

Blue Mountain College

Newsletter Issue 9, Term 4 2009

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Term 4 is now well and truly underway and we are entering the last phase of our school year. There are less than 2 weeks of classes before seniors start their external NCEA exams on November 16.

It is vital that Year 11, 12 and 13 students now have an effective study plan in place and are making the most of the supports available such as tutorials. I cannot overstate the importance of their asking their teachers assistance if they are struggling in their study – unless they ask for help the teacher will not know they need assistance.

I included an article in our September newsletter about study and would refer you to that if you have any queries. I have included an article with this newsletter that may be of interest. It is headed “last minute cramming” and the key message is that it is not too late. The way NCEA works where each exam covers up to 3 or even 4 standards careful selection of what one studies means last minute study can work. It also has some useful advice on sitting exams.

It is not just the seniors who have exams to look forward to - Year 9 and 10 students will have their exams next week. This is very early but we need to have these completed before NZQA Externals start as we use the same venues and equipment. Consequently there are several weeks of classes after these exams and most subjects will need to cover at least one topic in this time. It is important that Year 9 and 10 students study for their exams. One of the reasons we have these exams is to help them develop appropriate study skills.

Seniors will be finishing classes on Friday 13 November and going on to study leave for their NCEA exams over the following 4 weeks.

Monday 14th December is our last school day for the year and all students are required to attend. There will be a prize giving practice in the morning and seniors will be allowed to go home at lunchtime if they have finished all the tasks they have to do on that day.

Prize giving will be in the BMC Gymnasium on Monday 14 December starting at 7.30 pm sharp. I would like to take this opportunity to formally invite all parents and friends of the College to this event to join us in celebrating the successes enjoyed by our students this year.

Kevin McSweeney
Principal

Senior Reports for Year 11 to 13

These reports will be posted home later in the week and hopefully should arrive by Friday's post. They contain advice that may help parents help the students prepare for external exams and teachers have already given the same advice to the students to help them with their preparation.

Rotary Young Achiever Awards

Two Year 8 BMC students received Rotary Young Achiever Awards from the Gore Rotary Club at their annual Young Achiever Dinner tonight. They were Mathilde van Baarle and Kate Crawford. We are very grateful to the Gore Rotary Club for their support of our students through this award each year. A good number of Year 8 students were nominated and as we worked through the selection process we were impressed by the quality of the groups and the range of activities so many of our students are involved in.

Mana Pounamu Maori Young Achiever Awards

Year 13 Student, Logan Moore received a Mana Pounamu Maori Young Achiever Award in Dunedin last Friday. These awards are awarded to young Maori who are nominated by their schools for their achievement and potential, selected by representatives of the sponsoring organisations – Ngai Tahu Runanga, Ministry of Agriculture, Otago Polytechnic and the Otago University College of Education. The students received their awards at a very impressive ceremony and there is no doubt there are many exceptional young Maori students in our region and that Logan is one of the best.

NCEA External Examinations

- Derived Grades (previously called compassionate consideration)
If there is any situation which may harmfully affect your student's performance in an examination (eg. Should they be sick, or if there is a genuine family emergency on the day of the exam) **it is important you take action about it right away.** **If it is illness related you should come to the College and get an official NZQA form to take to the doctor and get a medical certificate. If it is anything else please contact Mike Venz (NZQA co-ordinator), Janine Venz (Senior Dean) or one of the Senior Management team to discuss the matter.**
- Expectations of students
Students have been briefed by the examination centre manager regarding rules and requirements for exams. Some of the key points include very strict rules as to what they can take into the exams (NO CELLPHONES !!, pens and other equipment in a clear plastic bag, no paper etc), the need to arrive at least 15 minutes before the starting time with their admission slip, when they can leave. As they are still students we require them to wear normal summer school uniform for exams. Our normal rules regarding bringing vehicles to school apply and study facilities will be available.
- Helpful hints and advice
NZQA have developed a web-portal with all sorts of resources to help students with their study ranging from examples of past exam papers and questions through to what to do if they are ill on the day or lose their entry slip. It is at www.nzqa.govt.nz and click on the information for students and learners (top right). It also has links to other useful sites including the very good study-it (www.studyit.org.nz) site.

- Timetable

Below is a copy of the Examination timetable for this years NCEA external examinations. Students will each be given individual timetables prior to the exams. Occasionally we have a student miss an exam by turning up at the wrong time and if that occurs it is their problem and they will receive no grade.

Date/Time	NCEA Level 1	NCEA Level 2	NCEA Level 3	Scholarship	
Sat 14 Nov	am			Classical Studies / Agricultural & Horticultural Science	
	pm			Statistics and Modelling	
Mon 16 Nov	am	Agricultural & Horticultural Science / Agricultural Science / Horticultural Science	Mathematics	Dance	Accounting
	pm	French	Te Reo Māori	Economics	Latin
Tues 17 Nov	am	English	Education for Sustainability	Chemistry	
	pm	Chinese	Physics	Home Economics / Art History	Physics
Wed 18 Nov	am	Geography	Social Studies	English	
	pm	Home Economics	Biology	Agricultural & Horticultural Science / Japanese	German
Thur 19 Nov	am	German	English		English
	pm	Accounting	German	Biology	
Fri 20 Nov	am	Mathematics	Art History	Statistics and Modelling	
	pm	Dance	Accounting	Spanish	Drama
Sat 21 Nov	am				Mathematics with Calculus / Te Reo Māori
	pm				Geography
Mon 23 Nov	am	Science	Drama	Chinese / Samoan	Art History
	pm	Samoan	Chemistry	German	Music
Tues 24 Nov	am	Economics	Agricultural & Horticultural Science	Physics	Spanish
	pm	Social Studies	Economics	French / Te Reo Rangatira	Science
Wed 25	am	Biology	Dance / Home Economics	Geography	

Nov	pm	History	Japanese	Classical Studies	Te Reo Rangatira
Thur 26 Nov	am	Japanese	History	Accounting / Latin	Media Studies
	pm	Physics	Te Reo Rangatira / Media Studies	Mathematics with Calculus	
Fri 27 Nov	am	Human Biology	Geography	Health	Biology
	pm	Chemistry	Spanish	History	
Sat 28 Nov	am				Chemistry
	pm				History
Mon 30 Nov	am	Drama	Classical Studies	Science	French
	pm	Te Reo Māori	Music	Media Studies	
Tues 1 Dec	am	Spanish	Latin	Making Music / Te Reo Māori	Chinese
	pm	Health	Chinese / Health	Music Studies	Physical Education
Wed 2 Dec	am	Music	French	Social Studies	Economics
	pm	Te Reo Rangatira / Latin	Science / Samoan	Drama	Japanese

Examination advice

Before the exam

- Check the time and place for the exam.
- Do not cram at the last minute.
- Put your equipment in a clear plastic bag the night before.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Eat before the exam but not junk food.
- Avoid people who make you feel nervous.
- Stay calm and confident. Breathe deeply.
- Don't forget your equipment.
- Be early for the exam.

In the exam

- Stay calm. Relax. Stay focused.
- Have confidence in yourself.
- Answer the easy questions first.
- Do not spend too long on each question. If you have extra time at the end return to the question.
- Do not use twink, pencil or red pen.
- Cross out mistakes with a single line.
- Use diagrams to support your answer. Label clearly.

- Read questions twice. Circle key terms.
- Do not bulk up an answer. Keep to the point!
- Proof read answers. Ask yourself – Have I written a complete answer? Have I answered the question that was asked?
- Match the length of your answer to the space provided.
- Watch out for plurals in questions. For example, 'Name features of graphs' means that you are required to write at least two features.
- Label extra pages clearly and attach them to your exam booklet.

LAST MINUTE CRAMMING

Just as examinations should be the successful end to a year of study, so revision should be the process of refreshing what has already been thoroughly learned. Poor marks and lack of work throughout the year can rarely be overcome by a last minute effort. Nor, unfortunately, can last minute revision make up for the lack of a planned study programme.

What advice can you give your children when they are in this situation? First of all, they need to remember this is revision (looking over material you already know and understand) and not an attempt to learn new material.

Revision should be a process of consolidating understanding of the subject, rather than cramming in as much information as possible before the morning of the exam. However, if revision has been left to the last minute, here are some tips that could be helpful.

- **Keep calm.** Everyone feels nervous about taking exams but it's important to remember that an examination is a test of learning, not memory. Examiners want to see evidence that you have drawn on your knowledge to develop a reasoned argument, rather than just memorising course notes and textbook facts. You can often construct a convincing answer with very few facts.

- **Although time may be short, you can still make a difference to your marks.** Prioritise and do what you



can. Use your revision notes (mind maps, diagrams etc) to consolidate your existing knowledge rather than trying to learn new topics.

- **Don't think that there's no point.** Use your last minute panic constructively. You probably know more than you realise.
- **Make sure you study the right material.** Check that you know exactly what you will be examined on.
- **Identify key points from your assignments.** Identify key concepts and facts for each topic. You don't have time to get bogged down in details so go for the big picture.
- **Write down the main points as you identify them.** Writing them down will help fix them in your brain.
- **Use your textbook and course materials well.** Read summaries, conclusions, review questions, practice tests and teachers' comments.

- **Ask yourself questions about the material** - what, why, how, what happened next, why does it matter?
- **Focus on getting credit for what you do know.**
- **Keep a cool head and sensibly plan the time remaining.** Remember what your teachers have said will come up in the exam. Similar types of questions are used each year so try to identify the main ones and draft rough answers for those.
- **Use your time constructively** rather than worrying or whining with your friends. Ban all TV and make the best use you possibly can of every remaining minute. Turn off your phone. Stay away from all distractions especially the friends you love to chat with.
- **Get at least five hours of sleep the night before the exam** otherwise lack of sleep will undo all your last minute efforts. You will need to keep your wits about you to maximise what you know and a well-rested brain is best at doing this.
- **Have at least two wake-up calls organised** so you wake up early and can go over your last minute notes again.
- **Eat a nutritious breakfast.**
- **Keep positive and convince yourself you can still achieve a decent result with what you do know.**

The best way to study for tests is to start several days or weeks before the test, so don't let yourself get into the last minute cramming situation again. Remember, the more time you waste, the more you will have to do later.

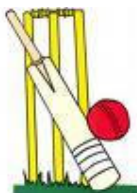
Sports Reports

BMC Girls Cricket

In April of this year the BMC Girls Cricket team won the Otago Southland section of the NZCT National Secondary Schools' competition by beating Otago Girls High School. This has qualified them to play in the National Finals in Taupo in early December against seven other regional winners, including Westlake Girls' High School and Waikato Diocesan School for Girls. These eight teams are the best from the 129 teams entered. The girls in the team are Danae Bradley, Alice Crawford, Kate Crawford, Bethany Cross, Leah Gardyne, Grace Isted, Maeva-Rua Kopa, Avana Miller, Sarah Park, Kim Shaw, Kate Stiven and Nicole Venz. The team has a mixture of both talented and inexperienced players but their attitude and enthusiasm should help them to compete well against their more experienced opposition. Ashleigh White, Anna Isted, Natalia McCall and Mariah-Carey Broad played in the team in term one but are unable to attend the Nationals.

Ian Mockford has been coaching the girls and will travel to Taupo with them, along with Manager Judy Stiven and supporters Russell and Gwenda Crawford. The girls and their parents and siblings have been busy fundraising, which has included tailing lambs (great for team bonding), catering, cooking barbecues, and selling raffles. They would like to thank everyone who has helped them to raise funds for their trip, particularly the West Otago Lions and A and P Society, the Mataura Licensing Trust, Heriot Plunket, the Edgar family, Ken and Lois Gardyne, Diane and Norman Glennie, Alwyn Stiven, the Tapanui Four Square Supermarket which has also given the girls drink bottles, TWO Promotions and Stuart Timber for caps. The girls will be running the 'Dunk the Clown' at the A and P Show as well.

If anyone would like to receive texted updates of the team's games on December 10th- 13th give your cell phone number to Judy. We will be staying at the Top Ten Holiday Park Fax number 07 3774922 – your support would be appreciated.



Some of the girls do not have proper cricket shoes so if there is anyone with a pair that they could borrow could you please contact me – Judy - 2048130.

Other Reports

MAD - Making A Difference

During terms 2 and 3 of 2009 a group of senior students took part in the MAD (Making A Difference) program focused on helping the local community and building leadership. This program was organised by our Clutha District Youth Council representatives Farryn and Todd. The group included Farryn Crawford, Gemma Tomsett, Cherise Thompson, Todd Murray, Renee Tomsett, Hannah Diamond, Joshua Kummer, Danae Bradley and our leader/mentor Daniel Maze who is the Youth Development Officer in the Clutha District. We met once a week at lunchtimes to discuss what we wanted to do to help our community and planned how this could be done. Our

main task was the Tapanui Park where we water blasted, tidied and painted the park to make it a more inviting place for people in the district to visit. This program was also about leadership and to test our skills and teamwork we went on a trip to the Lorneville High Ropes Course. This was a real highlight of the course as it was a chance to get to know the group better. This course was a great opportunity to give something back to the community and also to build on our leadership skills.

Danae Bradley

Student Achievements

Soccer

James Rea was selected for the Southland U19 Soccer tournament team and was awarded Most Improved Under 17 soccer rep.

Cultural

Rosemary Alderton entered 'The Body' dance competition in Christchurch recently winning 3/2nds and 1/3rd and made the adult D grade ballroom adult C grade ballroom and adult open latin finals. She also entered the NZ national dance competition in Christchurch this past weekend and although not placed she was recalled in most of her events. The Gore Dance Studio took home the North v South Dance Shield.

Golf

Gareth McCall was a member of the Tapanui Golf Club Intermediate Pennant team who won the Otago final.

Athletics

Alice Crawford 2nd in the Outward Bound Half Marathon

Motorbike Racing

Seth Devereux 1st in the Sportz Fotoz Cup after winning the 3rd final round at Ruapuna, Christchurch earlier in the month.

Karate

Results from the Otago/Southland Karate Champs last week;

Jacob Finalyson 15-17 colts premier Kata 3rd

Charlotte Kerr – 15-17 yrs premiers Kumite 3rd

Megan Finlayson – womens open Kata 3rd, 15-17 yrs colts Kata 3rd

Rugby

Otago Country U18 team runners up at South Island Tournament

Future Events

Last Chance - Woodwork Night Classes

Due to the cuts in Government funding for Adult Education next year: Term 4 will be the last term for our evening Woodwork classes. If you want to enrol please contact:

Angela Diamond
Adult Education Co-ordinator
2048877 or leave a message

A special thank you

The Adult Students would like to thank Alan Ritchie and Jim Erridge for their time and effort over the years this class has been running. The skills and knowledge we have gained have been invaluable. Thanks so much.

***Elwing Discoveries
for Sailing Adventure and Boating Education
Phone: 034738914 / 0272768817***

Hi all,

We have the planning of our school holiday adventures well underway now. I have attached the newsletter notice for you to possibly include in your newsletters as appropriate approaching the end of the year.

The information re the voyages is:

For 15+ year olds/Year 11-13 - 17-23 December 2009

Coastguard Dayskipper Certificate Course and Adventure/Experience Voyage

This is a live in course for two nights in Bluff and then 4 nights aboard Elwing adventuring at Stewart Island.

For 11-13 year olds / Year 6-9 - 26-30 January 2010

Coastguard Dayskipper Experience Course (designed for this age group) and Adventure Voyage

This is a 5 day live in adventure aboard Elwing at Stewart Island.

We look forward to keeping in touch.

Regards,

Barbara White

Community Notices

Special Award for Services to Netball

Congratulations to **Alwyn Stiven** who was awarded a Clutha District Service to Sport Award and a SPARC Volunteer Coach of the Year finalist award in Invercargill.

Congratulations to Barbara Hanna

We are delighted to announce that Barbara was awarded the 2009 Gore District Community Award for Contribution to Arts and Culture.

SUPPORT OUR FUNDRAISING –Go to www.yourfastshop.co.nz and browse over 85 online stores. All shopping helps raise funds when you select Blue Mountain College. Save money and time by shopping online.

Scripture Union Adventure Camps

For more information on these summer holiday camps

Contact Heather on 0800 SU camps

Or eMail: campsadmin@scriptureunion.org.nz

Blue Mountain Softball Club

NOTICE OF MEETING

TIME: 7.30pm

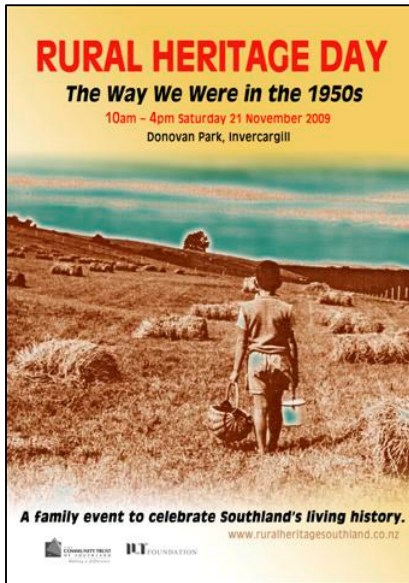
DATE: Wednesday the 2nd of December 2009

VENUE: BMC Library

All present and future players are welcome.

Parental support is necessary for the future viability of the club.

If there is insufficient support from players and parents
then the club will be placed in recess.



Children's Illustrated Story Writing Competition

This competition is held in association with Rural Heritage Day on 21 November. Stories need to tell the reader something about the way life was in Southland during the 1950s. It must be illustrated and, where possible, involve an interview with someone who remembers that decade.

The judge is award-winning NZ children's author and illustrator Gavin Bishop who was born in Invercargill and spent his 1950s childhood in Kingston. Gavin will also present the prizes at Rural Heritage Day.

For details and entry forms, email phil.becs@xtra.co.nz
Or ask at the Invercargill Public Library Children's Services for a competition kit.

Note! Entries close on Friday 30 October.

Don't forget! 'The Way We Were in the 1950s' by Lloyd Esler will be a great help for this competition. Each Southland school receives a free copy of this educational resource with additional copies available from the Southland Museum for \$10.

Phone 219 9069 or email Colin.Anderson@southlandmuseum.co.nz