To Stacey Hauke who prepared and painted the Garbarri as well as the football goal posts and basketball backboards. Stacey donated the time & materials used to paint the basketball back boards & a post near the staff room.

NETBOOKS FOR YEAR 6 STUDENTS
1:1 Notebook Program
The Victoria State Government through the Department of Education (DEECD) is embarking on an advanced and highly ambitious technology program for students in 2009. Starting at the end of February this year all Year 6 students will be given an Ultra-notebook (NETBOOK) each at a cost of $52 per year (tax deductible). Our school will contribute to the cost of the device (annually) and the DEECD and our Region will also contribute to the cost. (This includes – technical support & pre loaded software). In some Regions only trial schools will have this opportunity but our Region has decided to extend this to all Year 6 students in the Region.

Our school has taken the opportunity to order enough extra Ultra-notebooks (NETBOOKS) to ensure students in Year 5 will have access to the same devices during school hours. The Year 6 students (and their families) will enter into an agreement/contract with the Department of Education and the school (Annual payment of $52). Students will then be able to treat the notebook as their own, taking it home each night and during the holidays. The arrangement will be like a lease or rental and as the Year 6 students move into Secondary education in 2010, they will take the device with them. The agreement will then transfer to the Secondary College (Annual payment is expected to remain at $52).

Information brochures will be sent home with Year 6 student for families to read. As we get policy and agreements organized we will conduct information sessions for parents.

We are excited about this opportunity for our students at Speci and we feel that we are in a position (technologically) to take full advantage of the program and further engage our students in contemporary learning.

BOOST TO OUR WATER SUPPLY
We have been successful in applying for Coliban Water’s Urban Water Trading scheme. This means that the school has access to an additional Mega litre (1 million litres) of water
over and above our normal use. We pay an additional fee for the water but it is far below the cost of getting water into the school. This allocation lasts until June 2009 so this will enable us to water unrestricted until the water is used. Our garden and school oval will now reap the benefits! Mandy has already filled our tank which waters the school oval and watering systems can now be turned back on. We hope to be a lot Greener and have plants looking less stressed.

WELCOME BACK LETTER
From Minister of Education......see page 5

SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS—2009
Nominations close tomorrow, Thursday 12th February.

Dates to Remember...
Thur 12 Feb - Nominations close for School Council
Fri 27 Feb - EMA forms due
Mon 9 Mar - Labour Day Holiday
Fri 3 April - Last day Term 1

Term 2
Mon 20 April - Start Term 2—2009
- School Photos
Mon 27-29 April - Year 5/6 Camp

STARS OF THE WEEK
The Star of the Week awards were presented - Monday 9 February to:
P/1B - Trey A
1/2 H - Hayden G
1/2 MY - Jayden M
1/2 SW - Sarah S
3/4B - Brooke G
3/4G - Mitchell C
3/4GW - Indiana W
3/4J - Victoria L
5/6B - Chloe L
5/6M - Tara C
5/6S - Patrick K

Principal’s Award - Tara C (5/6M)
Congratulations to all these students for their achievements & contributions

REPEATED MESSAGES FROM LAST WEEK

HATS
A reminder that all students are required to wear a broad brimmed hat this term while out in the yard. Also it would be a good idea to ensure you sunscreen children each morning.

FOOTWEAR
Another reminder is that all parents should ensure you send children along with appropriate footwear. No thongs, crocs or scuffs. Shoes, runners or sandals are appropriate

EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA)
Parents eligible to receive the EMA must fill out the appropriate paperwork and return it to the school office after presenting current evidence (as at 28th January 2009) of eligibility. Parent or guardians must be an eligible beneficiary of a Centrelink pension, allowance or benefit within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 1986 or be a foster parent; and submit their application to the school by 27th February.

Instalment 1
Parent share $77.35
School share $77.35

Instalment 2
Parent share $33.15
School share $33.15

The application forms were sent home last week. More available from the office. (Note: It must be presented in person to the school office with your Centrelink Benefit Card).
The school’s share is used to cover your child’s school fees and the balance goes towards your child’s excursion levy.

CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER?
If you have changed your address or phone number - WE NEED TO KNOW! Please see Kaye or Val at the school office or call 54 435 353. Thanks for your support with this matter.

SCHOOL INJURIES & INSURANCE
Parents and guardians are generally responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including any transport costs. Most medical costs will be refundable by Medicare. If you are a member of an ambulance or health insurance fund, you may also be able to claim transport or other expenses from the fund.

The Department of Education and Training does not hold accident insurance for school students. Is other insurance cover available? Yes.

The Department is aware of two insurers, JUA Underwriting Agency Pty Ltd and Willis Australia Ltd, that provide accident insurance policies for students. These policies provide specific benefits for students who are injured in accidents for a reasonably low cost. Other insurers may also do so.

PERSONAL PROPERTY BROUGHT TO SCHOOL
Personal property is often brought to school by students, staff and visitors. This can include mobile phones (these are banned at Speci), calculators, toys, sporting equipment and cars parked on school premises.
Please note the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and it will generally not pay for any loss or damage to such property. Therefore these items are brought at the owner’s risk.

BOOKS & REQUISITES PAYMENT
A reminder to parents about the schools Books and Requisites payment for 2009.
This fee pays for the books we purchase on your behalf for each student, at a cost of $70.00. We request that each family contributes a voluntary $30.00. This amount will support the continued development of our grounds & updating our technology equipment (eg. Notebooks & Interactive White Boards).
Thus the amount owing to the school is:
$100.00 for the first child and
$70.00 for each child thereafter.

We are very happy for families to arrange to pay this off or pay as a lump sum.

EMA recipients (School Share) covers the cost of these items.
This year School Council are providing another prize which will be won by one family who have paid their requisites & levy by the 1st of May. Each family paying by May 1st will be placed in a raffle draw for the prize. (EMA payment is accepted). The prize will be determined soon and advertised in the newsletter—last year we raffled three family vouchers to the “Zone".

EXCURSION LEVY
Last year we designed a single levy for the various incursions & excursions that we have during the year. This means that you can pay up front for those parent funded items (like visiting performances) that previously needed to be paid for just before the performance. If you pay up front, your child will not miss the performance and you won’t have to be chasing around for change on the day before. That will mean you pay in advance and not worry about it for the rest of the year. (see detailed information attached)

PICKING UP STUDENTS AFTER SCHOOL
As you are aware, school concludes at 3:15pm each day. In the interest of your child’s safety our rule is that students not picked up by 3:30pm must come to the school office and be picked up there. This is because our yard duty teachers come in at 3:30pm. Your cooperation is appreciated.

PLEASE NOTE: Students should be booked into Before or After School Care if parents have regular commitments requiring children to be dropped off early or picked up late.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK
For all to be the best they can be in 2009!

Doug Jones
Principal

CLASS NEWS
JUNIOR NEWS
Preps, Grades 1 & 2
We have experienced a very smooth start to the year. Prep children are settling in and almost all have completed their School Entry Assessment Meetings with their teachers. If you are unable to attend at the appointed time please ring the school and let them know.

At this stage of the year all classes are establishing classroom routines and expectations for behaviour and learning. Alongside these discussions the children are working on a small book about our school rules. In a few weeks the children will bring these home to share with you. Please take time to listen to what they have to say, reinforce what the rules are saying, sign the booklet and return it to school.

All children will be bringing home books to share with you. Each child has a yellow coloured Home Reading Diary which is a record of the reading done at home. When you have shared the book with your child, fill in the title of the story, the date, a comment about your child’s reading and then encourage your child to complete the face to indicate

WELLBEING NEWS
How do we cope following the trauma of the fires. It is critical that parents remain calm as panic can be contagious. If mum and dad look stressed that will worry the children.
It is important to maintain routines, to share thoughts and feelings and to increase quality family time.

Extreme emotional reactions are normal but seek help if they remain for an extended period.

Some tips to help children to cope with the bushfire trauma.
• Hug and touch children
• Spend extra time with your children at bedtime
• Spend quality time with the family
• Everyone to share their thoughts and feelings about the incident
• Maintain regular routines
• Allow your children to talk to other safe adults – at Speci adults available are teachers, support staff, Bernadette, Mrs Craig, Mr Jones
• Discuss a safety action plan for your family in the future
• Limit your child’s time spent watching/reading media reports on the fires
• Contact the school if you feel that your child is not coping with the trauma. Help is available.

Reminder:- Children and parents may respond differently in a trauma and we must be sensitive to everyone’s needs.

Di Craig
Assistant Principal

Our children’s future in the very best of hands......................
Our children’s future in the very best of hands.............

how they felt about the book. Teachers will periodically write in the diary but it is essentially a record of the reading done at home. Other reading is done at school but this is not recorded in the diary.

More information about helping your child with reading will be in the next few newsletters and an information session will be held at school for Prep parents during this term.

Clothing items, lunch boxes and drink bottles often get misplaced or lost. To help avoid this event make sure everything your child wears or brings to school is clearly labelled with their name.

We ask that parents wait outside the school buildings for their children. A number of parents are waiting inside which becomes a safety issue for the children trying to get out of their classes. It becomes too congested. If the weather is too hot you are welcome to wait in the staffroom until the children are dismissed. Thank you for your cooperation.

Julian Regan
Junior Team Coordinator

SENIOR NEWS
Grade 3/4
It was good news to hear that all our students were at least safe and well after the weekend’s events. Unfortunately some students have lost their homes and others have lived through a very scary situation. If you can assist in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please take the opportunity to come and introduce yourself and your child next Wednesday. We would love to meet you all and help to establish the school/home partnership which is so vital in ensuring your child’s success at school.

This year, all 3/4 students will be involved in the gardening program being established at the school. Each week the students from 3/4 will work in the garden for an hour. Some of the activities they will be involved in are; collecting water, watering plants, weeding, propagating plants, caring for the chooks, planting, assisting with the running of the worm farm etc. Once we have established our vegetable garden, students will then be involved in preparing the produce. A big thank you to Mandy Pickering, who is doing so much to assist us with this program. Also to Trevor Meehan and Ruth East whose knowledge and expertise is proving invaluable.

Next Tuesday and Thursday between 11.45am and 1.45pm, all students will be involved in art activities focused around the Australian landscape. This is part of immersing our students into our Integrated Studies topic, ‘I Love A Sunburnt Country.’ If you could assist at either of these times, you would be most welcome. It would be appreciated if you could let your child’s teacher know if you are available to help before Tuesday.

Thankyou,
Judy, Natalie, Craig and Wendy

Grade 5/6
We have achieved a productive start for 2009. All students are settled into their Grades and we are gearing up for our first extra-curricular activity, the Gym Fitness Program which will operate for three weeks from Thursday, February 12th. Please ensure all notes are returned promptly.

Please return camp notes quickly. If you are experiencing difficulty planning/paying for camp please talk to a Grade 5/6 teacher as there are a few ways we may be able to assist your efforts. This camp will be a wonderful learning experience and we want all students to have opportunity to have that learning. We are also looking forward to meeting parents at our Introduce Your Child Sessions beginning next week.

Copies of the DVD shown at Graduation 2008 are now available from the office for Grade 6 Students from 2008.
If you could pass this information on to last year’s students/parents if you have contact with them it would be appreciated.

Thank you
5/6 News Team

LIBRARY NEWS
The Library will be available for children to borrow books. All children require a Library bag to protect books. Please encourage your child to return books regularly. Library bags are available for $2 from Mrs Young. Any overdue books from last year will be gratefully received.
Thankyou
Sandy

PERFORMING ARTS
This year we will have a number of occasions for the children to share what they have been doing in class. Years 3&4 will hold their presentation at the end of this term. The end of Term 2 will be when Years 5&6 hold their extravaganza. Our Art Show will be the end of Term 3 with specialty groups performing. Years Prep, 1&2 will strut their stuff at the end of Term 4. A year full of wonderful delights.

Julian Regan

School Netball
The school is looking for people to express an interest in coaching the school netball teams throughout the Winter Competition in 2009. Last year the school had 5 teams participating in the GCNA competition.
If you are keen on coaching a team on Saturday mornings please contact Corey Warne at school.

SCHOOL PAYMENTS - Eftpos
Eftpos is available at the school office. A charge of 1.46% will be added for any credit transactions.

SCHOOL WEB SITE
You can access school newsletters, permission notes, calendar of events and other information on our web site at http://www.shps1316.vic.edu.au.
Our children’s future in the very best of hands…………...
FREE CARPET CLEANING
Lyn Letts has kindly offered the use of her carpet shampooer for those who have dirty (smoke damaged) carpets after the fires last Saturday. Contact Lyn on 5443 0025

CANTEN NEWS
Canteen Lunches - starting date to be advised - will be on Mondays and Thursdays. Menu and prices will be sent home as soon as they are finalised.

Volunteers are required to run our canteen successfully. Please fill out and return to the school office the attached yellow sheet if you are able to assist in any way.

Tricia Ryan (Canteen Manager)

UNIFORM SHOP
Hours: Monday and Tuesday mornings 8.45am to 12 noon and all day Wednesday.
Sale Items: Girls pleated shorts sizes 4 to 10 for $8; Windcheater w/ side split sizes 8 to 14 for $14. Girls pleated gabardine trousers sizes 6 to 16 for $10.
Uniform Order Forms are available from the office.
Grade 6 shirts: Order forms have been handed out. Please have these returned to the school as soon as possible with money paid by 16th February.

SCHOOL BANKING
Forms for opening up a school bank account are available from the school office. Bring bank books and money to school on Tuesdays.

PLAYGROUP
Playgroup has started in the Multi Purpose room from 9am to 11am. Cost is $1 per child.
Bring a healthy snack for your child and a hat.
Tea/Coffee provided for parents and carers.
Playgroup is open to any children under school age.
Any queries please phone/see Kaye in the school office.
Danielle

LOST DOG
As a result of the fires our dog is missing. He is a 10 year old black & white short haired border collie named Bundy. He will be very timid. Please contact Ginny on 5446 9749.

COMMUNITY NOTICES
MAIDEN GULLY LJUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB
Registration Day for Under 10, 12, 13½ and 15’s will be held on Sunday 15th Feb. from 10.30am until 12noon in the clubrooms at the Maiden Gully Reserve, Beckhams Rd. Under 10 fees are $60 and all other grades $105. A $10 discount will apply for more than 1 child.
Any inquiries or if you are unable to attend, contact Peter Mitchell on 0407 846 500.

EAGLEHAWK SOCCER CLUB
Registration day to be held Thursday 19th February from 4.30pm @ Truscott Reserve.
Visit www.eaglehawksoccerclub.com.au or ring Mark Doherty on 0429 949 631 for more information.

GOLDEN SQUARE JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB
Registration day Sunday 22nd Feb. @ 11-1pm at Wade Street Clubrooms. For more information contact Linda Pedder on 0400 576 814

MAIDEN GULLY LJUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB
Registration day for Under 10, 12, 13½ & 15’s will be held on Sunday 15th Feb. from 10.30am—12noon in the clubrooms at the Maiden Gully Reserve, Beckhams Rd. Under 10 fees are $60 and all other grades $105. A $10 discount will apply for more than 1 child.
Any inquiries or if you are unable to attend, contact Peter Mitchell on 0407 846 500.

AFTER SCHOOL TUTORING AND HOMEWORK HELP
Kangaroo Flat Community, 21 Woolcock Ave., If your child needs to improve in reading, spelling, English or maths phone the office on 5447 9687 during business hours to leave a message or call Michael directly on 0413116096