**Forthcoming Events**

**September**
- **Tuesday 20\(^{th}\)**  
  Parent-teacher Interviews - 3:15pm - 6.30pm  
  School will finish at 3pm
- **Wednesday 21\(^{st}\)**  
  Disability Awareness Grades 3, 4, 5 & 6  
  Community Learning Presentations at Gnurad Gundidj
- **Friday 23\(^{rd}\)**  
  Day of Celebration & Opening of New Refurbished Facilities  
  Spring Showcase  
  Last day of term three – 2.30 p.m. finish

**October**
- **Sunday 2\(^{nd}\)**  
  Trip to France & Belgium
- **Tuesday 18\(^{th}\)**  
  First day of term four
- **Monday 10\(^{th}\)**  
  Loddon Mallee Regional Athletics in Bendigo
- **Monday 17\(^{th}\)**  
  Parents’ Club Meeting at 7.30pm

The term is coming to a close very quickly. This time next week, term three will be completed and the two week spring break will be upon us. Of course we have a lot to do before then.

Next week will be extremely busy with Parent Teacher Evening on Tuesday 20 September 2011. Please note that school will finish at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday with buses also departing 25 minutes earlier. Parents should have received a letter of invitation to the Parent Teacher evening during the week with a tear off receipt at the bottom of the letter to return to the office indicating your presence on the night.

Then, of course, we have our Day of Celebration on Friday 23 September 2011. The official opening commences at 11:30 p.m. with entertainment starting at 12:00 noon. You will be entertained with our Rock Eisteddfod dance routine along with plays, poem recitals and singing. Please come along and see our students perform and view their art, craft and class work. Stay for the free luncheon at 1:00 p.m.

I will be visiting Gnurad Gundidj on Wednesday 21 September 2011 to receive our year nine Gnurad Gundidj students Community Learning presentations. Marnie Lehmann, Diane Wineera, Cooper Benfield, Aaron Riggall, Connor Buteux and Ronald Turner will return to Birchip on Saturday 24 September 2011. Mr Tyler has been very busy of late creating our beautiful garden between the Administration & Science Wings and the refurbished Library and South Wing. New sandstone paving, native garden beds and even a large chess set will be features of the new garden. The school is really starting to look fantastic. I’m sure you will all agree when you come and visit. Along the Campbell Street fence, the native garden beds are in full bloom. It’s great to walk through and see the native shrubs.

For the past three days, I have been with the year 3 & 4 students and Miss Jessica Arnott, Mrs Michelle Lee and Marcia Mallia. Students visited the Golden Dragon Museum, went ten pin bowling at Golden Dragon Lanes, experienced going underground at the Central Deborah Gold Mine and undertook a ‘Slowmation’ workshop at the Discovery Centre.

While the Grade 3 & 4 students enjoyed Bendigo the Grade 5 students along with Mrs Debra and Mr Trevor Emonson and Brooke Morris enjoyed Melbourne. Students visited the Eureka Skydeck, Science Works, the Melbourne Aquarium, Shrine of Remembrance, a ferry trip, the Melbourne Museum and the National Art Gallery of Victoria. Of course an early morning visit to the
Queen Victoria Market was a must. They plan to visit the spider web being constructed out of sticky tape at Federation Square before they depart for Donald via Maryborough.
Approximate arrival time in Birchip is 09:15 p.m.
There will be full report along with many photographs in our next issue of the newsletter.

Parent Teacher Evening – Tuesday 20 September 2011
The semester three parent-teacher interviews will be held on Tuesday 20 September 2011.
On this day, school will finish at 3:00 p.m. with school buses running 25 minutes earlier than usual.
We will commence the interviews slightly earlier at 3:15 p.m.
There will be three, one hour time slots: 3:15 – 4:15, 4:15 – 5:15 and then 5:15 – 6:30 p.m.
Parent-teacher evening will conclude at 6:30 p.m.
Parents of three or more children at our school will be allotted two, one hour time slots to give them more chance of catching up with all their children’s teachers.
There will be three chairs in a line leading up to each teacher to allow for an ordered queue process.
A letter was sent home last week indicating the times allocated to your family for the parent-teacher evening. There was a tear off receipt which needs to be returned to the office so that planning can occur.

Najaf Mazari

Life for many around the globe means enduring constant conflict that is life threatening. At times Australians take the relative peacefulness of our nation for granted and it is visitors to our country who remind us how fortunate we are. Najaf Mazari, Afghani refugee from Hazara, rug-maker and author visited Birchip on Sunday to talk about his books and life to senior students from Birchip, Donald and St Arnaud and interested community members.

Najaf came to Australia in 2001 knowing no English, having no family and money and spending five and a half years separated from his wife and daughter. He related that it was no easy decision to leave behind his home and his culture but his family realised that he was the only family member with skills and that if he could start a new life in Australia, he could send home money to enable his family to survive.

Afghanistan has rarely been in charge of its own destiny. At different times it has been occupied by; the British in the nineteenth century, Russia in the late 70s and in more recent times, the U.S. and its allies moved against the Taliban as part of the strategy in the war against terrorism. As a child, Najaf related how the Taliban bombed his home with rockets, killed family members and left him with horrible wounds. The Taliban burned schools and firmly believed that women should not be educated. Najaf’s philosophy on life is diametrically opposed to this. He believes that education is the key to Afghani problems and in keeping with this, he donates the proceeds of his books to building schools in his region. Najaf especially believes that it is paramount that girls are educated as children spend more time around their mothers so that if we want an educated community, we must educate our women.

Conflict arises because people stereotype. Many westerners have stereotyped Muslims as terrorists since the attack on the Twin Towers on September 11th 2001 and see all Muslims as Taliban fundamentalists. However, this is not the case as most people live to care for their families and to go about their daily business in a peaceful manner. Ironically, while we may think we know Afghans, they have no knowledge of Australia as they have no television or newspapers. Najaf was asked whether he would like to return to his home country but he said he wouldn’t as Afghani politics is too much like Melbourne weather but much more dangerous. Unfortunately, he warned it is mainly innocent people, like the members of his poor family who are killed in war.

Najaf is very happy now in his new home, Australia, but life in the Woomera Detention Centre was difficult as he was always so very lonely. He related how detainees are woken in the middle of the night to have their identity checked by a light being shone into their eyes. The days were long in detention and Najaf thought that life in gaol would be better as at least then there would be a finite time that one can be detained. The economics of detention was a definite puzzle to him as millions of dollars are spent keeping people locked up when they could be gainfully employed and contributing to our tax base.

In Afghanistan, Najaf was a shepherd boy and then a rug-maker but since coming to Australia he has worked hard. He worked seven days a week from six in the morning until eleven at night and studied English at night; he runs a rug business in High Street, Prahran and devotes over an hour each day to helping year 12 students with their studies. Those present were impressed with Najaf’s selflessness as he is in the process of
buying an ambulance for his region and improving roads so that trips to hospital will be shorter than the one and a half hours it now takes. The ambulance would be appreciated by women about to give birth who had to travel all day on the back of a donkey.

Najaf has endured many hardships and conflicts in his life but he had the will and skill to overcome them. He left his audience of one hundred with his philosophy that ‘Life is your hands so you can build your life.’ Najaf’s books ‘The Rug-Maker of Mazar-E-Sharif’ and ‘The Honey Thief’ can be borrowed from the Birchip Library.

Do any look familiar?

These bowls and plates have been left at the school after catering events. If any of them belong to you, we would be grateful if you would collect them from the office.

Year 7 Spelling List
1. Disgusting
2. Cynical
3. Decisive
4. Celebrate
5. Celebrity
6. Descend
7. Incident
8. Cinema
9. Thief
10. Alliteration
11. Occasional

Ice Cream Containers
The Hospitality Department is looking for 2 and 4 litre ice cream containers. If you can assist could you contact Mrs Barb Smith or just send them to the school office please.

Invitation
School Holiday Kids Club for 3 days
Monday 26th, Tuesday 27th and Wednesday 28th September 2011
2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.
at Uniting Church Hall, Duncan Street, Birchip
With John and Ros Patterson form Adelaide.
Games, puppets, stories, songs, crafts and snacks.
Everybody Welcome – No charge
Students, parents, family and community members are cordially invited to attend our day of celebration on Friday 23 September 2011.

The day will commence at 11:30 a.m. with the opening of the new and refurbished facilities. At 12:00 noon students will entertain you with a variety of musical and dancing items. At 1:00 p.m. a BBQ and salad luncheon will be available to all students, parents and community members. There will be NO CHARGE for the luncheon.

Please come and join in the celebration!

This Spring Showcase will be a day of celebration where students will be able to display their work and talents to parents and the school community. During this showcase, students will perform their Rock Eisteddfod routine, students will perform various theatre studies performances, primary students will perform various musical items and music students will perform their items.

There will be a huge display of student work on display throughout all rooms of the school. Of course it will also be an opportunity for the school community to view our new learning spaces and fantastic new facilities. These include at least ten projects to the value of $2,225,708.

11:00 a.m.  Dignitaries arrive and tour new facilities
Mr John Forrest, MHR, Member for Mallee
Mr Peter Walsh, MLA, Member for Swan Hill
Cr Leo Tellefsen, Mayor, Buloke Shire Council
Cr Gail Sharp, Councillor, Buloke Shire Council
Mrs Wendy Watts, Chairperson, Birchip P-12 School, School, Council
Mrs Jenny Hogan, President, Birchip P-12 School, Parents’ Club.

11:30 a.m.  Official Opening of New Facilities – School Stadium

12:00 noon  Entertainment including:
Birchip P-12 School entry 2011 Rock Eisteddfod
MYs and VCE Theatre Studies performances
Various Musical Items

01:00 p.m.  Community Luncheon
A BBQ and salad luncheon will be available to all students, parents and community members.
There will be NO CHARGE for the luncheon.

02:30 p.m.  School concludes for term three and buses depart.
Birchip Watchem Hockey Club
Vote Count & Presentation Night
Tuesday 27th September 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

All Ages Twilight Mixed Netball - Nullawil Netball Club
When: Monday nights - 6:30 p.m. onwards
Where: Nullawil Netball Courts
Cost: $2.00 per player
Starts: 10 October, 2011 (approx. 6 weeks)
Registration by: 3 October 2011
For Registration Forms and General Enquiries contact Rebecca James at rebecca_anne38@hotmail.com

Junior Golf Wind Up
Friday 23 September 2011 at 2.45 p.m.
A Four Ball Event with an adult partner
Followed by a BBQ and Presentation of Championship Trophies
Any enquiries to Beryl Fietz 54 922 636

Senior Cricket
Birchip Cricket Club senior training will start
September 29th 5:00pm at the cricket nets George Cartwright oval.
We need players – young or old.

BLACK RANGES DIVISION
PRIMARY ATHLETIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

As a result of many terrific performances at the North Central District Athletic Sports held in Donald two weeks ago, a squad of fifteen primary students travelled to Stawell last Friday to participate in the Black Ranges Division Athletics Championships. These students were Jessica Bidstrup, Caitlin Bidstrup, Joseph Reid, Bill Lee, Andrew Phelan, Olivia Rickard, Courtney Sayle, Seamus Lowry, Liam McGinnis, Britney Robinson, Khiana Brooks, Ben Milne, Tom Hogan, Jesse Kemp and Joe O’Donnell. It was a blustery, cold day with spells of patchy rain and brief sunshine but this did not deter the students’ endeavour and their desire to perform to their best.

It was a new experience venturing to Stawell for North Central as in previous years the second stage was held in Horsham and involved mostly Wimmera and surrounding district schools. North Central is now part of the Black Ranges division and includes southern schools such as Ararat schools, Lake Bolac and Stawell schools.

Khiana Brooks, Andrew Phelan and Bill Lee all came first in their 200m event and Andrew also ran a brilliant 100m final to finish first. Khiana came first in her discus event and eventually came home with three blue ribbons; finishing first in her 10 year old girls relay with students Caitlin, Courtney and Olivia. These girls could hardly contain their excitement after their victory! The 11 year old boys relay team consisting of Joe Reid, Ben Milne, Andrew Phelan and Jesse Kemp ran a convincing relay to narrowly finish in second place. Khiana, Andrew, Bill, Caitlin, Courtney, Olivia, Joseph, Ben and Jesse will now compete in the Regional Athletics Carnival to be held in Ballarat on Friday 21st October 2011. Good luck to these students.

There were also very pleasing results in other events. Jessica Bidstrup and Bill Lee came third in their triple jump events for their age groups and Joseph Reid finished third in his 800m event. The 12 & 13 year old boys relay team of Seamus Lowry, Joe O’Donnell, Tom Hogan and Liam McGinnis were pleased to gain third place in their relay race. Caitlin Bidstrup was fourth in the 10 year old girls long jump and Jesse Kemp fourth in the 11 years boys shot put with Britney Robinson 5th in the 11 year girls shot put. Joseph Reid and Britney Robinson both represented North Central in discus events for their age groups and both placed around 5th. Olivia Rickard and Joe O’Donnell also competed in triple jump for their age groups and finished in unconfirmed placings of around 7th-8th.

Congratulations to all students on their participation and behaviour at Stawell last Friday and thank you to all parents who attended with their children and who also supported the students in all of their events. Many thanks to Mrs Michelle Lee for again organizing and accompanying our students at the next stage in athletics. Thank you also to Mrs Amanda Reid for her photographic display.
P-6 District Athletics Sports – Stawell 2011
Hello from Gnurad Gundidj

Hi All,

A few days ago we went surfing for the second time – on a day that was probably better suited to drinking hot chocolates somewhere warm (we did do this on our camp stoves at lunchtime though). The waves were choppy but everybody did such a great job of staying positive, encouraging each other and standing up – despite the numb feeling in our toes and fingers. It is great to see everybody improve from our last surf day and it was also a good chance to relax in Warrnambool because there is still a lot to achieve and do in the next two weeks.

On Wednesday we returned from our second expedition. On this trip, we rode to Lake Elingamite and spent the afternoon setting up camp and relaxing. The second day saw us walk 15km to Lake Bullen Merri on the Camperdown Timboon Rail Trail. This is the first time our campus has included a hike in our program and it was a real success. The students all enjoyed the challenge of carrying a pack and loved being able to talk to each other along the trail. Everybody was in bed by 9:00 p.m. – which was a good indication they had been challenged! On the third day we rode back to school (about 25 km). Our group has definitely had some difficulties in sorting out issues and differences in opinion and personalities – but this is where the real learning has taken place. During our reflection at the end of expo it was fantastic to hear students speak honestly about the team’s progress, strengths and areas in which we could still improve. It is such a valuable experience to be part of a small team in which each student has had to develop ways to earn respect, take on responsibilities, listen, share opinions, support others and seek assistance.

We have also completed a number of classes back at school, from first aid and safe food handling through to working on Community Learning Projects and passports. So as you can probably gather, everything is going well and the students are focussing on making the most of the rest of the term.

Regards,

Michael

Michael Fitzgerald
Teacher mentor for Birchip students
Junior Football Vote Count & Presentation Day

**Sunday 25th September 2011 (after grand final)**

10:00 a.m. start with lunch to follow counts & junior presentations

(Senior vote count & presentations will be in the afternoon)

Junior families a salad please.

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**Junior Cricket Coaching Camp**

This is a fantastic opportunity for anyone between the ages 12-16, boys and girls to develop their cricket skills.

Participants do not need to be cricket stars – this camp is designed to cater for all ranges in skill.

Information was distributed at school earlier in the week

Dates: 3rd & 4th October

Location: Goff Letts Oval – Donald Stephen Field Level 3 Cricket Coach will head a team of coaches

Cost: $50

Application forms were due today 16th September

HOWEVER this has been extended to Wednesday 21st September.

Forms can be sent directly to organisers or they can be handed in to Andrew Sayle at school.

For further information please contact Andrew Sayle.

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**SACs Next Week**

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Yoga
Beginning on Monday Oct 17th – December 19th (10 weeks) for a cost of $60, 5.30pm-6.30pm St Marys Parish Centre
Early bird class-for those who can’t wait - 19th Sept- 10th Oct (4 weeks) $25

Dance for fun classes
Oct 17th – Dec 5th (8 weeks) Monday nights, Birchip Public Hall $40
3.00-3.30 Preschool  3.30-4.30pm Prep-year 4  4.30-5.30pm Grade 4 –6

Basketball
Monday nights – Men  Weds – Women’s  Fri - Juniors
Starting week beginning Oct 17th, for 6 weeks
Players can organize own team of six or individuals can register and they will be put into a team.
Teams may be adjusted to even up comp. $20

Strong and Stable
Tues nights – 7-7.45pm, $50, St Mary’s Parish Centre, Oct 11th – Nov 30th
Concentrating on pelvic floor, core stability and stretching

Body Bar
IT’S BACK….Tues nights – 5.45 -6.45, $50
St Mary’s Parish Centre, Oct 11th – Nov 30th (first week back after holidays)

Buddy Circuit.
Birchip P-12 School stadium, THURS nights 5.45-6.45, Oct 13th-Dec 1st 8 wks $60
Participants have to organise a buddy to bring and train with. If you can’t’ find a buddy register with the BB & LC and they’ll match you with a buddy. All levels of fitness catered for.

Painting Class – with Bev Neil
Are you interested in learning to paint with acrylics on canvas board, or wanting to enjoy a Sunday learning some new techniques
Sunday 6th Nov, 10am-3pm (byo lunch) Birchip P-12 School Art room
$25 (includes canvas boards, brush & paints)

Coming soon
More cooking classes, water exercise classes, swimming classes …………

To register your interest or provide feedback about the classes on offer or the potential for a new class call contact Simone as listed above.

BOOKINGS AND PAYMENT FOR ALL CLASSES MUST BE PAID TO BB & LC PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF CLASSES. THIS IS REALLY IMPORTANT FOR COMPLIANCE REASONS.
Sea Lake Youth Group

Presents

“GRAFFITI FREEZA Event”

Saturday 24 September 2011

12 - 18 years of age event

Featuring

Acts: Daylight Hours (Melb cover band)

Sounds Disco

Venue: Sea Lake Community Centre

Complex Rd Sea Lake

Time: 8:00pm - 12:00am

Cost: $15.00 per person

STRICTLY NO ALCOHOL DRUGS OR TOBACCO and NO PASS OUTS

EVENT IS FULLY SUPERVISED WITH SECURITY

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE REPORTED TO POLICE

Permission Forms & Timetables available from all Buloke Shire Council Offices or by contacting Youth Development Officer Julie Saylor on 0429867897 or email jsaylor@buloke.vic.gov.au

FREE TRANSPORT IS AVAILABLE BUT PLACES ARE LIMITED
What can you make out of a piece of chipboard, a stack of newspapers, an old stocking and some glue?

The Grade 3 & 4 class have been working hard all term, to turn these items into this!

Using the Habits of mind, students created their own 3D mining town. The project is part of their unit on the “Australian Gold Rush” and this week students visited Bendigo to learn more about gold.

While producing their 3D miniature town, students needed to “Persist” and keep laying piece after piece of paper. Some students even used “Applying Past Knowledge” when suggesting the river should be brown from all of the dirt that would have washed into the water from mining in the area. Students also showed “Thinking Flexibly” when creating the characters and tools for the mining town.