BRING THA NOOZE

April 2014

The Jon Carnegie School
Real Life Learning
From the Founder

As I shared in last year’s corresponding ANZAC Day newsletter, my family has a long history of wartime service to Australia. It is a source of great pride to me that both my great uncles served in World War II and that one, Gordon, made the ultimate sacrifice when his ship was bombed in Alexandra, and the other, Bobby, was a prisoner of the Japanese until the war ended and he eventually returned to Australia.

Bobby went on to live well into his nineties and carrying his coffin at his funeral was a moment I will cherish as I felt in many ways I was carrying a slice of our national history to its grave.

With that said I have always had a lingering discomfort with the legend of ANZAC. Having read my great uncle’s letters and my fair share of history, I suspect the notion of fighting for ‘king and country’ was considered very patriotic and was a great driving force behind many Australians giving up their lives during both world wars. Likewise our more recent involvements in wars from Vietnam to Afghanistan have also been under the banner of ‘someone else’s’ course. Indeed, throughout the entire white history of this country, it is hard for me (with the benefit of hindsight) to justify our involvement in any war in which we have participated.

I say this from what I have often referred to as ‘the cheap seats’. I have never had to pick up a gun and shoot another person in defence of my country. I do not have the right to judge those who have done this, nor do I in any way whatsoever intend to moralise, denigrate or question their actions. What I am doing however, is looking forward and asking the question, is there a better way to represent Australia in the field of international military endeavours in the future?

My answer is ‘Yes’. While I have no doubt every country that can afford it needs to be able to protect its own borders, I do have significant doubt about the fact that we spend $25,000,000,000 (billion) per year on defence and yet in our entire white history, we have only ever had to fire twice on an enemy directly attacking Australian soil.

So for me, the legend of ANZAC would be far better served if we were to shift the focus of our military to that of a Peace Corps, similar to the one JFK instigated in the USA in 1961. As such the job of the Corps is national defence on one level but equally importantly, national and international service on another. Things like the eradication of obnoxious weeds and feral animals. The support of nations in natural disaster situations. Medical and peace keeping efforts in international war zones and assistance in schools and education.

There are several natural scourges in Australia that require eradication at the moment including the crown of thorns star fish, the cane toad, fire ants, red fox, feral cats, thistles, blackberries and various fungi just to name a few. We spend $4 billion dollars a year alone on getting rid of weeds; $720 million in the damage caused by introduced animals and a further $6 billion in research and control.

Furthermore, I would make it compulsory for all people under the age of 25 who are not either studying or employed to participate in the Peace Corps, with an aim to teaching them skills which may result in employment down the track.

No doubt the Johnny Come Lately, Good Samaritan, Politically Correct, House of the Bleeding Hearted Civil Libertarian Mob are already up in arms, but that was exactly my point at the start of this somewhat convoluted article. These days being up in arms is little more than a turn of phrase... Back in the day of the ANZAC, the phrase actually meant being up in arms. And despite our supposed progress as a nation, I question how those who gave up their lives so that we may live ours in peace, would react the knowledge that there are more than enough jobs for every young person these days, but some still choose to live on dole. I doubt that’s what the ANZAC were fighting for and I doubt they would be too happy to know this is where we have ended up.

Lest We Forget.
Welcome to term 2

This term’s theme is Accountability. Each student has a ‘distilled’ version of their ILP (Individual Learning Plan) on the wall for personal reference and public display. The students have set goals themselves and the ILP refers to these goals and the steps the individual needs to take in order to reach them. The ILP’s don’t lie, they don’t change, they don’t get caught up in petty arguments or semantics. Students are personally and publicly accountable to these ILPs and to their own goals.

It makes everything a lot clearer and gives students less room to justify their negative behaviour. Staff have their goals up on the wall already and continue to be held accountable to these. As part of any community, individuals must be accountable to their own goals, personal development and contribution to the community. Sometimes we let people off the hook because it is easier to do this than to hold them accountable. But in the end this doesn’t do the community or its individuals any favours.

DECV

This term’s focus for DECV is in line with the term’s theme, ACCOUNTABILITY. This term we will be pushing for students to keep up to date and to get ahead in their DECV course work. All of our students’ goals are linked in some way to the completion of their DECV course work. DECV offers a way to measure how accountable students are holding themselves to their own goals.
Camp

This term’s camp is Queensland Camp. This camp pushes students out of their comfort zone into real life learning opportunities. Each year the camp changes in order to link to the term’s theme and offer students different experiences. The finalised itinerary will be forwarded to parents and students before the camp. To ensure the success of our camp program for all students, attendance is compulsory. Prompt payment for the camp is also important for our camp program, if you have not already please make payment to Hannah. Camp spending money will be due Monday the 19th of May.

If you have any further queries in regards to camp, please contact Hannah.
**Activities**

This term’s excursion is Gender Bender. One of the aims of this exercise is to give students the opportunity to spend a day in someone else’s shoes. When this activity is done well it gives students an insight into how it feels to experience life as someone else, with a different set of circumstances. This is designed to help them appreciate the life they have.

**Parent Workshops**

At our recent parent evening, most parents expressed they would welcome greater ‘intrusive’ guidance as to dealing with teenagers. As such we are running a series of family workshops this term and in third term.

Dates will be made available soon and further specific information in relation to each student will be sent home in the next week.

**Important Dates**

**Term 2**

- Sunday 11th May
- Wednesday 14th May
- Monday 26th May
- Tuesday 27th May – Friday 30th May
- Monday 9th June
- Friday 27th June
- Mother’s Day
- Gender Bender
- Student Study Day
- Queensland camp
- Queen’s Birthday
- Term 2 Concludes
Be prepared!
you never know what to expect
on PLD camp!