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DATES TO REMEMBER:

TERM 1:

Monday 25 January to Friday 26 March

Mon 8 Mar: NO CCAs THIS WEEK

Mon 8 Mar: Parent Teacher Interviews

Mon 15 Mar: Yr 4 Camp Information 3.30pm

Wed 17 Mar: Yr 7 Camp Info. Eveining 7pm

Mon 22 Mar: Yr 5 Camp Information 3.30pm

Fri 26 Mar: Last Day Term 1



Our Athletics carnival on Wednesday at Serangoon Stadium was an outstanding event. It was a privilege to witness the level of participation from our Middle School students and the spirit in which they embraced the day was exceptional. Many thanks must go to Mr. Bill Brennan, our Acting Head of Sport and the PE staff for their superb organisation of the day. Furthermore, all teaching staff played a crucial role in the smooth running of the day and embraced the carnival with enthusiasm. We acknowledge the outstanding performers with trophies and certificates but I would like to make mention of the numerous students who went about their business and competed in all events. These students may not have collected a ribbon or crossed the line first but they should have slept well on Thursday night knowing their personal contribution to the day was valued. A strong sense of community can be instilled throughout these events and it is my hope the sense of camaraderie throughout the day can filter back into the classrooms.

Providing an environment where our students are constantly engaged and active is paramount. Many opportunities are available throughout the school term and I encourage all students to capitalise on these to ensure they are active both physically and intellectually on a constant basis. I'm a believer in the old saying 'idle hands are the devils tools' especially throughout adolescence. Young men and women need to be engaged, challenged and immersed in productive activity on a daily basis. Middle School educators should aspire to this throughout each and every school day. Additionally, I encourage parents to continue to present opportunities to your children throughout the wider school community. Expect that they are involved in structured, activities over the weekend and ensure they fulfil their commitments.

Next week we have our Parent Teacher Interviews for Term One. Sessions will take place on Tuesday 9 March from 4.00pm – 6.30pm and Thursday 11 March from 2.00pm to 8.30pm. Details have been sent to families outlining the booking process using our online community portal. Middle School students are expected to attend these sessions. Having a three way conversation involving parents, the teacher and the student is a proven approach to set tangible goals and reflect on the beginning of the year. Nothing discussed at these meetings should be hidden from the three key stakeholders as transparency and open dialogue is essential for your child's academic and social development.

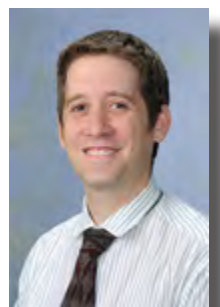
Middle School Staff Sharing their Story

We are blessed with a very talented academic staff here at AISS. Our staff is recruited from a diverse array of backgrounds and many have fascinating stories to share. It is my intention throughout the year to ask staff to share their personal stories with our parent community within our Newsletter. Our first entry has been written by Mr David Schmeer who started with us in 2009. David is a Year 9 Home Group teacher and is a valued member of our Language A English, Language B, EAL and PMC Programs. Read ahead to enjoy David's short autobiography:

I had two fantasies when I was a fifteen: being a teacher and being a guitar god. Perhaps not average fantasies for a fifteen year old, but I was pragmatic. I would become a music teacher so that I could leave school each day at 3:30 and spend the remainder of the day working on rock stardom.

I haven't left school at 3:30 since I was fifteen.

I did leave my home state of Texas for the marvels of Hollywood, California though



when I was seventeen. After graduating from Hollywood Performing Arts, I did a yearlong stint at the Guitar Institute of Technology. We all walked down Hollywood Boulevard with guitars on our backs and GIT emblazoned on our chests. After a bit of time playing the LA club scene and working in a music shop, I thought university would be a good move away from a cliché lifestyle.

It took a couple of years for me to realise that as much as I loved music, what I really wanted to teach was language and literature. I found a new home in the English Literature department and also fell in love with writing. I still chased after rockdom, but in a different way. I interviewed bands for our university paper when they came to our town.

When I graduated, I had only one desire. More than anything, I wanted to teach in any country other than the United States. When I got a job offer to teach in Tokyo, Japan, I jumped at it. Two weeks after graduation, I was in Japan, where I remained for 11 years. Much of that time I spent at a Japanese high school, where each year brought a further investment and dedication to education. In many ways it was an ideal that we often discuss in the MYP, the idea of being a lifelong learner. I studied my students' language while I taught them mine.

The congestion and confined spaces of Tokyo eventually took their toll, and moving to Singapore was a logical step. I am grateful to the Australian School for providing the opportunity. I love being here, and a large part of that is because of the students. With so many different backgrounds and cultures, everyday offers something new. Language, literature and music just bring it all together.

Mr David Schmeer

Year 8 Update

This week has been a busy week with much of the focus surrounding the Vietnam camp. Monday night was our Camp Parent Information evening. During the evening a large group of parents heard from the camp leaders, our support company Hemisphere and the AISS medical team. The evening answered those lingering doubts. Both parents and students were excited about the prospect of repairing an orphanage and enjoying the beautiful scenery of Vietnam. In addition Hemisphere provided some donated items to auction at our Quiz night on Thursday 18 March including a beautiful picture created from pure gemstones.

This week also began the hot cross bun drive with a rush of orders looking to raise some real funds for the orphanage. 8W, Miss Healey, Miss Huxtable and a number of other volunteers managed this flow of orders, diligently collecting the monies and accounting for them in a spread sheet.

In Humanities students have been exploring their medieval books. Their assignment this week has been assessing their book for medieval accuracies and inaccuracies. It has been pleasing to see the emergence of a group of medieval experts, as they tested how well the author had 'spun the tale.' Next we will be exploring the issues by creating a poster that would accurately portray the story. But as yet the guiding question remains unanswered 'Is spinning the tale more important than accuracy?'

Barney Trezona and Wayne Nitschke- Year 8 Team Leaders



Sue Huxley

Our deepest condolences to the Huxley family after hearing that Sue lost her brave battle with Cancer. Sue's son Chris is a member of our Year 8 community and our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family during this difficult time. Nicole Huxley was our 2006 Community and Service Captain, following in her mother's footsteps. Sue was an active member of the Tabitha Foundation.

For more information on Sue's legacy and for memorial details please go to www.suehuxley.blogspot.com.