FROM THE PRINCIPAL

End of Term 3 2012:

It is with some trepidation in my heart that I write in this newsletter but I felt that it was important that I share with our community what has been happening for me over the last term. As every woman should do I have been vigilant in ensuring that I have all of my health checks and I undertake these during the term breaks. During the July holidays I went for a routine breast screen and to my dismay and that of my family I was diagnosed with 2 Category 3 cancers. These were not lumps and were not able to be picked up by routine checks. From the moment this occurred it has been a rollercoaster ride, with significant breast surgery and now chemotherapy. Within all of this doom and gloom there have been moments of light and this has included all of the cancer being removed, reconstructive surgery and chemotherapy as just a precaution. This experience teaches us so much. I always knew I was strong, positive and determined, but not very patient. This experience has allowed me to delve to the very depths of this determination and positivity and yes, taught me some patience. Anyone who knows me will tell you that I want things done yesterday, but this experience has its own pace and beat of the drum.

I only told staff of my predicament but in any organization, word leaks out and I know that students have noticed my absence and have asked direct and probing questions, the very attribute that makes teenagers so endearing. This is why I write to you now. I wish to thank everyone for their positive and heartfelt best wishes but assure you that I am cancer free and will return in Term 4. The cancer treatment will continue but I am not allowing it to impact on my life or to define me as a person.

During the last year there have been a number of people who have had their lives impacted upon by cancer. It is indeed an insidious disease and researchers are saying that they will be able to stamp it out, hopefully in my life time or in the next generations. My sincere condolences to our families who have lost a very special loved one and as a school we endeavor to support and nurture our young people through these trials. Any death in our community impacts upon us all and it is important that we remember that these people’s legacies live on in our children. Memories do indeed last forever and we need to keep these alive.

I wish to thank the staff who have stepped up to fill in for my absence, these include Cathy Trenouth (Acting Principal), Marie Milne (Acting Deputy Principal), Phil Boyle (Acting Assistant Principal Senior School), Leith Gourlay (Acting Assistant Principal Middle School behind Shaun Walsh who is on Long Service Leave for the last 4 weeks), Leisa Yanner (Acting Year 10 Coordinator) and Megan Dienelt (Acting Year 11 Coordinator) and Thomas Gradisar who took on a short term Counsellor position behind Megan. All are very capable, hardworking and dedicated people. Our school has been in good hands.

There have been regrets for me this term and these have included missing the Year 12 Formal and a Principal’s tour. However I am making every endeavor to miss no other major events for our Year 12 students. Our Year 12 students have nearly completed their secondary schooling and I know that although I say this every year, it is in fact true, these are the nicest, wisest and kindest young people that I have ever had the pleasure to work with and for.

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I wish them every success and happiness in the future and hope that they remember their time with us with fondness and good humour. The Year 12 Formals photographs were taken by Mr Chris Duncan (Year 12 Coordinator) and he kindly took my camera and you can see them all looking so beautiful, handsome and grown up in this newsletter. We are so very proud of them all.

I came into school to show off our school to all of the National Facilities Managers from around Australia and they were extremely impressed with what we have done on a physical level to improve the school however we have been working really hard on improving our academic and learning standards and I know that our Year 12 students will gain excellent results for 2012. We have had over 90% retention rate in Year 12 and we have noticed that the majority of students have been coming in on a Wednesday and seek support and coaching from their teachers to utilize school resources, including the internet which has been enabled by the NBN speed.

However whilst I was in Student Reception a young boy (who was obviously having a bad day) was saying that he “hated school”, “hated his teachers” and “did not like coming to Willunga High School”. It was interesting that there were 3 other students in the office at the same time and then all of these students said, pretty much in unison, that they “loved the school”, “it was the best school that they had ever gone to”, that “they had the best teachers” and “that he did not know how lucky he was”. This was all un solicited and I could see the young boys face that he thought he perhaps needed to rethink how he was feeling, given the strength of feeling from the other students. I asked him what he did not like about school and he said things like: “doing work”, “having to come” and teachers expected that he would “be on task all of the time”. These are not unfair expectations and it takes some students a little while to work out why they actually come to school. When I asked if he would like to go to another school, he said “NO!” It makes me realize that it is what is within us that we need to work on, as positive thoughts result in positive actions. We are what we think and the only people that we can change is ourselves.

I will return in Term 4 with my continued positivity and I look forward to the next phase of our development, in preparing for 2013 with another 2 buildings needed because of our increasing numbers.

I thank everyone for their kind thoughts and wishes.

Janelle Reimann ~ Principal

Year 12 News:
It is a very important time for the Year 12 Students who are in the throes of preparing for exams and finalising their assessment as formal lessons end 12th October, (Week 1 Term 4). Exams begin the 24th October and conclude 14th November. Mr Duncan has briefed students on exam protocols and an exam timetable will be posted home with the end of term mail out to parents. A very important occasion to mark the end of their secondary schooling is the Graduation Ceremony which is scheduled for Thursday 11th October and is to be held in the school Gym starting at 7:00pm. Families have been posted their invitations and we look forward to sharing this occasion with as many as possible. We ask that replies are returned to the school as soon as possible.

Marie Milne ~ Deputy Principal

Kuitpo Walk:
On Friday 31st August, 127 year 8 students participated in an excursion along the Kuitpo Forest Walking Trail.

Students and staff split up into small walking groups and were dropped off at different points along the outskirts of the forest area near Kyeema Conservation Park. From there they were guided by Outdoor Recreation Certificate Education students who navigated the group to the Chookarloo camping ground, some 10-12 kilometres away.

Despite the weather being well suited to walking, the ground was very wet in some sections of the hike, posing some small challenges for a number of the hiking groups. It was encouraging to see students working together to overcome these small challenges, supporting each other and pushing themselves to achieve their goal to reach their final destination.

On arrival at Chookarloo Camping Ground students were given the opportunity to cook a meal on a campfire and enjoy the natural structure of the forest area and surroundings, along with their teachers and peers. Several were lucky enough to get a close look at some of the native fauna, stumbling across a koala and some kangaroos.

It was an enjoyable day that provided opportunities for students to work as a team and display leadership qualities.

Caleb Macrow ~ Y10 Coordinator

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Doorways 2 Construction:
During this semester I have been participating in Doorways 2 Construction. My group has completed a range of different projects. These included building goat pens for the agriculture area, paving in the vegetable garden and erecting signs in the car park areas of our school.

We have built concrete bays to store sand and metal on site at our school. These were built using concrete sleepers, which we made by hand.

I have found Doorways 2 Construction to be a challenging but rewarding experience. I now have an understanding of what actually happens on a job site and I thank Willunga High for giving me this opportunity. I also really enjoy driving the new 4WD buggy to deliver material to our work site.

Travis Creeper ~ Year 10 Student

Netball Update:
The Year 8/9 Knockout Netball Team had a great season, culminating in winning the South Australian Championship in August, following carnival and round competition wins in May and July. The Open team came third and the Year 10 team finished second, having been defeated in the Grand Final in a close game, by Yorketown.

Trials for netball teams began early in Term one. Teams were named at the end of the term and the first carnival was at Victor Harbor at the end of May. The Open Girls, Year 10 and Year 8 & 9 teams were very successful winning all games.

The second rounds were played in early August and once more the Willunga Teams were successful – all 3 moving into State Finals at ETSA Park on the 20th August.

The competition was fierce with schools travelling from all over South Australia to compete, after winning their zones.

The Year 8 & 9 Team defeated Moonta in the Grand Final in a close contest. Final Score:

Willunga 34 Moonta 28

The coaches would like to thank the families, friends and umpires, for the fantastic support given to the Willunga High teams this year.

Julianne Schubert ~ Year 10 Coach

Congratulations to Cameron Waters who won the Cycling SA State Under 15 Road Championship at Flaxman Valley in July. He will now compete in the Australian Under 15 Titles in Canberra.

Congratulations to David Cole who Represented South Australia in the National Youth Archery Championships in Armidale, NSW.

Congratulations to Brandon Whiley who has been selected in the Under 18 Lawn Bowls’ State Team. He will compete in the Under 18 National Tournament in Tasmania in October.

Julianne Schubert ~ PE

Year 12 Formal:
Our Year 12 Formal was held on Friday 17th August and students had a fantastic time as can be seen by the photographs. This event provides a formal celebration of their years of school together and it was great to see them all enjoying each other’s company. The setting of the Stamford Grand provided a perfect backdrop for the stunning dresses and stylish suits worn by the students. Having the formal on the student free day allowed the students to spend their day preparing without missing out on any school work. A great night was enjoyed by all and thanks to the staff who attended and shared this special occasion with the students. A very special thank you to Mr Duncan and his formal team for their excellent organisation.

Cathy Trenouth ~ Acting Principal

Governing Council Meeting Dates

Term 4
29 October,
3 December

The Governing Council meeting will be held in the Resource Centre at 7pm, all welcome

Reminder
Please return your overdue library books.
Thank you

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Congratulations to Brandon Whiley who has been selected in the Under 18 Lawn Bowls’ State Team. He will compete in the Under 18 National Tournament in Tasmania in October.
Year 12 Formal ~ 17th August 2012

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