December 18, 2013

VCE Results
See Page 2.

SPEECH NIGHT
See page 2.

NORTHERN TERRITORY STUDENT VISIT
See page 4 for more details.

VALEDICTORY DINNER
Page 2

NOSSAL ALUMNI
“OLD NOSSALONIANS”
Page 3

STAFF FAREWELLS
Page 3

MERRY CHRISTMAS

IMPORTANT DATES
Jan 29  School Commences for 2014
Feb 10 - 12  Lord Somers Camp Yr 12s
Feb 17  Foundation Assembly
Feb 18  School Photos
Feb 19 - 21  Unit 1/2 PE Camo
Feb 20  Year 12 Information Night
Feb 25  Year 10 & 11 VCE Information Night
Feb 27  Swimming Carnival
Dear Nossal Community,

**VCE Results**

As I write this late on Sunday night there are thousands of anxious students and their families and teachers waiting for the 7 am release on Monday of the ATAR scores for the VCE classes of 2013. Whilst the individual results remain private at this time I can say that we are incredibly proud of, and impressed by the overall performance of our first graduating class.

Of the 199 students – all successfully completed their VCE; 116 (58%) of them achieved ATAR scores of 90 and over; 11 students achieved ATAR scores of 99 and over; the median study score was 35; and 9 students achieved perfect study scores of 50 in a variety of subjects (and of the 9, 3 students were in Year 11 which bodes very well for the performance of the 2014 graduating class).

Without anything to benchmark against it is difficult to know how the students will feel about their own results, but as I have stated many times, the ATAR is a ranking, not a measure of worth or performance, or even long term success. The success measure should only be applied to individual development and improvement and the measure should be celebrated if it indicates individual growth and improvement. As a ranking, the fact that others may have performed at a higher or lower level should in no way diminish the individual's achievement.

I'm sure that there will be many students who are overjoyed at what they have achieved and there will be others who will be disappointed. For all students we continue to offer ongoing support and assistance and should students need to rethink their career pathways and VTAC applications, Ms Rackham and the VCE and welfare teams will be available all this week and into the future to offer ongoing support, advice and assistance.

We held a morning tea for Year 12 students and staff on Monday to celebrate the outcomes and acknowledge the hard work and commitment shown by the foundation students, their teachers and to offer support and assistance for those who may need it.

At 6.30am on Monday, seven very brave Year 12 students agreed to meet with the Education Minister (Martin Dixon) and the media (television, radio and newspapers) to access their results publicly at 7.00 am. The Education Department want to feature Nossal in the official media releases this year and have arranged for the event where our students will be interviewed and filmed and photographed as they receive their results for the first time. I know they will do very well and am very pleased to have their talents showcased, although doubt that I would have been brave enough to so. I wish the graduating class well with their tertiary applications and hope to see them all back early next year (before University resumes) for a celebratory reunion to acknowledge their successes and be updated about their plans for 2014 and beyond.

**Speech Night**

My thanks to all who attended and to all who worked behind the scenes to ensure it went off so smoothly. Particular thanks to Mrs Kluckow, Ms Harrap and Mr Haworth for the organisation. We were quite concerned that it was going to be a very long night as we had a significant number of awards to present and also wanted to showcase the student musical performances and guest speakers, but it went very smoothly and was completed in record time. It was an emotional night for me as we farewelled the graduating Year 12 class, as we have established a very close bond with them, and they with each other. As always I am humbled and greatly impressed by the talents of the students who were showcased on the evening, but even more impressed that they represent the tip of the iceberg and there are many more deserving and exemplary students who we were not able to single out and acknowledge at that time.

**Valedictory Dinner**

Close to 600 members of the Nossal community including nearly all the Year 12 students gathered at Etihad Stadium for our first Valedictory Dinner where we made presentations to all graduating students and celebrated their 4 years as the Nossal pioneers. It was a wonderful evening (apart from the traffic issues) and the students managed to reduce me to tears by presenting me with a book filled with personal letters from them. It was a wonderfully moving and thoughtful gesture and is something that I will always treasure.
Nossal Alumni
The Nossal Alumni has now come into existence. “The Old Nossalonians” already has a significant membership and we will convene meetings early next year to assist them establish themselves so that they may independently support and promote our school and graduates long into the future.

PFA
My sincere thanks to the PFA who have done excellent work in their short lifetime this year. The second hand book and uniform sale was a huge success with large numbers of buyers in attendance. At one stage the gym and both carparks were full and the biggest issue we had was that demand by the buyers (particularly for Year 9 materials) greatly out weighed the number of sellers. I urge all families to consider taking part next year and to either sell or donate their books and uniforms for the benefit of themselves and others. Many sausages were also sold and I offer sincere thanks to the many parents who also stayed or came specifically for the working bee. I was particularly impressed to see Year 12 students and parents working away in the gardens and we achieved a great deal in a few hours In fact we had been quoted over $5000 by professional gardeners to do less than half of what was completed on the day. I hope to hold another early in the new year so we can maintain the gardens and grounds more consistently in future.

Dr Judie Mitchell Retirement
After an outstanding teaching career spanning 40 years Dr Mitchell is retiring for the second time! As well as being an exemplary classroom teacher, Judie spent time as a lecturer and researcher in Education at Monash University and was responsible for significant and far reaching work on teacher professional learning that has had global impact. We were delighted when she joined our staff in the foundation year and offer her much thanks for the key role she played in helping us to establish Nossal and for her leadership within our English team over the past 4 years. It is rare in my experience to be able to achieve such success as both a practitioner and researcher and I thank her for her commitment and dedication to the improvement of teaching practice on behalf of the many thousands who have benefitted from her work.

Farewells
There will be a number of new staff members joining us in 2014 and we are still completing interviews in the final week before Christmas. Sadly we will be farewelling the following staff members this year and offer sincere thanks to them all for their commitment to Nossal…..

Mr Sam Hu (Maths)
Mr Daya Weerasinge (Maths)
Ms Gabrielle Gory (English)
Mrs Annabel Reeves (Japanese)
Ms Kathy Watson (Laboratory Technician)
Ms Mervat Youssef (Humanities)
Ms Suzanne Kinsella (Instrumental Music)

…..and Mrs Simone Kluckow (Marketing and Events) and Mrs Melissa Krause (French) will be relocating to the country next year and are unlikely to return.

At the risk of offending others I would like to single out Simone for a special mention. As a foundation staff member she has filled a range of essential administrative positions over the past four years and has made a significant contribution to the organisation of key activities and events and has been merciless in her nagging to ensure that I complete my newsletter pieces and numerous other tasks and deadlines that I would miss or overlook.

Merry Christmas
Finally I wish all members of the Nossal Community a safe, restful and peaceful Christmas break. I urge the students to have fun, to relax and unwind and to complete the little holiday work that they have been asked to do. I ask the same of the staff who are the most dedicated and hard working team I have ever had the pleasure of working with, and who will need to rest and recover after what has been an incredibly busy term.

The school office will be closed from Monday December 23 until Tuesday January 21. Students resume on Wednesday January 29 2014.

For any urgent issues during the break – contact me on 0408121847.
Best wishes, Roger Page
Nossal High School recently hosted a successful cultural exchange between Maningrida College and Berry Springs Primary School in late November. Nossal staff and students developed a program for Berry Springs Primary School and Maningrida College. These activities were facilitated by the Science, PE and Food Technology domains.

Berry Springs is located approximately 65km South of Darwin. The students come from many outback stations and large properties throughout the Northern Territory. The focus of the Berry Springs visit was to work with some of our staff and students in our science laboratory. This was to give Berry Springs an insight to all the possibilities science has to offer, while learning and having fun at the same time. The students experimented with dry ice, played ice hockey, while also experimenting with balloons and coloured bubbles. They also made coloured slime which really captured the imagination of these young students. The students then all had a BBQ lunch afterwards where our students were able to spend some time talking to the younger students about their experiences and interests. The students then left heading for Phillip Island. The poor students arrived on one of the worst weather days in November. It was windy and raining and very different from the conditions they are used to in the Territory, but to the students credit never wiped the smiles from their faces.

Maningrida is located 500km East of Darwin at the top of Arnhem Land. Maningrida College has been working with Nossal High School to develop a cultural exchange that will enhance both school educational experiences. Maningrida joined us for an afternoon of similar Science activities. Followed by a plant and knowledge exchange session with Mick from the Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne. Mick brought local indigenous plants to the school where the students were able to learn their names and compare them to similar plants from around the Territory. Mick also brought in many edible grasses, fruits and bulbs and provided the students an opportunity to cook and taste the plants. Maningrida joined us for afternoon tea then spent the rest of the afternoon playing dodge ball and basketball with Nossal students.

On a separate note... I would like to acknowledge and thank the Nossal community for their continuous support with our Nossal Breakfast and Sustainable Garden program. So many families and local businesses have made continuous donations throughout the year that have ensured the success of both equally important programs. We look forward to your support again in 2014. If you would like to donate or volunteer to help with either of these programs please contact me directly Leanne.Ansalde@nossalhs.vic.edu.au

Australia Day Public Holiday 2014... Yes we are open!

We know that the back-to-school rush can be a busy time of year, so our store will be open for regular trade on the Australia Day Public Holiday (Monday 27 January) to provide you with convenient shopping hours!*

*Please note: We will be closed Sunday 26 January. Lay-by will be unavailable in January and February.

AVAILABLE AT PSW HAMPTON PARK
Unit 2, 10-12 South Link, Dandenong Sth, VIC 3175
Phone: 03 8768 7490

TRADING HOURS
Monday to Wednesday 8:30am - 5:00pm
Thursday 8:30am - 7:00pm
Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm
Saturday 9:00am - 5:00pm
Sunday CLOSED