be emailed to [edenews@det.wa.edu.au](mailto:edenews@det.wa.edu.au).



## What is mental health?

WA's children and young people can win an iPad and the chance to be Commissioner for a Day by sharing their ideas on how to stay mentally healthy.

Michelle Scott, Commissioner for Children and Young People, said the winner would share her job with her and spend time with the Minister for Youth and other important decision makers discussing mental health. Entrants can write, draw, take a photo, sing or make a short film sharing their ideas on mental health. Some young people have already indicated they look after their mental health by talking to people, staying away from drugs, listening to music, hanging out with friends and getting enough sleep.

Michelle said mental health was about feeling happy, enjoying life and knowing there are things you are good at. It can also be about feeling lonely, stressed and angry. Entries close at 5:00pm on Friday 24 September. For more information on how to enter, email [leah.broderick@ccyp.wa.gov.au](mailto:leah.broderick@ccyp.wa.gov.au) or telephone 6213 2297. [W:ccyp.wa.gov.au](http://W:ccyp.wa.gov.au)



## Awards to recognise children

Nominations for the Children's Week Awards of Recognition close on 10 September.

Children's Week focuses on children and their rights to be educated, to feel safe, to be healthy and to have fun. The awards acknowledge individuals and groups of children across Western Australia who have shown generosity, compassion and a strong sense of spirit. Adults and services/programs are also recognised for making outstanding contributions to improving opportunities for WA children aged three to 12 years, families or the community. The awards are organised by Meerilinga Young Children's Foundation Inc and are co-supported by the Department of Education.

[W: meerilinga.org.au](http://W:meerilinga.org.au)

## Students can sharpen career skills

An expo for students deciding on a career will be held at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre from 3 to 5 September.

Run by The West Australian newspaper, the Skills West Expo will promote the benefits of training, raise public awareness of the trades as worthwhile and valuable careers, and provide advice to people considering careers in high demand occupations.

Training and Workforce Development Minister Peter Collier said the Skills West Expo will concentrate on in-demand occupations. Mr Collier said the expo would cater for a wide audience including students still deciding on careers, apprentices looking for their next jobs, experienced workers looking for new skills or opportunities, and young women wondering what traditional trades would suit them. The Expo will run from 9.00am to 5.00pm Friday and Saturday, and 10.00am to 4.00pm on Sunday. Entry is free for all days. [W:skillswestexpo.com.au](http://W:skillswestexpo.com.au)

## Teaching scholarship applications open for university students

Students entering their final year of an education course or completing a Graduate Diploma of Education in 2011 can now apply for a teaching scholarship.

Early childhood teacher at Williams Primary School, Bronwyn Dixon, said she was grateful to receive a scholarship in 2008. "The scholarship helped me focus on my studies in my final year and gave me financial security so I didn't have to work," she said. "I always wanted to teach in the country and the scholarship was a fantastic incentive to start my career in a country school."

Scholarship holders are guaranteed full-time employment at the start of the 2012 school year and must be willing to teach Statewide. The value of the scholarship depends on the priority subject area and the length of time the scholarship recipient teaches in the country. "I'm in my second year at Williams Primary School and I just love it," Bronwyn said. "There is a huge difference between going to a small supportive country school and working in a large metropolitan school."

Executive Director Workforce, Cliff Gillam, said the Department's scholarship

program focused on providing quality graduates committed to teaching in country public schools. "We are very interested in students studying early childhood education, maths, physics, chemistry, English, agriculture, and design and technology," he said. "These are areas of need, particularly in our country schools."

Students studying languages such as Indonesian, Italian and Japanese and those majoring in special needs education are also encouraged to apply. "Scholarship recipients will receive up to \$30,000 (less tax) for a two year contract which is a great start to their teaching career," Cliff said.

Applications close on Monday 23 August 2010 and interviews will take place in September. Successful applicants will be notified during October. If you are interested in applying or would like further information visit the Teaching WA website at: [det.wa.edu.au/teachingwa](http://det.wa.edu.au/teachingwa).



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