Ayr High Opti-Cats Optimise Opportunities for Creative Excellence!
by Ms Anna D’Illario, English & LoTE - HOD

On Sunday (24 August), six weeks of hard work and creative thinking culminated in Ayr High’s two Year 9 teams competing in the annual Opti-Minds Creativity and Sustainability Challenge at James Cook University. The competition presents teams with a ‘problem’ they must solve using sustainable thinking and creativity. Both teams entered the Literature and Language section of the competition for their division. Team 1 (Wombat Tales) consisted of Lauren Bozzetto, Kacee Bromham, Shona Scalia, Jasmin Timm and Lyam Loring. Team 2 (Bush Tails) consisted of Czarcee Galope, Taylor Jensen, Kaylee Thaler, Maddi Collins, Holly Cranston, Sophie Sutcliffe and Jacob Gross.

The day started early (some of us were at the uni by 8 am!) with both teams practising spontaneous challenges to fire up their brains for the day. They put themselves through timed trials and peer evaluated each other’s performance and strategy as Mr Pickersgill and Ms D’Ilario looked on.

Soon, however, it was time for the spontaneous challenge. Both teams were sequestered away and sworn to secrecy as they battled against schools from across the Townsville region for the most creative response. Once it was over, there was no time to relax as both teams had to prepare themselves for the Long Challenge.

The previous six weeks of hard work, group meetings (and pizza!), and juggling commitments, came down to this. Both teams performed very well, but it was Team 1, Wombat Tales, that took out first prize for their division! Lauren, Kacee, Shona, Jasmin and Lyam did an amazing job in both their spontaneous and long-term challenges, working as a team and playing to their strengths.

The team has been invited to represent the Townsville region at the Opti-Minds Australian Final, to be held at the University of Queensland’s St Lucia campus on the 13 October.

Winning Team: Jasmin Timm, Kacee Bromham, Shona Scalia, Lauren Bozzetto and Lyam Loring


Wombat Tales: Lauren Bozzetto, Jasmin Timm, Kacee Bromham (kneeling), Shona Scalia and Lyam Loring in costume.

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From the Principal
by Mr Craig Whittred, Principal
Editorial - Newsletter No. 13 05/09/14

Last Friday night Ayr State High School’s Identity Visual Art Exhibition had its opening night, and what a magnificent display of student expertise it was. On display are hundreds of pieces of student work ranging from Year 8 to 12. This has been the third year that we have had this exhibition and each year I am amazed at the talent of our students. I would like to congratulate and thank our two Visual Arts teachers, Mrs Lynda Hoey and Ms Corin Parison, who have done an outstanding job presenting this exhibition. I would also like to thank the other staff members who help support this event.

During the week the students involved with the Maryborough 24 Hour Challenge unveiled their two vehicles and showcased them to families. The Challenge will involve a Junior and Senior Team travelling to Maryborough and riding their vehicle around a set track for 24 hours nonstop. Teams from all around Queensland compete and last year in our first year, we had great success. This year we have refined our vehicles and are hoping to improve our ranking from last year’s effort. The two vehicles will be on display in the Water Festival Parade on Saturday.

Year 12 University Pathway students this week sat the QCS test. The students put their skills and knowledge, that they have learnt over 12 years of school, to the test. I am happy to say that the students felt confident in their performances and were extremely well prepared by their involvement in our dedicated QCS prep program (that they have been engaged in over the last 12 months). Well done Year 12s, now that you’re into the home stretch, let’s focus on our exam block to ensure you get the OP score you’re hoping for. The rest of our students are also completing assessment at this time. I encourage all of our students to develop a study timetable and discuss this with their family. Students should talk with their family about when assessment is due and how much work is required for each piece. They can then negotiate how much time they need to concentrate on their study, which may mean missing a social outing, reducing shifts at work or getting a break from some chores. This will help students to focus on assessment and give families an understanding of the workload - which may prevent a few arguments down the track.

The Ayr State High School P&C Association will also have a food and drink stall at Saturday night’s Water Festival celebrations so come along and support the school by eating some yummy tortellini!

Yours in Education
Craig Whittred
Principal

Japanese Club
by Ms Rebecca Irvine, Japanese Teacher

Year 8 Japanese Students have been participating in a lunch time club celebrating Japanese society, culture and language.

The club runs every Thursday, second break and celebrates all things Japanese in a fun and exciting way. Students participate in arts and craft activities, Japanese film and animae and games. We have helped to decorate the room for the various Japanese festivals and celebrations and created some really wonderful artwork.

Next week will be Japanese animae (animation). All Year 8 Japanese students are welcome, so come and check it out!
All Schools Touch Carnival
by Mr Bruce Johnson, Coach

The Ayr State High School Junior Girls team that contested the All School Touch Carnival demonstrated that with more representative experience, they have the ability to take the title next year. The Hawks were drawn in pool A which was a much stronger pool and contained schools that actually offer touch as an elective subject in their curriculum. The team recorded impressive wins against Gordonvale SHS (5-1), Ryan Catholic (3-0) and Tully SHS (4-1) but were defeated by St Margaret Mary’s (2-0) and Kirwan SHS (5-1). Kirwan and St Margaret Mary’s won their respective cross-pool semi-finals and St Margaret Mary’s defeated Kirwan 2-1 in the Grand Final.

All the girls contributed to the success of the carnival. Sharni Wight was hampered by an ankle injury but never backed off, Solehl Heron showed patches of brilliance, Akeilah Williams demonstrated her silky ball skills, Blaise Heron played with a constant smile and Emma Lawson proved that speed is always an asset. Overall, a pleasing team performance and a good indication that the team has the potential to win the competition next year.

A big thank you to Miss Scott for being the team manager, Daniel Walsh from Burdekin Touch Association for being the designated referee, the Feeney’s for bringing the shade tent and all the parents who provided transport and encouragement.

Interschool Athletics Carnival
by Ms Courtney Carrigan, Sports Co-ordinator

On Friday 22 August 95 Ayr High students descended on Home Hill to participate in the Interschool Athletics Carnival hosted by Home Hill State High School. Students competed in various track and field events. Hurricane led our team into the grounds and was a ‘hit’ with the other schools and spectators, duelling it out with the BCH bear (in fun jest) and even posing for photos with younger children. Ayr High finished second overall with a total of 697 points, only 18 points behind overall winners Burdekin Catholic High School on 715, and third in the aggregate trophy (which takes into account overall school numbers and overall points on the day). Congratulations to Jayden Caltabiano (U13), Sharni Wight (U14), Wesley O’Rourke (U14), Liam Vitale (U15) and Karina Thompson (U16) who were Age Champions.

Two records were broken by Ayr High students:
- Noeleen VaeVae Pare (U15) Shot Put 11.28 m (10.81; 2013)
- Molly Barbagallo (U19) Shot Put 11.38 m (11.27; 2012)

A squad of 32 has been selected from this carnival and will represent the Burdekin district at the North Queensland Track and Field Trials on Friday 5 September. Eleven members of this squad are from Ayr High. Congratulations to all students.

Ayr SHS Community Shield
by Blake Hollywood, Sport Captain

On Tuesday 19 August my fellow Year 12 cohort took time away from their rigorous studies to compete in a game of touch against our local community services. The Police, Ambulance and Fire Brigade combined to give us ‘young whipper snappers’ a run for our money. The concept of the Community Shield was initiated through sport to help foster and develop (ASHS’s) positive relationships within the community. The game started with a flip of the coin and the community services team took early bragging rights with the first tap, winning the coin toss. It was a well fought battle; the first half closing with the Year 12’s up 2 – 1 after some exciting pieces of play with breakaway intercepts, close touches and lots of drop ball. Following a team huddle and a passionate plea by our School Captain Matthew ‘butter fingers’ Wight the Year 12’s picked up their act, rallying together with some first class plays by Jack Vacher and Jay Leckenby to close the game 5 – 3. This meant the Year 12’s took out the inaugural Community Shield.
Science Competition Success in 2014 by Mr Kerry Flynn, Science & Maths - HOD

Congratulations to the following students who have performed very creditably in the annual ICAS science competition. The competition involves students answering multiple choice questions in a 1 hour period.

High Distinction: Dean Webber (10)
Distinction: Luke Sockhill (11); Matt Wight (12)

Credits:
Jordan Holmes (12), Jared Haller (12); René Le Feuvre (11); Chris Ordorica (10); Tyler Northwood (10); Emma Lyons (10); Sharni Wight (9); Kara Sutcliffe (9); Shona Scalia (9); Lauren Bozzetto (9)

Take-Home Literacy Challenge
Can you find something which has keys that open no locks, with space but no room, and allows you to enter but not to go in?

Literacy Abuzz at Ayr High by Mrs Linda Attard and Mrs Jessamy Nicolaides, Support Teachers of Literacy (ST-L)

This past week has seen the 2014 National Literacy and Numeracy Week (NLNW) take Ayr High by storm! The daily Take-Home Literacy Challenge saw many brave students dispute the answers to contentious questions and riddles with their teachers, striking a buzz about the school. By being the first to arrive at the English staffroom with the correct answer, Hayden Menso, Bradley Wood, Lachlan Giarusso, Zoe Muir, Kaylee Thaler, Sam Spelta, Kaitlyn Chapman, and Chloe Rehbein were crowned the daily winners. Another week-long competition was the Facebook Character Profile competition, which required students to develop a Facebook profile of a fictional character from a novel they have been reading. There were a number of fantastic entries featuring Draco Malfoy and Harry Potter along with Doug and Alex Jackson from popular novels read in English. We are excited to announce the prize winners of the competition - Tiarne Walsh (Year 10) for the most creative profile and Bradley Wood (Year 10) for the best character representation.

Whilst promoting literacy throughout the school during the NLNW, the Support Teachers of Literacy (ST-L) have also been busy building a hive of activity around reading. Reading comprehension is our school’s literacy focus for 2014 and we have been supporting teachers to incorporate a range of reading strategies in their lessons. With a focus on lifting comprehension levels, all teachers are trialling the DR-TA (Directed Reading and Thinking Activity) strategy. The aim of this strategy is to focus students’ thinking while they are reading to improve concentration and understanding. DR-TA has seen students engage in reading activities in a range of subject areas, including Manual Arts, Maths, Science and Design and Technology. The feedback from all teachers is that DR-TA supports reading comprehension and engagement in class.
In one of the best performances for some years, the Ayr High Hawks have won all six divisions for interschool touch. The clean sweep ensures that Ayr State High School remains the premier school in the sport of touch.

The open boys team was pushed all the way by a well-trained Home Hill SHS squad and only won the title on superior goal difference. Often playing with only 1 or 2 subs, the boys showed incredible tenacity and endurance to grind out well-deserved wins. Success was built on the work rate of Kurt and Tyler Boxall, the vision of Jack Vacher and incisive darts from acting half by René Le Feuvre.

The open girls team was undefeated but every game was close until the final whistle. They certainly proved the adage that a champion team will beat a team of champions. Zoie Borellini was tireless in both attack and defence.

The under 15 boys managed three wins and a draw to take their title. The six all draw against BCH was a nail-biting game which ultimately decided the outcome of their season. The boys jumped out to a commanding lead but then had to hold out a fast finishing opposition.

The under 15 girls were also undefeated and although they didn’t play their best touch this season, they won their games convincingly with defence being their strength. The girls scored 23 touchdowns and only conceded two.

Unfortunately the under 14 boys only opposition came from Home Hill SHS resulting in the team only having two games. The boys were a formidable combination and drove the opposition back before skillfully opening up the defence with incisive ball movement. Twenty touchdowns were scored with only 2 being conceded.

BCH did manage to field a team in the under 14 girls division but met a red-hot Ayr High team who scored 12 touchdowns without conceding any in the two matches. Unfortunately Home Hill were unable to field a team and so there were only two games.

Congratulations to all the teams and their coaches.

Random Acts of Reading
Novel Reviewed: Gone
By: Michael Grant
Genre: Dystopian Adventure
Age suitability: 12-16 years
Who would like this book: anyone who enjoys tales of survival.

In the fictional town of Perdido Beach, every person aged 15 years and over suddenly disappears. No adults. No parents. No control. As the world collapses around them, the children who remain discover what kind of people they really are, and what some of them will do for power.

For Sam and Astrid, the protagonists, it is a race against time as they try to solve the mysteries that dominate their lives…What is the mysterious force field that has trapped all the kids inside the town? Why have some kids developed super powers? And what is going on at Coates Academy with Drake and his gang of bullies? Meanwhile, down in a mineshaft, the Darkness waits… Gone is a sensational novel that has taken the young adult world by storm. Grant’s style of writing is simple, but exciting. He ends chapters with cliff hangers, and subtly creates suspense by gradually revealing mysterious pieces of information, making the reader eager to turn the next page.

Gone is the first in a series of six novels which have all been extremely popular. You can find out more about Gone – and the other books in the series - by going to the website (http://www.michaelgrantbooks.co.uk/gone) and watching the book trailer.

English Tutoring
Tuesdays 3.15 pm - 4.15 pm  A4

Your friendly English teachers are available to help you with homework and assessments.
Young Diplomats Program
by David Ballin, Year 10 Student

On Friday, 22 August, four courageous young year 10 students travelled to Townsville with Mrs Vollema-Creek to compete in the Young Diplomats Program, 2014. This event was hosted by James Cook University, and focused on educating students on rules of diplomacy and how to apply them in day-to-day life. Four volunteers from Ayr High’s Year 10 cohort including myself, Alix Leckenby, Hayden Menso and Lachlan Giarusso were nominated to negotiate and discuss issues with other high schools in North Queensland. As diplomats, we were selected to represent the country, India, and our topic of negotiation was “Global Food Security”. To prepare for the day, we spent many after-school hours with Mrs Vollema-Creek researching our topics and writing an eight minute speech which was to be presented on the day. With our brains rich with the knowledge of Indian culture and our tongues tied with the preparation of the speech, we can say we confidently drove to Townsville in hopes of success at the program.

When we entered the venue, we couldn’t help but feel a tad nervous as we walked into a formally prepared room with tables set alphabetically with our country’s flag on our sector of table. We were addressed formally by the judges, chairperson and even a real-life diplomat. Then each country delivered their expertly prepared speeches and expressed the views their country has on the achievement of food security. We delivered our speech confidently and fluently which gave us a boost of confidence for the day ahead. After the seemingly lengthy speeches, we were treated to afternoon tea and then brought into the negotiation rounds, where we, as our country, had to negotiate what we could do in order to benefit the food security in other countries and how they could assist us. Then finally, as the day came to an end, one person from each country was nominated to give a concluding speech presenting their final views on food security. We were very proud of our involvement in the program as Alix Leckenby provided a truly remarkable and moving speech to conclude the day.

Although we did not quite come out as the victorious country in the end, with Atherton State High taking out first prize and St Margaret Mary’s winning best individual speaker, we arrived back home to Ayr proud in the knowledge that we gave it our all, and achieved a victory of our own – competing in the Young Diplomats program 2014.

Calling for Nominations
What: North Queensland Junior Regional Touch Championships
When: 4 - 6 October 2014 (Labour Day long weekend)
Where: Queen’s Park, Townsville
Divisions: Boy’s 16, 14, 12, 10 – Girl’s 16, 14, 12, 10

Burdekin Touch Association is nominating teams in all divisions and is calling for players to express their interest. Teams will train in the weeks prior to the Championships and the appointed coaches will organise a suitable training time. Interested players should nominate in person at the Burdekin Touch Fields on Friday 29 August at 5 pm. Alternatively a nomination can be emailed to burdekinTouchAssociation@outlook.com or phone Bruce Johnson on 0408 060476. Multiple teams will be nominated if there is sufficient interest.

Ayr State High School Sports Awards
Thursday 23 October 2014
Ayr Showgrounds Hall, 7.30 pm

This evening celebrates students who have represented the school in their chosen sport/s and who have been selected to represent the Burdekin district or beyond.

Keep an eye out on student notices as Miss Carrigan will announce further details in the coming weeks.

Home Study Trial in Term 4 Maths & Science
by Mr Kerry Flynn, HOD - Maths & Science

Homework sheets are currently being used in a range of Maths/Science classes. As further refinement of this process a move towards a unit based Home Study program will occur in 2015 in all Year 7 – 9 Maths and Science classes.

This unit format will give students/families and teachers the flexibility to more proactively cater for the learning of groups/individuals. More importantly it will allow the school’s Student Wellbeing program to be incorporated into subjects in a tangible and meaningful manner for students.

To gain feedback this year, a trial of a unit home study program will occur in Year 8 Maths and Science in term 4 and in Year 9 Science in term 4. Please look out for these in term 4 and if you have suggestions or comments, please contact Mr Kerry Flynn (HOD - Maths/Science) on 47904319 or kflyn8@eq.edu.au or Mrs Gemellaro (STLaN) tgeme1@eq.edu.au.

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