Avila College acknowledges the Wurundjeri people, the traditional custodians of the land on which the College is built.

Inside this issue:
2009 VCE Results
2009 College Dux
Student Achievements
Project Compassion launch
New Master Building plan
Fire Carrier honour
Opening Mass
Red Cross Door Knock
Oxfam Trailwalkers
New Year 7s
Japanese Exchange students
Year 12 formal
Past student news
Year 9 Camp
House Swimming Sports
Message from the Principal

Busy launch to year

Welcome back – to 2010, and life at Avila College.
The year has started extremely well and staff have worked very hard to ensure the smooth transition of our 200 new Year 7’s, and more than 25 additional students at other year levels from local, interstate and overseas schools.

A jam-packed Term One, as captured in this first edition of Avila Matters, has seen our students involved in our Opening Mass, leadership training and forums, Christian Living and Friendship Days, camps, the Year 12 Formal, Public Speaking and Debating, Science forums, the launch of Caritas’ Project Compassion, and the all important awareness raising and fundraising during the Lenten season.

Added to this, of course, is the excitement of new classes, new teachers, different subjects, the opportunity to meet and make new friends, not to mention the stimulation and challenges of learning.

No two years are ever the same and 2010 has presented with many opportunities. The roll out of Phase 1 drafts (English, Maths, History and Science) of the National Curriculum has staff working hard to audit our current offerings against the recommendations in each of the listed subjects to be introduced in 2011, and to then further develop our Yr 7 -10 curricula.

The next stage of our School Improvement Framework will see the implementation of our School Improvement Plan, and the first of our Annual Action Plans, in the five spheres of Education in Faith; Learning and Teaching; Student Wellbeing; Leadership and Management; and School Community. Across last year, we developed a number of key strategies that will assist us in ‘growing the edges’ at Avila, as well as addressing any concerns presented in the final review report.

The commencement of the first of five stages in the College’s facilities master plan will see the building of a new junior school. Whilst there will be some disruption to parking and movement around the school, I believe the final result will be an excellent addition to our campus.

Avila aims to continue to provide a rich, unique and distinctive learning environment, committed to the education and nurturing of confident, well-adjusted young women. Faith and education are at the core of what we do, and our holistic approach to education ensures that Avila students emerge ready to be active participants in their world, both in the workforce and as citizens in their community.

We look forward to an exciting year, and encourage all of our Avila families to join us in the many events held across 2010.

New junior school plans unveiled

Master plans have been unveiled for a multi-million dollar building program at Avila College that will add a long-awaited chapel, new junior school, and spacious new library to the campus.

Subject to funding, the program is expected to be completed over the next several years with architects confident the first stage, a new junior school, will be ready for the new school year in 2011.

Tenders are about to be called for the junior school to be constructed at an estimated cost of $4 million at the northern end of the playing field, between the existing junior school and the tennis courts.

The two-storey junior school will feature 16 classrooms, with eight classrooms on each level, plus an open plan multipurpose area, coordinators and special education facilities, a lift and toilets.

Its completion will help pave the way for other stages of the master plan:

- The Year 10 block, apart from the commercial kitchen and dining room area, will be demolished to make way for a two-storey building with a spacious new library at ground level and eight Year 10 classrooms upstairs. Year 10s will be accommodated in the old junior school during the construction.
- The existing 25-year-old library will be transformed into the College Chapel.
- The southern end of what will be the old junior school will become the Drama Department while the northern end, adjacent to Saint Teresa’s Garden, will be demolished to create more open space.
- The existing Drama Department above the gymnasium will become an extension of the staff room, linked by the overhead walkway.

Principal, Ms Liz Gleeson, said the master plan was an exciting phase of the College’s history and Avila’s ongoing and forward thinking commitment to provide the best possible resources and facilities for students. The new physical facilities will further enhance Avila’s reputation as the provider of quality education for young women.

‘The chapel will be a particularly wonderful asset. For many years, staff and students have identified the need for a dedicated “sacred space” for prayer and reflection,’ said Ms Gleeson.

College Business Manager, Mr Norm Phillips, said the new junior school would be self-funded by Avila. It is hoped that the library/Year 10 stage would be commenced within the next five years, finances permitting.
Avila is setting quite a benchmark with the Father James Wall Bursary award with Georgia Harris becoming the third Avila student in as many years to receive the scholarship. The award is presented each year to four Year 10 students from the Archdiocese of Melbourne in which there are about 70 Catholic secondary schools. The award, sponsored by the Catholic Development Fund, acknowledges student leadership.

The Archbishop of Melbourne, the Reverend Denis Hart, presented Georgia with her award during a special function at the Catholic Education Office at the end of 2009.

Other Avila recipients are immediate past College captain, Caitlyn Petrie who received the award in 2007 and Nicole Paulding, a 2008 recipient.

Avila’s star performers from left to right, 2009 Drama Captain Stacey Townsend, 2009 College Captain Caitlyn Petrie, Celeste Pellizzari, Michelle Matta, Cloe Smithett and Felicity Smith. All the girls were selected for Top Acts with Stacey and Caitlyn progressing to Top Class.

Achievements reflect Avila Way

From prestigious awards for overall academic excellence and leadership to outstanding 2009 VCE results to being in the cream of the state in Music, Drama, Design and Technology and sport, Avila’s reputation as the provider of quality secondary education for young women has been further enforced.

The exciting and diverse career paths of former students, and the high esteem in which they hold the College, are further testimony to the Avila Way. So too is the increasing number of past students who choose to send their daughters to Avila and who choose to return to the College as teachers themselves.

These are just some of the 'measures' of our success that are highlighted throughout this issue of Avila Matters.

In terms of academic and leadership excellence, Georgia Harris, Year 11, has received two prestigious awards. Georgia attended the Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program hosted at Melbourne University over the Summer holidays. Georgia was one of 700 students selected from 1900 applicants based on leadership and academic qualities. Georgia also was a 2009 recipient of the Father James Wall Bursary, the third Avila student in as many years to receive the award.

Top Acts and Sounds

Two 2009 Year 12 Drama students have been invited to perform in the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority’s upcoming Top Class Drama program. Last year’s College Captain, Caitlyn Petrie, and Drama Captain, Stacey Townsend, will perform their 2009 Solo Performance examinations to hundreds of Drama students and their teachers at the Melbourne Recital Centre on April 16 and 17.

The program is part of the VCAA’s Season of Excellence and showcases the very best performance exams from the previous year. Six Avila students were asked to audition for a place in this year’s program. Avila has been represented at Top Class Drama by seven students, four times in the past six years.

In the Music equivalent, 2009 Music Captain, Emma Steel performed in Top Sounds at the Melbourne Recital Centre on February 26.
Hard work pays dividends for 2009 College Dux

There is no doubt in Hannah Phillips’ mind that hard work can pay off – and Hannah should know, she is the 2009 Avila College Dux.

Seventeen-year-old Hannah received a Tertiary Entry Ranking of 99.30. She was ‘pretty shocked’ by the result because she was aiming for about 92.

Still feeling her way in terms of career directions, Hannah is keeping her options open by commencing studies for a double degree in Science/Arts at Monash University, possibly majoring in Physics and Philosophy in the respective disciplines, and minoring in Chemistry and Creative Writing. While she currently has a leaning towards Science, Hannah is a bit of a literary buff and her dream, since Grade 3, is to publish a novel.

In Year 12, Hannah undertook Literature, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematical Methods and Specialist Mathematics. She strongly believes that completing Biology as a Unit 3/4 subject in Year 11 was one of the best preparations for her VCE year.

‘A 3 / 4 (VCE) subject is different to studying any other subject. By undertaking a VCE subject in Year 11, I learned how best to prepare and approach unit 3 / 4 subjects,’ Hannah explained.

In imparting advice to senior students, Hannah said it was extremely important to not give up if things do not go according to plan, to stay positive, and to remember that ‘there’s a light at the end of the tunnel, but it’s a relief that only comes after doing all you can; you have to fuel that train with your own hard work.’

‘There is no doubt about it, VCE is taxing. The necessary study takes time and energy and you have to make sacrifices. But, in the end, if you work hard, you can be surprised by how well you can do,’ said Hannah, who has a history of academic excellence including being the recipient of the 2009 Patricia Ryan Love of Learning Award, 2008 Monash Prize for Excellence, as well as individual academic awards over the years. And, just for good measure, Hannah kicked off her VCE year by gaining her black belt in Taekwondo.

Hannah paid tribute to the dedication of the Avila staff both in and beyond the classroom. ‘In year 12 comes the realisation that teachers actually want you to ask for help outside class,’ Hannah said.

‘Take those opportunities – doing plenty of practice sacs and exams really shows in your understanding and results.’ She described Avila as a wonderful community and believed its friendly and welcoming atmosphere made it so special.

Now a first year university student, Hannah is looking forward to taking her love of learning to new heights and to sharing the next exciting phase of her life with some of the ‘fantastic, close friends’ she has made at Avila.

Note of thanks

Dear Ms Gleeson,

I write this as a very proud father of an exceptional young woman, Olivia Crapper, who has blossomed while in the care of your school. I would like you to pass on my thanks to all of the staff who, at one time or another, have contributed to her development into a confident and loving person.

We are all celebrating her very pleasing VCE results, which have opened the doors to so many opportunities at university. Any parent, or teacher, would be thrilled with such a strong result. It is something in addition, however, which I wish to convey in my message to you and your school. I wish to thank you and all of your staff for the superb job of nurturing my daughter, who has been encouraged to grow into the amazing young woman she is. As a teacher of 27 years myself, I am cognisant of the awesome responsibilities of this job and the challenges involved. Your school has done a great job!

I have always been an admirer of the inclusive atmosphere I have sensed when I have visited your school on parent teacher nights, concerts and the awards nights I have been able to attend. I am confident when I say that Avila has lived up to the value expressed in your Mission Statement, “students learn when they are valued and respected.” I think that the wonderful film Olivia made for her school friends in Year 12 is testimony, not only to the generous and courageous young woman she has become, but also the nourishing experience your school has offered over the years. It is this she wants to remember and expressed so well. I believe she was saying thank you to you all.

The opening words of your school hymn “Let nothing frighten you...” resonate in my imagination when I think of the strong young person to which your school has made so significant a contribution.

Congratulations and profound thanks from a grateful parent.

Peter Crapper
Mt Eliza Secondary College

Olivia has commenced a Bachelor of Science degree course at James Cook University, Queenslands, majoring in marine biology.
Nearly half ranked in top 20 per cent of State

The Avila community proudly congratulates the 2009 Year 12 graduates - 100% of students successfully completed VCE or VET and/or VCAL studies. A year of dedicated study and application resulted in exceptional results.

Twenty-six per cent of students undertaking VCE in 2009 achieved an ENTER above 90, with a further 18% achieving a score between 80 and 90. This means that almost half of our 2009 Year 12 students were ranked in the top 20% of the state.

The Dux of the College was Hannah Phillips who gained an ENTER of 99.3 (see oppose page), and who has now commenced studies for a combined Arts/Science degree at Monash University. Hannah's extraordinary achievement was closely followed by Estelle Griepink, Caitlyn Petrie (College Captain), Sarah Rajah, Stephanie Szabo, Laura Jean, Talisa Trantino, Nikola Prestia, Lucy Nihill and Amy Duong who were all ranked in the top three per cent in Victoria. Avila's Principal, Ms Liz Gleeson, presented the Filomena Salvatore College Dux Award to Hannah at the first whole school assembly in February. Her fellow high achieving students were also recognised at the school assembly and later addressed current Year 12 students giving them sound advice about successful completion of Year 12.

A further congratulation is extended to Talisa Trantino who scored a perfect study score of 50 in Design and Technology. Talisa is now pursuing her dream course, a highly competitive degree in fashion design at RMIT.

The impressive results ensured that Avila students received welcome offers for tertiary studies. Of the cohort of 184 students, 172 received round one offers with 90 students being offered their first preference. These students have taken up studies in diverse fields across 22 institutions in areas such as law, science, pharmacy, humanities, health professions, education, business and commerce.

Monash University was once again the preferred institution, closely followed by Deakin University, University of Melbourne, RMIT, La Trobe University and Australian Catholic University.

Success in Year 12 is the culmination of dedicated study throughout secondary education. Students need to establish solid academic foundations in early years and then build upon these foundations with consistent and independent learning in the senior years.

Students at Avila are supported by very experienced, committed and well qualified teachers who work collaboratively to deliver excellence across a wide ranging curriculum. This is coupled with sound pedagogical practice and encouragement of independent learning. The end results are confident, competent and resourceful young women well equipped to meet the challenges of not only tertiary study but also the vagaries of adult life.

Mrs Louise Swift
Year 12 Co-ordinator
Avila College was greatly privileged to host the Caritas launch of the Project Compassion campaign for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne on February 16, Shrove Tuesday.

Caritas is one of the largest aid and development agencies in the world and currently has a presence in more than 165 countries. Its major fundraiser is Project Compassion which is held during the Lenten period in the lead up to Easter. In 2010, the Project Compassion campaign focuses on the 8 Millennium Development Goals, which are to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development.

In the Avila launch of Caritas’ Project Compassion campaign, World Education Officer for Victoria and Tasmania, Ms MaryAnne Collins and Caritas volunteer and a former Avila teacher, Miss Lisa Harkins, shared their experiences about a recent trip to Bangladesh. They explained how Caritas was helping to address many problems such as infant mortality and child trafficking. Many of the communities they had visited were well aware of the assistance they had received through Caritas.

‘In one community a woman handed me a warm hard boiled egg as a gift of appreciation for what Caritas had done,’ said Miss Harkins, adding that the experience was confronting yet very humbling.

Ms MaryAnne Collins urged the students and families to donate at least $1 a day to Project Compassion as a fifth of the World’s population survive on less than $1 a day. She showed us that we can really make a change in people’s lives by just giving up something very small. Both Ms Collins and Miss Harkins impressed us on how lucky each of us was to live in a country such as Australia and that we have a responsibility to help those who are less fortunate.

After the launch students flipped and feasted on hundreds of pancakes to raise money for Project Compassion. The lunchtime pancake feast had a special significance as this was a simple way of making a huge impact on the lives of others.

Neethu Pynadath
Year 11 Liturgy Captain

Pictured clockwise from top left, Caritas visitors Miss Lisa Harkin, a former Avila teacher, and Ms MaryAnne Collins with Faith Development Co-ordinator Mrs Marie Stuart and Liturgy Captains Sara Cincotta and Cassie Valadon; student volunteers wearing Millennium Goal t-shirts; pancake chefs and customers.
Avila College has made another significant step in its work towards Reconciliation with Reconciliation Captain, Beth Corkill being inducted as our first Fire Carrier.

The honour has special significance for Avila where social justice and Reconciliation have been a strong part of the College culture for many years. Even more so in 2010 given that Beth is our first Reconciliation Captain, making the role an official student leadership position.

Beth was formally inducted as the Fire Carrier to represent the Avila Community during a special smoking ceremony at the Opening of the School Year Mass on February 18. The ceremony was led by Mrs Vicki Walker Clarke, Co-ordinator of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Melbourne and a Mutthi Mutthi woman, and Felicity Oxnam the Promotions Officer for the Opening the Doors Foundation which launched the Fire Carrier initiative in November 2009.

Vicki was particularly moved by the arrangement of the Aboriginal Our Father by the Avila Music Department at the Opening Mass because it resonated such deep respect for her people. After mass, Vicki met with Reconciliation Group and explained how it had been such a battle to have Aboriginal spirituality recognised in Catholic Liturgy and that the Aboriginal Our Father had given them that recognition. The Aboriginal Our Father was written by the people of the Kimberley and additions were made by communities in the Santa Teresa area, together with Aboriginal groups in NSW.

Vicki emphasised that Avila was a school in tune with reconciliation and that such acknowledgement had been a huge battle at other schools. She said Beth and Amy Tremewen, the Year 11 Reconciliation Captain, were now part of a program that would help change people’s attitudes.

The Fire Carrier initiative, (standing for Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education), aims to help schools in Victoria establish Reconciliation groups and education projects in their school and local communities. Avila is ahead of the game, with a well-established Reconciliation Group (we are one of the very few schools that has a separate Reconciliation group) and Aboriginal awareness very much part of ‘The Avila Way’. We have already written a covenant, outlining our achievements and hopes for the future.

Fire Carrier Conference

The day after the Opening Mass, Beth and Amy Tremewen, together with Avila Reconciliation co-ordinators Mrs Christine Valladares and Miss Darcie Kane-Priestley attended the first Fire Carrier Conference where Mrs Walker Clarke and Ms Oxnam were inspiring guest speakers, reminding us to keep our roles and aspirations in perspective while being effective in our local communities.

The conference was a very productive day, working both as ‘Team Avila’ and with other schools, discussing what it means to be a Fire Carrier. With 13 other schools attending, we were able to come up with creative new ideas for fundraisers, the annual Santa Teresa journey and keeping people interested in Reconciliation, as well as advising other schools on what we have learnt about promoting and maintaining interest in Australian Aboriginal issues.

If attendance at the lunchtime meetings is an indication then Reconciliation Group will carry on as strong as ever in 2010.

Amy Tremewen Year 11 Reconciliation Group Captain

Fire is at the Heart of Aboriginal Culture

The gathering of people in a circle around the fire is for the calling of people together for cooking, eating and warmth at night. It is used for smoking the people and the land when gathered for important ceremonies. It is around the fire that stories are told and the law was taught. Fire is at the heart of Aboriginal culture. In the Aboriginal community fire represents the spiritual connection for the individual to Mother Earth and the Ancestors. And so it is fire that represents the learning, teaching and the journey of all young people towards Reconciliation.

Avila Matters Term 1, 2010 - 7
One of the most rewarding aspects of my role as the Faith Development Co-ordinator is to work with our student leaders.

On the Monday before school commenced, I had the privilege of working with our 2010 Year 12 leaders as they planned the year ahead. They took as their motto for the coming year the theme of ‘2010: Let’s Go – Learn More, Do More, Be More’ which is an extension of the quote from the inspirational El Salvadorian Bishop, Oscar Romero, who was murdered 30 years ago, who said ‘Aspire not to have more, but to be more.’ The Liturgy Captains used this theme, adding the words ‘Love More’ as the theme for our wonderful Opening School Mass. The readings, the music and the homily by Father Pat Jackson, Parish Priest of St Christopher’s, Syndal, all highlighted the call for each of us to love others in the way Christ loved others, fully and without counting the cost.

Lent is the period of time before Easter where we are called to reflect and pray about our relationship with our God. This is also the time at Avila when we support the Caritas Project Compassion campaign. Caritas is the largest Catholic international aid organisation working with local agencies in the developing world. On Pancake Tuesday, Caritas representatives visited Avila to launch the Project Compassion campaign for the Melbourne Archdiocese. Ms Mary Anne Collins, World Education Officer for Caritas in Victoria and Tasmania, together with Miss Lisa Harkin, a former teacher at Avila who now works with Caritas, spoke to an audience of Avila students along with some Grade 6 leaders from Holy Family, Holy Saviour and St Justin’s about the distribution of wealth and the work of Caritas, especially in the Asian-Pacific region. We then all shared some pancakes and kicked off our fund-raising with a collection of $545. There was lots of friendly rivalry for the rest of the term as each class rallied to help raise more than $7,000 for Caritas.

Term One can be a daunting time for our new Year 7s, so ‘Friendship Day at the end of Week 1, is always a great way for them to spend time with their new classmates and develop friendships.

At the other end of the secondary school journey, our Year 12s spent time with their class focusing on where they are headed during this year and beyond. Amidst the very important year for our Year 12s, their Homeroom/Religious Education teachers will be helping the girls think about and reflect upon what values they will take with them when they embark on their life beyond school.

Our Year 8s spent time together at their Christian Living Day at Jell’s Park early in the term. They participated in a range of activities which focused on the themes of respect, honesty, support forgiveness, trust and justice which underpin our Behaviour Policy, but more importantly are the key values we live by at Avila.

The Year 11s had a challenging Christian Living Day early in March when they were addressed by author Jonathan Doyle about the values they choose in their relationships.

As we head into the Easter and end-of-term break, our preparation for Holy Week began with our own Holy Week Liturgy. The whole student body gathered together for a liturgy which focused on the Stations of the Cross. This was a moving reminder of the sacred celebration in which we are about to participate.

I wish you all a safe and holy Easter and wish you a happy time with your families.

Mrs Marie Stuart
Faith Development Co-ordinator
Avila’s 2010 Opening of the School Year Mass on Thursday, February 18 was one of celebration and symbolism as well as reverence, prayer and beautiful music.

One of the special highlights of the Mass was the induction of Beth Corkill as the Avila Fire Carrier by Mrs Vicki Walker Clarke, Co-ordinator of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry. Mrs Walker was particularly moved by the deep sense of respect for the occasion and the beautiful rendition of the Aboriginal Our Father by the Avila Music Department. The Avila community - of 1150 students, about 150 staff and parents and friends and special visitors - was equally moved by the induction of a Fire Carrier, representing another positive step toward reconciliation.

In keeping with tradition at the Opening of the School Year Mass, badges were presented to the 2010 Year 12 leaders.

The Mass, celebrated by Father Pat Jackson, was also a first for our new Year 7s who have been welcomed into the Avila community. As a sign of welcome, our Year 12 Sports captains presented six Year 7 students with gifts which represented the 2010 theme of ‘Do More, Learn More and Be More’.

A clock and netball were given as a symbol of doing more in the time you have, as well as getting involved within the Avila community. A mirror and bible were given to represent the things that the Year 7s will learn about their faith and themselves especially during their time at Avila.

A Caritas box and a Peer Helper smile were presented to encourage all Year 7s to help those in need, and also recognise that there is always help around, especially in the Avila community.

It was a beautiful Mass and definitely a great way to start off the New Year at Avila.

Sara Cincotta
Yea 12 Liturgy Captain
Throughout Term One, 31 Year 10 students have been working with the Year 7s in small groups as part of the Avila Peer Support Program.

Each Thursday, using food treats as an added bribe, we encouraged the Year 7s discuss delicate issues such as making new friends, facing conflicts and getting used to the Avila way of life, to help ease the transition from primary school to secondary school.

As Year 10s, we can still remember the daunting feeling of starting at a new school; but it was with the help of our Peer Support Leaders that we were able to figure out those pesky locks, our way around the school and who to turn to for help. It was those Peer Support Leaders who introduced us to the people who are now our friends for life. Becoming Peer Support Leaders ourselves was simply our way of saying thank you and giving back to the Avila community, helping to continue the tradition of welcoming new students and helping them to feel at home at Avila.

It’s been a wonderful experience and a great privilege to help the Year 7s through this nerve-wracking time and into the community that will be their other “home” for the next six years. We would like to thank Ms Di Brebner, the Avila Chaplain, for giving us her time to make this program easy to lead and even more enjoyable for us as well.

Sarah Genovese, Lisa Lentini and Karlie Mascetta, Peer Support Leaders 2010

Peer Support has a long tradition at Avila College. It is a great way for Year 10 students to take leadership roles and show initiative in welcoming the new Year 7s into what can seem, for many students who have come from much smaller primary schools, a somewhat daunting experience. Along with the Peer Helpers, the Peer Support Leaders work hard to help the Year 7s to feel at home, to find their way around Avila, have some fun making new friends and to know that they, too, are an important part of our community. It is a delight to see the enthusiasm of the Year 10 students in taking on these valuable roles, and each year, continuing the welcoming process. May the 2010 Year 7 students always feel welcome, supported, at home and happy at Avila.

Di Brebner, Avila College Chaplain

**WHAT SOME YEAR 7s HAD TO SAY:**
- Peer Support sessions are good fun!
- We get to meet kids from other Year 7 Classes and make new friends.
- The Year 10 leaders are nice; they try to help us to fit in to Avila.
- I like being able to talk about other things than school work.
- It’s nice seeing the Year 10s around the school; they know my name and that makes me feel good.

Peer Support Program 2010

One of the many Student Representative Council (SRC) initiatives at Avila College is to reach out to the community and, where possible, provide support. So it was wonderful to see 58 students from across all year levels take part in the 2010 Red Cross Door Knock on March 13.

The students gave up their Sunday morning to don the College uniform and head out to raise funds for this worthy cause. Our students were warmly welcomed by the people of Mount Waverley and the girls raised nearly $3000.

The College is very proud of the girls’ preparedness to represent Avila College in the community and a special thanks goes to the many senior students who took time out of their busy schedules to participate. Several members of staff also generously gave their time to drive the girls to their fund raising area and the College is very grateful for their assistance.

Congratulations to all involved and it is encouraging to see our students live out this year’s College motto ... Do More, Learn More, Be More.
The bright pink smiley faces are back with the 2010 Year 10 Peer Helpers out in force. And what a busy first term we have had.

Our year’s work began with an early wake up call on one of the last precious school holiday days. But with excitement and joy we were up and rearing to go for training day. Here we learnt all the tools of the trade from our amazing mentor and guru, Mrs Helen Tillinh and the girls who had done it all before; the Year 12 Peer Helpers. It was a day of fun but very much a learning experience which we will take with us through our helping journeys.

The newly trained Peer Helpers went into action for the first time to greet the Year 7s on their first day. There were many nervous and anxious, yet at the same time, enthusiastic and eager faces, and a lot of sad yet happy parents with boxes of books and flip files. But luckily the Peer Helpers were there to lend a helping hand wherever possible. We took the Year 7s to their homerooms, settled them in and gave them the little extra bit of assurance they needed. Then it was time to say goodbye to mum and dad and they were in high school for the very first time. Next were the infamous combination locks, timetables and locker numbers which brought memories flooding back for us Year 10s. It was still a challenge remembering how to work the locker combinations!

The next big event was Friendship Day – a fun and interactive day for the Year 7s. It was all about learning names, finding common interests and learning about what it really means to be a friend. With a few wacky role plays thrown in by us Peer Helpers and constructing some incredible friendship boxes and snazzy glasses, it was a great day.

Currently, every Thursday lunch-time, the Peer Helpers are outside the Dining Room playing the old favourites skipping and elastics. We invite everyone to join, but especially the Year 7s. It is a great way to take a break from the classroom stresses and have a bit of fun. You may even be lucky enough to catch one of the teachers having a skip on their way through to their lunch break.

While wandering through the Year 7 corridors, you may have noticed the bright and dazzling displays of photos which were put up by some of the very artistic Peer Helpers. We have also rejuvenated the Peer Helper noticeboards. And we have plenty of wonderful plans for the year – a Teddy Bears’ Picnic, a Pink Cake Stall and Smile Day, but that’s just the tip of the iceberg!

And of course the fast approaching Year 7 Camp. The Peer Helpers absolutely cannot wait until camp – it’s like we are in Year 7 too!

We have a big year ahead of us filled with exiting events and activities and we are thrilled to be a part of such a magnificent group, with the help from our fabulous leader and adviser, Helen.

Look out for the Peer Helpers around the school with their pink badges and also be alert for upcoming events regarding the Peer Helper team... you are in for some fabulous fun!

Courtney Ager, 10 Gold

2,0,1,0: Let’s go, Learn more, Do more, Be More

This is the theme that the Year 12 Leaders have devised for 2010 based on Oscar Romero’s famous quotation to ‘Aspire not to have more, but to be more’.

Already this year the student leaders have brought their theme to life. The first whole school assembly on February 9 saw the Year 12 leaders introduce themselves and this year’s theme to the school and we all enjoyed a sensational first whole school address from School Captain Marnie Banger.

Then the Liturgy Captains got to work on the Opening of School Mass for February 18. This mass was truly moving, especially the witnessing of the Fire Carrier Ceremony to introduce Beth Corkill as Avila’s first Reconciliation Captain.

February 15 was a big day for the student leaders as all leaders from years 8-12 gathered together for 2010’s first leader’s seminar. This was a day to get to know each other and plan all the exciting activities and events for 2010.

I know that I am really looking forward to seeing these plans come to fruition in such activities as Creative Arts, Sports Carnivals and in fund-raising. So in 2, 0, 1, 0 Let’s Go!

Karis Dalton,
Leadership Co-ordinator

Avila Matters Term 1, 2010 – 11
Women in research - achieving it

Twenty-seven of our senior Science students (Years 10-12) had the privilege of attending the Women in Research forum held at Monash University on Thursday, March 4.

This was an extraordinary forum in that so many elite scientists were present, both on the panel and in the audience.

The keynote speaker was Professor Elizabeth Blackburn, our first female Nobel laureate and only the 11th Australian to have been awarded the Nobel prize. In her address, Professor Blackburn noted that, whilst there is a steady supply of female scientists entering research, many did not continue due to family pressures, despite the fact that a woman’s scientific career can last for four decades or more. Those that continue, however, have achieved equally highly with their male counterparts.

Other elite scientists on the panel included Chief Scientist for Australia, Prof. Penny Sackett, the chief executive officer of the CSIRO, Doctor Megan Clarke, and world-leading geneticist, Professor Kim Cornish. These women spoke of their own career paths and passionately asserted that research was the best possible career they could imagine. The forum was chaired by Deputy Speaker Ms Anna Burke, M.P.

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Students impress prospective families

Our students are our greatest ambassadors, a fact regularly reinforced by the feedback from families attending College Information Sessions.

Student-led tours are one of the key features of the Information Sessions and parents of prospective students frequently comment on the wonderful way in which our girls conduct themselves. The first round of sessions for 2010 was no exception with many favourable comments about the more than 70 students from across all year levels who gave up part of their Saturday to help show a total of about 600 visitors around the campus.

Welcome to new staff

Avila College was represented at the 2010 Lions Youth of the Year competition by Georgia Harris, Year 11, and Marnie Banger, Year 12.

Both were impressive competitors with Georgie being the holder of the Kwong Lee Dow Scholarship and the Father Wall Bursary Achievement Leadership Award. Marnie, our College Captain, brought with her fantastic results from Year 11 and her experience of working with the Leadership Team of the College.

Marnie was successful in winning the Public Speaking Award after delivering an impressive speech on the new relationship between China and developing countries that is impacting on world forums; and going on to deliver an impromptu speech which the judge said the only word to describe it was, ‘Wow’! Congratulations Marnie.

Welcome to new staff

Dr Sue Liston
Head of Science

Mr John Beekhof
Religious Education Co-ordinator

Miss Lauren Stute
Science & VCE Ag/Hort
(Lauren is a past Avila student.)
Four Avila teachers are putting their best feet forward - for 100 km - to raise funds for Oxfam.

‘Team Avila’ - aka Meg Gilfedder, Steven Frances, Allan Kennedy and Sarah Macdonald - have been training hard to participate in the annual Melbourne Oxfam Trailwalker on the weekend of April 16 and 17.

Known as the world’s greatest team challenge, and one of the toughest, participants are required to complete the 100km Trailwalker course within 48 hours. Team members must start together, stay together and finish together.

The event is a major fundraising activity for Oxfam Australia, providing vital funds to support some of the world’s poorest people through aid and development work in more than 28 countries.

‘Oxfam Trailwalker’ is not just physically demanding but it’s also a fundraising challenge,’ Sarah Macdonald said.

‘By taking part in the event, ‘Team Avila’ committed to raising at least $3,000. A morning tea held for the Avila staff guaranteed the target was generously met.’

If anyone would like to donate to ‘Team Avila’ or follow their blog, visit http://www2.oxfam.org.au/trailwalker/Melbourne/team/764.

Staff newlyweds

Bishop Tim Costelloe, SDP, officiated at the wedding of John Rhynehart and Teresa Wilson on January 9. The couple married at St John’s Catholic Church, Clifton Hill and the reception followed at the Kew Boat House.

Mr Rhynehart described his wedding day as ‘fantastic’.

A love of Science was the catalyst for the marriage of Johanna de Leon and Raul Chavez at St John the Baptist Church, Ferntree Gully, on September 24. Johanna, who teaches Science, Biology and Religious Education at Avila, and Raul met while undertaking studies for their Science degrees at Monash University.

Following their wedding, with many Avila staff at the ceremony, the couple honeymooned in Fiji.

Having spent four years living and working in England, Lisa Manning-Cox met her English husband-to-be within three days of setting foot back on Australian soil. The couple met while independently exploring Central Australia. Following their wedding at White Chapel, Langwarrin on December 19. Lisa and her husband Oliver Antrobus continued to share their love of travel with a honeymoon in Malaysia and Borneo.
Pictured from left to right with their daughters are Catherine Meale (Class of 1981) and Susannah Meale; AnneMarie Hope (nee Davis, Class of 1979) and twins Jorja and Sian; Mary Sheehan (nee Giling, Class of 1980) and Jade; Maria Constanzo-Veccio (nee Constanzo, Class of 1978) and Stephanie; and Joanne McKenzie-McHarg (nee Kelly, Class of 1977) and Bridget.

Avila tradition

Reflecting the reputation Avila College enjoys within the community, 15 of our new Year 7 intake are the daughters of past students.

Avila College was established in 1965 by the parishes of Mount Waverley, Glen Waverley, Syndal, Mulgrave and Jordanville with the Presentation Sisters accepting the challenging invitation to administer a Catholic college committed to the education of young women.

From 110 students in 1965, Avila now boasts a student population of about 1150. Avila’s coming-of-age in recent years has been highlighted by the increasing number of past students sending their daughters to the College.

Pictured from left to right with their daughters are Kerrin Keily (nee Thatcher, Class of 1982) and Tegan; Annette Hirst (nee Mitchell, Class of 1985) and Anjee; Joanne Le Sueur (nee Clarke, Class of 1983) and Stephanie; Cathie Hanna (nee Tell, Class of 1983) and Isabelle; Helen Selwood (nee Schmidt, Class of 1973) and Emma; Louise Davison (nee Dee, Class of 1982) and Brittany.
New Year 7s ‘Go for it’

There was a definite buzz of excitement in the air in the Junior Corridor on February 1 with the start of 200 very excited, and perhaps a little nervous, Year 7s.

The 2010 Year 7s have taken on the challenge of starting secondary school with gusto and are settling in well. The girls are fast refining their padlock opening skills, they are able to negotiate their way around the school grounds with ease and now know how to get to and from classes without bells. They have also experienced their first whole school Mass, a whole school assembly and year level assemblies. Our new Year 7s are quickly becoming part of the Avila community.

The Year 7s have also attended special Year 7 events such as Friendship Day, where they develop their friendship skills through role-plays and games. They have also participated in Swimming Day and Thursday lunchtime games, which have further helped foster new friendships.

During General Studies and Religious Education the Year 7s have been learning about the history of Avila College and of Saint Teresa of Avila, the Presentation Sisters and their Sports Houses. They have had the chance to visit the library and have seen first hand some of Avila’s archives.

The theme for the year is to ‘Go for it’! The girls are certainly embracing this and have already joined many extra curricular activities, such as house sports, drama club, music and computer club. What a wonderful start to the year and to secondary school life!

Well done, Year 7!

Mrs Tanya Induni
Year 7 Co-ordinator
**Japanese students enjoy Avila stay**

Two Japanese exchange students, Sayaka Marumoto and Yoko Honda, joined the Avila community for Term One.

They stayed with the family of Nicola Masters of Year 8 Orange, attended classes at Avila and also played tourist during their stay.

Sayaka and Yoko, who had never traveled outside of Japan before, enjoyed the experience greatly. They noted that Avila students participated in class discussions and were far more interactive than their peers in Japan; and that Melbourne’s temperature was much hotter than they expected.

Sayaka, who would like to work in airport services, and Yoko, who would like to be a radio technician, provided the following report: ‘We are both 19 years old and come from Kagoshima, Japan. We have been studying English for seven years and are in the English Department at Immaculate Heart College, a women’s college. We came to Australia to improve our spoken English. In Japan, we live in the college dormitory: every first grade student must live there with native teachers to study spoken English. We really enjoy living in the dormitory and cultivating our friendship with our friends.

In Australia we stayed with Nicola Masters, Year 8 Orange, and her family. They are a family of five and they all get along very well. Tony, the father, likes football and sometimes we watched the football on television with him. Wendy, the mother, is very kind. She likes animals and chatted with us every day. We helped her cook and loved her frittatas especially. Nicola’s brother studies Japanese at school. He speaks Japanese well.

**Year 8s quiz visitors**

On Wednesday February 17 two brave and well-educated nineteen-year-old girls from Immaculate Heart College, Japan, sat down and answered 8 Silver’s investigative questions about how life differs in Japan. Half of this Year 8 English class from Avila College interviewed Yoko Honda.

Yoko lives with her parents, older brother, dog and cat in their house in Kagoshima. She’s an active girls, not dissimilar to an Australian teenager, who likes to play volleyball and tennis, and in her spare time, listen to Japanese hip hop and watch TV. To relax, she reads fashion magazines and hangs out with friends.

Monday to Friday, Yoko travels by train to school. Similar to Avila, school starts at 8:30am, but it finishes considerably later at 6:30pm. During the day, Yoko looks forward to studying Japanese History and English even though she finds English challenging. Once she arrives home, Yoko’s expected to do at least two hours of homework each night.

Yoko arrived in Australia for the first time on Sunday February 14 and so far, her first week has been one of adjusting to the Australian lifestyle. Whilst residing at Nicole Master’s family home, she has discovered that the bathing process in Australia differs significantly. Her taste buds were challenged when she sampled some Vegemite for the first time. Yoko has had to become accustomed to eating cereal for breakfast and sandwiches for lunch, instead of miso soup, rice and Japanese white noodles for the respective meals.

Her time Down Under ends in just a few short weeks, but Avila hopes she will enjoy every second of her stay.

Madeleine Heyn

The family has two dogs, a cat, a lizard and a snake. They are so cute.’

Nicola said it was fun hosting the Japanese students and learning about their way of life and customs. She said her brother particularly enjoyed their help with his Japanese homework!

Nicola’s mum, Wendy, said that hosting Sayaka and Yoko was a wonderful opportunity for her family, and particularly her children, to gain a greater appreciation for a very different culture.

Mr Paul Ekers, who co-ordinates the exchange student visits, echoed Mrs Masters’ comments. He said the cultural exchange and new friendships were most rewarding for all involved.

Avila regularly has Japanese students visiting in February/March each year. Anyone interested in hosting a Japanese student in 2011 is invited to contact Mr Ekers on 9831 9600.
At just 14, the future is looking bright for aspiring actor and comedian Hayley Tait who was one of the stars of a recent ABC3 Prank Patrol series.

Hayley, a Creative Arts and Year 10 Drama Festival veteran, was among the 30 young performers selected from hundreds of applicants to be in the series which was screened earlier in the year.

Not only did Hayley have her time in front of the camera, but she also experienced how television shows are produced from auditioning and casting stage to the planning and working with the cameraman, sound technician and director.

‘We worked solidly for eight hours a day for three days,’ said the Year 9 student who found the experience sealed her desire to study at the Victorian College of the Arts or NIDA to become a professional actor.

The experience was the perfect outlet for Hayley’s love of drama, bubbly personality and sense of fun.

For her part, Hayley had to invite a friend to audition for a play but unbeknown to the friend, a ghost had been written into the script. Hayley and the crew had to carry off the prank during filming in a studio and also outside the Palais Theatre and inside the Tivoli.

‘With the help of special effects, we really had my friend Lucy believe there was a ghost,’ said Hayley, adding that Lucy shared in the hilarity when all was revealed.
Avila College hosted its Year 12 Senior Formal at the Brighton International on Friday, February 12.

Everyone made the most of the opportunity to dress up and strut their stuff. Many lessons were learned at last year’s Year 11 Formal and all students and guests were elegant and sophisticated in their formal attire.

The venue looked wonderful and the three course meal was delicious. It didn’t take long for us all to kick off our high shoes and hit the dance floor. A few golden oldies songs from the 1980s had the teachers up and on their feet with some of them busting a few interesting moves! The night was a great celebration of the friendship and respect our year level has for one another and the whole evening had a positive and fun vibe to it.

Apart from enjoying a great evening the Year 12 VCAL class did most of the organising for the event. We now know how frustrating it is when people do not bring back forms on time or change their mind (or partner) at the last minute. Seating more than 300 people, making invitations from scratch and liaising with administration staff at school and the venue has taught us invaluable event management skills. Thanks to the venue and teachers who make the event possible. Work is now underway for the Year 11 Formal.

Sarah Wellington, Year 12 VCAL class
Party politics and paparazzi puff aside, if Jill Hennessy’s track record of trying to make the world a better place is anything to go by, the newly sworn in politician is destined to achieve great things.

Even as a teenager the past Avila student and Public Speaking Captain had a strong social conscience and firm values and knew that if she wanted to effect change, she needed to position herself to do so. She is already well on her way with an impressive legal and political career and wider community service ... one of her most recent and widely publicised coups was her election to State Parliament as the Labor representative for Altona.

The Class of 1989 graduate’s legal and political background is underpinned by her passion for social issues and equality and justice. A mother of two young daughters, family is extremely important and so too is the need for greater equality for women in terms of professional opportunities and remuneration and having a more equal voice in the political and corporate decisions that shape our world.

Ask those who knew Jill from her younger years, and they will say that she was always destined to make her mark ... At just 16, she joined the ALP and in 1997 she became the youngest Victorian ALP President.

With a Law Degree from Monash University and a Masters of International and Public Law and having worked as a solicitor with Holding Redlich, Jill quickly and steadily progressed to the government arena, working as a manager in local government before becoming advisor and then director of administration for former Premier Steve Bracks.

In terms of achievements, Jill is quick to qualify that there is usually a team effort involved. In law, she worked on many equal opportunity cases so that people could be treated ‘fairly and with dignity’ as well as specialising in personal injury and employment law. Her political highlights include chairing Steve Bracks’s election campaign committee when he became Premier and of course her own recent election. In 2002 Jill traveled to the United States for a US political fellowship as a guest of the US Government.

Jill’s community involvements have ranged from helping St Vinnies and Rosies, run by the Oblate Brothers, to provide food and support for the homeless to volunteer advisor at the Springvale Legal Service to serving on the board Amnesty International Australia. She was also on the Board of Western Region Health Services as Chair of the Victorian Working Families Council.

Jill is also a strong supporter of Emily’s List, an organisation specifically formed to give encouragement and financial support for women keen to enter politics. She herself has been taken under the wing by the likes of Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard and former Victorian Premier Joan Kirner.

As a student at Avila, Jill was studious. She connected with the College community and broadened her horizons by making the most of the extra curricular opportunities ranging from social justice groups to drama and music.

‘Avila enhanced my commitment to social justice and community involvement,’ Jill said.

‘...There were a number of teachers who encouraged us to be deep thinkers and to see the world from a fair and just perspective,’ recalled Jill, adding that she was particularly inspired by strong female role models like (long serving teachers) Mrs Anne Vadiveloo and Mrs Pat Hall who were the founding ‘aunties’ of the Reconciliation movement at Avila and helped nurture the ‘(girls) can do’ philosophy which is so much a part of the Avila spirit.

According to Jill, Avila’s culture of tolerance and inclusiveness was unique. Also, students were empowered by the belief that they could achieve anything they worked towards ... Jill continues to work hard to make the world a better place, mindful that ‘change takes time and requires good leadership’.

Jill described her time at Avila as ‘a lot of fun’ with a great circle of life-long friends who have continued to keep her well grounded, particularly during the political whirlwind of the past few months.

Despite Jill’s demanding career and ambitions, her family is her number one priority. She said one of her greatest challenges will be to maintain a healthy balance, and to be there for her daughters, Lily and Ginger, who are 5 and 3 respectively, and destined to be part of the next generation of women who will be able to draw on the work of people like their mother to help make the world a more equitable place for all.

Vote 1 for Jill

Past student and ambitious politician Jill Hennessy with her husband, Bernie and their children Lily and Ginger.
Private chef in Italy turns teacher

Never in her wildest dreams did Ciar Foster think she would one day be living and working in Rome as the private chef to Amanda Vanstone, Australia’s Ambassador in Italy.

In fact, never in her wildest dreams did Ciar think her career path would see her switch from double degree studies in Arts and Economics to completing an Arts Degree majoring in English Literature and Politics, to qualifying as a chef and working in Italy as well as Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, and then to become a secondary school English teacher.

However, the Class of 1996 graduate is a person of multiple talents and someone who believes in keeping an open mind to pursue her dreams. She attributes some of her determination to her time at Avila, ‘an incredibly supportive environment with many strong women telling us we could do anything we wanted and worked towards’.

At university, Ciar supported herself with part-time café work. Upon completing her degree, she contemplated further study such as an Honours degree or post graduate course but decided to take a year off instead. She decided to do a commercial cookery course so she could earn more money while still a student. She enjoyed the cooking so much that once she completed her degree, she decided to take up an apprenticeship with Andrew McConnell of Dining Room 211 fame. After stints in Sydney and Perth and through industry contacts, she landed the job as private chef to Amanda Vanstone during her first year as Australian Ambassador to Italy in 2008.

‘It was a fantastic experience. I was the only chef so I planned everything for functions catering for as many people as 300. We had dinner parties with people like Cardinal George Pell and also entertained delegates from the Italian Soccer Federation and for Australia Day,’ said Ciar who thrived on the mix of creativity and structure that cheffing offers.

‘I loved the lifestyle in Rome and shopping in the local markets ... the local seasonal produce was just amazing ... There was also a wonderful sense of community in Rome. I picked up a bit of Italian but I really regretted not keeping up languages at school.’

Ciar had an option to remain in Rome at the end of her 12-month contract but decided to return to Australia because she was becoming restless for a new challenge. Not one to be complacent, Ciar completed her Diploma in Education last year and is now teaching English at Sandringham Secondary College.

‘I was drawn to teaching because I believe in education and how important it is and I had such a positive experience myself at school. I am really enjoying sharing my passion for education, and English, with young people,’ said Ciar who was heavily involved in debating during her student days at Avila and in Year 12 was chosen as a representative on the Victorian Schools Debating Team.

No doubt Ciar’s drive and determination, love of a challenge and adventurous spirit will inspire her students to follow their interests and dreams in finding fulfilling career paths.

Rewarding time in Cambodia

Teaching English as a volunteer in Cambodia has been one of the most rewarding experiences to date for past student Bianca Trollope (nee Miranda, Class of 1997).

Bianca and her husband, Brett, taught English at an orphanage (see picture) and also at a hospitality training school. They also supplied a water pump and clothing and blankets for the children with money raised by students at Mount Scopus Memorial College where they were both teachers at the time.

‘English is a ticket to independence particularly for the young girls at the hospitality school because if they are able to get employment in the hospitality/tourism industry they can support themselves and their families,’ said Bianca, adding that the students were mainly from disadvantaged backgrounds, coming from families earning less than US$300 a year. ‘It was so rewarding to help make such a positive difference and everyone at the orphanage and hospitality school was so appreciative.’

Bianca, who is expecting the couple’s first child and is on maternity leave from her current position as Head of Science at The King David School, said that she and her husband would like to return for an extended period some time in the future. Their experience has also inspired some of their friends to work as volunteers in Cambodia. With a passion for education, as well as her natural love of learning and challenge, Bianca is currently undertaking her Masters of Education and basing her thesis research on Leadership in Science Education.
Terri Psiakis with baby Ella.

Finding the funny fuels comedic career

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This phrase scribbled on a classroom blackboard at Avila College back in the early 1990s has had quite a profound impact on successful comedian, radio broadcaster and author, Terri Psiakis who was in Year 9 at the time.

‘It is what I base my material on, “finding the funny” in the every day,’ said Terri, who described humour and comedy and the ability to laugh as a wonderful coping mechanism.

It is not surprising Terri often pinches herself about the way her career has taken shape, and laughs herself at the absurdity of earning a living from having, and poking, a lot of fun.

At just 32, she has an impressive curriculum vitae which is not bad at all for someone who readily confesses she was very stressed in Year 12 because she had no idea what she wanted to do. Terri’s work history includes prime time stints on national radio, performing at the Melbourne Comedy Festival and the launching last year of her first book, *Tying the Knot Without Doing Your Block*. One of her greatest career highlights was co-hosting two successive summertime shows on Triple J with English comedian Ross Noble, considered to be one of the top comedians in the world. Her first ‘serious’ job was script writing for *Rove*.

Currently on a semi sabbatical caring for her six-month old daughter Ella – once the baby is settled for the evening, Terri is often penning scripts until the early hours of the morning, Terri fondly recalls her Avila experiences and how they helped shaped who she is today. She also treasures her tight Avila friendship group with whom she is in regular contact.

‘Avila was such an encouraging and inspiring environment. Students were encouraged to pursue their passions and have a go,’ Terri said.

And that is exactly what she did: ‘My first stand-up experience was at the Creative Arts Festival when I was in Year 8 ...I was involved in House drama as a performer and then a director ... I was in public speaking and debating which helped give me the confidence to stand up in front of an audience ...I was one of the school magazine editors which I loved ...I loved English and writing and can remember Mrs Chris Dalwood who was such a wonderful teacher ...Mrs Anne Vadiveloo and Mrs Adèle Morice were always there to spur us on ...’

It was at Avila that Terri enjoyed her first taste of broadcasting when she and fellow student Naomi Murphy launched an Avila radio station. From a small room near the old gymnasium, and complete with specially purchased equipment, the two girls broadcast music and radio sketches at lunchtimes.

Not knowing where she was headed, Terri completed an Arts Degree, majoring in English and Indonesian, at Monash University and a Master of Arts/Communications at RMIT. Ironically it was whilst supporting herself with stand-up gigs on the pub comedy circuit that Terri was ‘discovered’ – she was invited to join the script writing team for *Rove* where she remained for eight years. She has since progressed to radio presenting, performing stand-up at the Comedy Festival and publishing a book.

Terri draws from her own life for her material, from being single, to meeting her husband who she refers to as ‘The Bloke’ in her work, and planning her wedding. The arrival of Ella in October 2010 has opened up a rich new world of ideas.

‘One of the biggest challenges is to talk about the people I love without offending them in any way,’ said Terri who comes from a family of storytellers and can remember as a child sitting around the dinner table listening to the adults crafting their tales.

For Terri, the greatest reward working in comedy is to bring pleasure to others, to provide a tonic for the soul by turning the ordinary into something extraordinary, something extraordinarily funny, that makes people laugh, and even reflect and view their lives from another perspective.
Bush Camp was an amazing experience, even though it was a 35km walk without showers. The views were breathtaking and looking back, our walk was a great achievement. Although it was tough, we all pushed past it and kept our spirits high.

Carla De Losa
Liana Baviello

Surf Camp was a fun experience. Our activities included three surf lessons in large and small waves, a bush walk, reef studies and snorkelling. Some were in beautiful environments. Our camp site was good and we had lots of fun on the jumping pillow whenever we could.

Maddy Murphy

Bimbi Park camp was filled with excitement, enthusiasm and a whole lot of screaming... One of the most popular activities was the surf kayak because the seals were so curious about what we were doing. The most annoying part of camp was sleeping in tents with koala’s all around making lots of noises during the night and first thing in the morning.

Tahlia Holsinger

Mount Arapiles is a beautiful place and our four days there were full to the brim with adrenalin-pumping rockclimbing, fun, excitement and exhaustion. Everybody came together as a group and helped each other get to the top of each climb. Mount Arapiles camp was so much fun, I would gladly go back and do it all again.

Darcy Morris
Distance swimmer and Year 8 student, Holly Dever, hopes that up to 17-hours a week of training will pay off one day with selection to represent Australia in the Olympics.

Holly, 13, is already reaping rewards from her commitment, having recently gained fifth place in the open water nationals at Nagambie. Her time of 65 minutes over the 5km course also placed her as the first Victorian over the line in her age group. She hopes to qualify for the Victorian side as well as the age nationals in the 800m pool event.

A member of the Monash University Swimming Club, Holly has been competing for the past three years. She hopes to follow in the footsteps/swim strokes of her idol, Melissa Gorman and represent Australia in the 800m freestyle event at the Olympic Games.

Kate Fotopoulos is carving quite a name for herself in both outdoor and indoor (futsal) soccer.

Earlier this year, Kate, 14, was selected for the under 14 national team and recently was awarded a coveted full scholarship into the National Training Centre’s junior program. Kate, who is in Year 9, trains up to 13 hours a week at the NTC.

Kate’s selection follows-on from her great performance representing Victoria in outdoor soccer last year. Kate, who plays mainly on the wing, also represented Victoria in futsal (indoor soccer) in January.

Whilst soccer can be a bit physical at times, Kate said she loved the pace of game and the fact players can largely run the field.

Year 8s enjoyed plenty of action at Point Leo for a beach safety excursion in February. The day involved eight different activities, five in water and three on land. Our trained instructors from Lifesaving Victoria and teachers helped us get the best out of our day. Everyone had fun and learned so much.

Indoor/outdoor soccer success

Kate Fotopoulos

New spin on basketball

VCE students studying Physical Education Unit 3 gained a different perspective on sport when they were visited by Andrew from Wheeltalk Victoria. Whilst they enjoyed their taste of wheelchair basketball they soon realised the intense level of physical effort required.

Set to make big splash

Holly Dever

Emily-Jane Howley and Sophie Salvitti

Point Leo action

Kate Fotopoulos

Kate Fotopoulos
Team spirit was electric and competition keen at the 2010 House Swimming Sports on March 11.

The atmosphere, perfect weather and impressive venue at the newly refurbished Oakleigh Swimming Pool made up for the cancellation of last year’s event due to soaking rains despite the prevailing drought conditions.

At the end of the day, Chisholm was triumphant with 767 points, followed by Nagle 744, Mackillop 693 and Flynn 545.

The individual champions (pictured above) were:
Year 7 - Stephanie Bella Penna, Natallie Costello; r/u Alice Whelan
Year 8 - Holly Dever; r/u Rebecca Abbott
Year 9 - Ruth Smith; r/u Stephanie Holmes
Year 10 - Katherine Konstantinidis; r/u Teaghan Sutherland
Year 11- Lillian Smith, and Danielle Costello; r/u Tenille Grebert-Craig
Year 12 - Alex Bell; r/u Michelle Esmore.