PENRITH HIGH SCHOOL
Principal: Mr John Elton

Newsletter
Issue 7, May 2011

From the Principal

Open Night
Parents should be very proud of the things their children achieve at Penrith High. I certainly am!

Open Night showed me that what is special about Penrith High is our students. There were many, many, student leaders, performers and volunteers at Open Night and this is the main factor for the success of the event. I have quickly come to realise that students put their hands up to contribute to a positive school tone in so many ways. We are all very proud of their efforts.

Open Night was a great reminder of the wonderful music programs provided by Mrs Gock and Mrs Ridgeway. Not only are there opportunities at school, but these provide a springboard to represent at the top level. Recently I attended the showcase of the Department’s Arts Unit at Sydney Town Hall. This brings together the very best performers from all over the State. Penrith High had students in both the Instrumental Music Ensembles and the Voices in Performance Combined Choir. This prestigious event was packed with exceptionally high quality performances. It said a great deal about the quality of teaching and learning at Penrith and the support provided by parents. Well done to all involved. There is more on this later in the newsletter.

Next P&C Meeting
Tuesday  7th June
7:30pm in the Staff Common Room
All Welcome
NAPLAN
Students are to be congratulated on the manner in which they approached the NAPLAN exams last week. We now await the results. Mrs Taylor, Mr Ferguson and Mrs Ryan did a fantastic job on co-ordinating the logistics of this large operation.

School Captains 2012!
It is only Term 2, but we have just selected our Captains for 2012. They will begin their duties during the Trial HSC in Term 3. From an outstanding group of candidates the following students were successful:

Captains: Imogen Clarke
          David Stone

Vice Captains: Jessica Washington
               Agilan Ratnakumar

Congratulations to Imogen, David, Jessica and Agilan.

Congratulations

• **Luke Keanelly**, Year 12, who represented the school at the National Constitutional Convention in Canberra. Luke impressed at the NSW Convention and was selected to represent at the highest level. This achievement recognises Luke’s leadership skills and capacity as an effective communicator. Well done.

• **Laura Butler**, Year 11. Laura was the highest scoring student in all of New South Wales in the senior division of the Australian Geography Competition. She will now be flown to Melbourne in October to take part in the ‘Big Week Out’. This will involve field work based on the Mornington Peninsula. Congratulations on an exceptional achievement.

• **In Concert participants**: Xanthe Adams-Ward, Mikayla Briggs, Laura Butler, George Caley, Riley Callan, Bridget Corke, Emily Cowcher, Gabrielle Davy, Cassandra De Jonge, Amelia Fox, Eleni Gabrieldies, Joshua Gardner, Kate Gellini, Michaela Gray, Jodie Hargans, Madison Hughes, Riva Ibraheem, Carmela Merenda, Rebecca Millar, Owen Morris, Natasha Op’t Land, Thalia Penninkilampi, Timothy Powell, Priyanka Rola, Suransh Rola, Philaretos, Stylianides, Chantal Vrielink, Rosie Ward, Hasith Wijesekera, Kayla Wilkins.

• **Jodie Hargans and Thalia Penninkilampi**, who have been selected for the State Drama Camp.

• **Kate Grima-Farrell and Emma Riches**, who have been selected for 2011 Schools Spectacular.

Mr John Elton
Principal
Following on with a Guide for our Year 7 Parents Part 3 of our 8 part advice.

What successes can be capitalised on and what is now needed to continue this success?

Students in the Middle Years are moving from concrete to abstract thinking. They have an intense curiosity and a growing capacity for higher-order analysis and reflection. They are also moving towards more rational decision making and a better understanding of the effects of behaviour. They are developing, exploring and expanding their relationships with both their peers and adults, and are taking more risks and learning about the consequences of decision making and responsibilities.

Our Middle Years Learners - engaged, resilient, successful. An Education Strategy for Years 5 to 9, 2010-2012

The educational growth of a child between primary and secondary schooling reflect a maturation and movement towards independence, with divergent interests, cognitive changes and a consolidation of morals, personal values, and self-direction.

In Year 7 students will be introduced to subjects they haven't experienced before, and other subjects may have a different approach and emphasis from primary school learning. At High school, greater emphasis will be placed on independence, self-reliance and self-motivation than in primary school. Lessons will often be student-centred and teachers will become resources and guides, rather than instructors. Much of a student’s successful progress will be measured on individual initiative, proven capacity for work and ambition.

The difference in work load between Primary and High School will vary in amount and type because of the number of teachers and subject variations, but most students will need to do work at home each night - whether it is a review of the day's lesson, completion of exercises or starting an assignment that is due down the track.

Then there needs to be study time - which is separate from completing homework. Students should go over the day's work, read their text-books or notes and try to increase their understanding, and remember concepts touched on in the class. In many cases student self-discipline, motivation and time management skills will need to be developed and managed to maximise a student’s potential for success. These skills are begun in Primary and continue to be developed and expanded to enhance life-long learning.

High School recognises that not everybody learns at the same pace. Some catch onto things fast, some take more time to catch on but it is important that students recognise the importance of commitment, focus, and diligence and maintain consistent application from day to day. The student needs to share concerns they have about their learning with both teachers and parents. The role of
parents here becomes important so as to assist, guide and support their child at this important transition time with advice. Where students are having difficulty in coping, the parent can make contact with the Year Adviser to ensure support at home and school is achieved.

Next issue: 4. How do students cope with increased workloads?

Mr Glenn Robertson  
Deputy Principal

Music News

“In Concert”

Students from PHS recently had the opportunity to sing in a massive combined choir at the Sydney Town Hall. The choir was made up of students from schools all over the state. Some of these students had travelled from as far as Woolgoolga on the North Coast. The choir was accompanied by a symphony orchestra which included our own Owen Morris on trumpet. The choir sang five songs in styles such as folk, gospel, pop and a large orchestral/choral work which was sung in Latin. The conductors were Stuart Davis who was the assistant director of the well known choir "The Cafe at the Gate of Salvation” and Elizabeth Scott from the Arts Unit.

Congratulations to all of the students who performed and behaved beautifully. They were great ambassadors for the school representing Penrith high School at a state level. Thanks to the staff and parents for their support in this endeavour.

“Open Night”

Congratulations to all of the students who performed at Open Night. It was an entertaining evening with individual items in the performing space and a concert in the hall featuring Year 12, Drama items, Concert Band, String Ensemble and Stage Band. Well done to all that participated.

Mrs Kim Gock  
and Mrs Kerrie Ridgeway
2011 Ningbo Chunxiao Middle School Exchange Program

We are calling for applications for host families in our student exchange program with Ningbo Chunxiao Middle School in China. The period of homestay would be from Wednesday July 27 to Saturday July 30, 2011 (Week 2 of Term 3) inclusive. Students would stay 3 nights and would leave early Saturday morning.

As a host family, you will be responsible for providing accommodation, meals and evening activities while the school will provide daytime activities. The Chinese student will gain a valuable insight into Australian family life and you will have the opportunity to welcome a person of another culture into your home.

This is our first time to welcome students from China and we will need 18 host families. If you are interested in hosting a Japanese Chinese student for the above mentioned period, please contact Mrs Pipio or Mrs Sullivan by Wednesday May 25, 2011.

We expect to plan a reciprocal visit in 2012 and students who billet will be given first priority next year.

Facebook

This week’s Facebook information from The Very Unofficial Facebook Privacy Manual by Angela Alcorn deals with Fundamental Privacy Controls.

Setting up Facebook can be confusing, especially if you don’t know what’s going on. For example, you’ll be asked if you want to search your IM and email contacts: Before you enter anything, be aware: Facebook will remember all your contacts and use that information to suggest connections.

Also, Facebook doesn't make you enter your password in order to upload your contacts. It will find contacts from whichever account you're logged in to, regardless of which email address you enter in to Facebook. Sneaky, huh?

The first page is a list of contacts found in your webmail account that are already on Facebook. It's worth looking through the list carefully, rather than clicking “select all”, since it will also find people who you don't really know but email from time to time.

The next page is everyone else in your address book. De-select everyone RIGHT NOW. This will send a friend request from you to everyone you've ever emailed from that webmail account: ex-boyfriends, old co-workers, teachers, administration staff, tech support, mailing lists...everyone. There may be a few people you want to invite, but de-select everyone first!
Privacy of your basic updates
When a Facebook user posts and updates, it shows up in the news feeds of friends. It also goes on the user’s wall, meaning visitors to their profile can see recent activity. Depending on the privacy levels chosen, an update can also be shown to friends of friends or beyond (ie, on networks and community pages.)

Tagging a person, using status updates, notes tagging, photo tagging or video tagging, will also make that update appear in that person's profile and in the news feeds of their friends.

When you tag an event, group or page, not only will your friends see this on your wall and in their news feed: the update will show up on the wall of the relevant event, group or page and the news feeds of people following that group, event or page. Your privacy settings can offset this. When updating your status, keep in mind your privacy settings and the possibilities of who might see it.

Deleting a Status Update
To delete a status update, go to your wall (on your profile). Hover on the right hand side of the update and you will see a “remove” button. Click that and confirm the delete.

When you delete it, the update is removed from your wall, your friends' news feeds and from the “current status” display at the top of your profile. There's a similar function, which is a little confusing to new people: the “clear” link which sits next to the “current status” display. “Clear” won't remove the update from your wall or news feed; it just clears the “current status”.

Posting on other people's walls
Consider wall posts to be the equivalent of sharing an anecdote in the middle of a cocktail party. All their friends and family are there – and yours are too. Don't say anything you wouldn't say in this crowded room!

Photo Albums & Tagging
Not sure about your privacy settings? Don't add a location or your photos might be shared with far more people than you think. You can change the privacy of each album by editing the album and clicking on the padlock. Even if you have changed your privacy settings to “Friends Only” it will only apply to future photo albums. You need to change older albums manually.

Facebook makes it possible to tag someone even if that person is not a friend of yours, or not on Facebook. Think carefully, or talk to the person, before you do this. Some people have very good reasons to not want their details, photos and names on Facebook. It's good practise to check with people before you put photos of them on Facebook (or anywhere on the internet) at all.

Events Privacy
You really want to set how public an event is BEFORE you start adding addresses or inviting your friends.
If you create your event through the publisher (home page or profile), it will be a public even by default. This means anyone can see it, search for it, see the address and see who is invited. Not good
if it's at your house! It also goes straight to your update feed while it's still public. So, make sure you don't use this when the name of the event is something like “Surprise birthday party for Kelly”. If you create the event using the “What are you planning?” box of the home page you can set it to be public or private using the padlock.

Or, when you edit the event, make sure you un-check the public box. If your event is public it is not just seen by all of your friends: it is also public for everyone on Facebook. The other privacy option listed: to show or hide the guest list. For larger events, where the guests don't necessarily know each other, it's probably best to hide the guest list. Decide before you invite people. Also, be careful with exact addresses and too many details. Don't put private details into a public event!

**Facebook Message Privacy**
As with email, be aware when messages sent to a lot of people come in. The default reply option is to “reply to all”. Don't click this unless you want everyone to read your reply! You can respond to just one person by clicking the word “reply” next to their name in the thread.

**Networks**
Networks are groups of people (educational institution or workplace). You can adjust your privacy settings to allow or disallow people from your networks to see your various activities or information, so be aware if you’re a member of any particular network.

**Groups**
Be aware that anything you post to group walls and discussions (or tag with a group) will be viewable by the other people in the group (and potentially by your friends). This all depends on the settings of the group, and your privacy settings. Just consider it public and be careful what you say.

**Pages**
By “liking” a fan page you're showing appreciation for the blog, product, organisation, political figure, company, activity or sentiment. It will show up on your profile and you will see updates in your news feed and messages.

**Questions**
Question and answers are public, period. None of your security settings will stop these from being public. When you ask your first question you'll be reminded of this:

*Your question will be visible to everyone so you can hear from the people who know the most about this topic. It will also appear in your friend’s News feeds.* Not sure what to ask? Check out some recently asked questions.