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

This issue includes:

1:1 Year 10 laptop program

Red Cross Doorknock success

Welcome to Year 7s
I t has been with mixed emotions that we have commenced the new school year - excitement as we welcomed our Year 7s and new and returning students at other year levels; and absolute compassion for all those affected by the floods and cyclones in Australia, the Christchurch earthquake, and the earthquake and tsunami in Japan and the events in Libya.

As a community we have prayed for the many thousands of people who have been affected, as well as fund raised. Just over $1000 was donated to Caritas relief projects when the school fundraised and paused for a minute’s silence to remember those who had lost lives in devastating events in Australia. For the 2011 annual Red Cross Door Knock Appeal, we had an overwhelming response with 90 students giving up their Sunday to collect about $4,500, some of the proceeds of which will benefit those in need of assistance in other countries.

We have commenced the 2011 school year with 200 Year 7s and 15 new students across years 8 to 12, as well as nine new staff members. Our Year 7 intake includes a number of daughters of past students which is testimony to the reputation that Avila enjoys in the community as a provider of quality education in a Christian environment. We also welcome another past student, Mrs Catherine Spurritt, as a member of our teaching staff and Head of General Studies.

The Girl Effect

At our first whole school assembly for 2011, I presented to the student community a very simple but powerful message entitled ‘The Girl Effect’. This fast-moving, simple word-driven message highlights the fact that if you give a girl an education you are investing in the future of our humanity. I asked the Avila students to appreciate that they are considered most fortunate to receive an education and to remember this compared to the 600 million girls in the developing world who are often denied the opportunity to have much of an education. The prevailing clip has a message at the end, which says, “invest in a girl and she will do the rest.” My hope is that Avila students consider this message.

As you will see from the pictures in this edition of Avila Matters, the new junior school building is really starting to take shape with all steel work now completed and most of the concrete for the second level due for completion very soon. We have also decided to include an underground water storage tank that will harvest rain-water from the roof and be used as green water for the toilets in this new building and provide garden water for our plants.

Term One is usually described as the busiest term of the four in any school year – and this term has been no exception thanks especially to the late start to the year. This year we tried something new for the beginning of the year and that was to bring all students – years 7-12 back on Friday 4 February for a half day of orientation. From all accounts this allowed a smoother start to the academic year and we are looking at a similar arrangement for the start of the 2012 school year. A quick look over the calendar and one can see that numerous events have kept staff, students and parents busy throughout the term. I would like to thank staff for their commitment to these important activities and parents for their continued support of what we consider an important alliance to what we offer your daughters.

Rich and vibrant community

As I reflect on my first term as the eighth principal of Avila College, one very quickly begins to realise that while we are not an old school compared to others that have a history spanning over 100 years, we are a rich and vibrant community that shares a common bond started by the Presentation sisters 46 years ago. Current staff and students have the immediate responsibility to plan for the future of the college while past staff and students are essential in recording and reflecting on their times at Avila and what brings them back together many years later.

I am sure all who read this edition of Avila Matters – will gain a valuable insight into the very dynamic community of which I am proud to be a part.

Ms Louise Gunther
Principal
The 2011 school year has been launched with an exciting start with Avila’s ‘can do’ young women recording an impressive list of achievements across a diverse range of disciplines and extra curricular interests.

The breadth and depth of the student achievements – as individuals, members of sporting teams and clubs and special interest groups - clearly contribute to the rich fabric that makes Avila such a vibrant learning environment.

Many of these accomplishments have been featured throughout this issue of Avila Matters. In summary, they include:

- Class of 2010 graduate, Alex Saltis, is our 2010 College Dux in acknowledgement of her ATAR score of 99.3 per cent.
- Year 12 students Margaret Hezkial (Religion and Society) and Georgia Delaney (History Revolutions) achieved perfect ATAR scores of 50 in the unit 3 and 4 subjects they undertook in Year 11.
- 2010 College Captain, Marnie Banger, was selected to perform at the VCAA top Class Drama concert on April 1.
- 2010 Mackillop captain and captain of the College tennis squad, Alexandra Bell secured a scholarship, valued at more than A$50,000 to pursue her studies and tennis in the United States.
- Ruby Robertson, Year 9, was awarded the highest mark in Australia for an Australian Institute of Classical Ballet scholarship.
- Mirella Cuda, Year 8, is in Los Angeles to perform with her dance school at Disneyland and Universal Studios.
- Margaret Tanjutco, Year 10, was named Best Actress in the Lyrebird Youth Awards for her performance as Belle in a Beauty and the Beast production.
- Nana Owusu-Afriyie, Year 7, took out the 100 and 70 metre titles at the Victorian Little Athletics State Track and Field Championships.
- Sarah Papadimtriou’s soccer team won the U13 Victorian Champions Soccer League title and Sarah, Year 7, also captained her Waverley Softball Association’s U13 team to victory at the Australia Day carnival in Canberra.
- Natalie Passarelli, Year 11, will participate in the U17 National Softball Championships at Easter.
- Rebecca Andrews, Year 9, has been selected as second goal keeper for the Victorian 18-and-under water polo team.

In addition:
- Phoebe Tapley, currently in Year 11, is our second student in as many years to be accepted into the prestigious Kwong Lee Dow Scholarship Program at Melbourne University while Stephanie Barcham, also Year 11, is our fourth student in four years to be presented with a Father James Wall Scholarship by the Catholic Development Fund.
- A 90-strong contingent from Avila collected $4500 in the 2011 Red Cross Doorknock Appeal.

Organised by the Avila Peer Helpers and Peer Support groups, students and staff rallied to make 1000 origami cranes to fundraise and maintain awareness of the plight of Japan following the earthquake and tsunami on March 11.

Japanese exchange student, Shiho Sato, whose family is safe, led the way in making the cranes. Shiho herself made 40 in a single night.

The cranes are traditionally made by the Japanese to symbolise hope in good time and bad.

Pictured: College Captain Mia Lentini (third from right) with other members of the SRC who were among the Avila Red Cross Doorknockers.
Hard work, with a few sacrifices along the way, have reaped rewards for Alexandra Saltis, the 2010 Avila College Dux.

Alexandra gained an ATAR score of 99.3 and acceptance into her chosen tertiary course, Arts/Law at Monash University, Clayton. Inspired by the culture of social justice at Avila, Alexandra wants to make a positive difference to the lives of others by specialising in the human rights field.

In addresses to the first whole-school assembly for 2011 and to a Year 12 Pastoral, Alexandra stressed the importance of focusing on study in Year 12.

‘There is no substitute for hard work and the need to sometimes make some sacrifices in areas such as your social life ... The choices you make are really important like whether you do that little bit extra, it all counts in the end,' Alexandra later reiterated. ‘It is equally important to know your limits and pace yourself so you don’t burn out.’

Alexandra emphasised the need ‘to have confidence in yourself and not to underestimate your ability ... use your teachers, and your family, as they are there to help and support you.’

For her VCE, Alex, who was among the younger students in her cohort, chose subjects she enjoyed and was good at - English, Literature, Italian, Classical Societies and Culture and Religion and Society. In Year 11, she completed units 3 and 4 in Health and Human Development which provided her with a head start for her final year as well as an insight into what was expected.

‘Don’t be frightened to do what others might advise you against,’ said Alexandra, ‘I dropped Maths, which was not a prerequisite subject for what I wanted to do, and did both English and Literature. Writing and communicating are my strong points, and together with the related skills like analysis, are extremely important in a career like law.

Italian is another of Alexandra’s passions and she intends to continue her language studies at university.
Class of 2010 - atar results

Almost half cohort in top 20 per cent of State

Congratulations to the Year 12 class of 2010 who all successfully completed VCE or gained relevant VCAL certificates. Well done to those who worked diligently throughout the year to achieve their best.

The 2010 results were excellent with nearly half of the cohort of 176 students, achieving an ATAR above 80, placing them in the top 20 per cent of the state. Twenty-one per cent of these students achieved an ATAR of 90 or above.

The Dux for 2010 was Alexandra Saltis with an ATAR of 99.3. Alexandra has commenced Arts/Law at Monash University. College Principal, Ms Louise Gunther presented Alexandra with the Filomena Salvatore College Dux Award at the first school assembly in February.

Congratulations must also be extended to two Year 11 students, who completed Units 3 & 4 subjects and achieved perfect scores; Margaret Hezkial in Religion and Society and Georgia Delaney in History: Revolutions.

Marnie Banger, our 2010 College Captain, attained exceptionally high scores in all her subjects, one of which was Drama. Her exam performance earned her an invitation by the VCAA to perform her piece at the 2011 Top Class showcase. See page 5 for more details.

The impressive academic performances resulted in 159 Round 1 tertiary offers being made to Avila students. Ninety-two students (58 per cent) received their first preference. Yet again, Monash University was the preferred tertiary institution, with Deakin second and Melbourne University third. In all, Avila students have headed to 18 different learning institutions across Victoria and a small number have elected to study interstate and overseas. The students combined choices span 110 different courses reflecting the uniqueness of each student, their varied interests, aspirations and talents. It is also a measure of the expertise and experience of the careers guidance provided by Mr David Bruce, who is able to guide and fine tune the students’ choices to reflect their ability and aspirations.

The most popular areas of study for 2011 are in Society and Culture (which includes BA degrees), Management and Commerce, Science, Health, and Creative Arts. Education is also strongly represented.

Success in Year 12 is the product of continuous and dedicated study throughout secondary school. Successful students establish a solid academic foundation in earlier years which they build on in their final year. The general consensus to success in Year 12 is commitment to rigorous studies, excellent time management and a love of the chosen subject. Living a healthy, balanced life is also a key to success.

Students at Avila are well supported by excellent resources and dedicated and skilled staff who deliver their curriculum with passion and sound pedagogy.

The academic program, combined with extra curricular activities and a supportive pastoral ethos ensure the young women completing their education at Avila are confident and independent, ready to face the challenges of life.

Mrs Louise Swift, Year 12 Co-ordinator
Avila’s high achievers share their tips

Avila’s high achievers from the Year 12 class of 2010 inspired this year’s VCE students when they returned to the College in February to address a special year-level assembly.

The 2010 graduates each shared their aspirations for the future, their experiences of Year 12, and also passed on some words of wisdom about academic success. Most of the girls achieved an ATAR in the high 90s and are now pursuing their passions to study Arts/Law, Business/Law, Biomedical Science with some hoping to work in the fields of medicine and engineering.

The advice was candid, indicating that success is not only about ability, but rather being prepared to work very hard, to make sacrifices during Year 12, to use all resources available at the College and to learn to become independent learners; to go beyond minimal expectations. The graduates also gave very useful hints about study techniques they found productive. A feature of their presentation was that it is possible to achieve high academic results and also be involved in extra curricular activities. A number of the students served as leaders and most were involved in some form of extra curricular activity such as debating which they found enhanced their studies.

Tamara Goodings spoke to the students about making a more significant choice when deciding on post study celebrations. Rather than opting for the more popular ‘schoolies’ holiday destinations she chose to volunteer her services to providing aid to East Timor. ‘I wanted to be able to draw on the education I have enjoyed to help make a difference by volunteering in orphanages, schools and medical drop sites,’ said Tamara who completed her VCE in 2010.

Unfortunately the Mater Christi-organised trip was cancelled due to lack of numbers, but Tamara hopes to go at the end of this year. In the meantime, Tamara, has commenced undergraduate studies in communication and design at Swinburne.

We wish all of these girls the very best for their studies in 2011.

Mrs Louise Swift
Year 12 Co-ordinator
As we go to print much of Queensland is attending to a massive clean-up after incredible flooding, Christchurch is rebuilding and Japan, and the world, is coming to grips with the terror of an earthquake, its aftershocks and the extraordinary impact of a tsunami that simply devastated entire regions in the country. These are solemn times as the rescue of people turns into recovery of bodies.

At the same time, while we pray for those affected and look in shock at the aftermath, and consider other sorrows in the world - Libya comes to mind - people of good will seem to come out of the crevices of their normal, usual lives and simply pitch in. They are ordinary people inspired to do ordinary things in the hope that, even in some small way, what they do will make a difference. There is no reward and certainly no 15 minutes of fame. They see a need and respond with generosity, conviction and tenacity.

The community of Avila College responds as well. We pray. We donate money. We empathise and sympathise. We understand John Donne's sentiments: 'No man is an island ... we are all a part of mankind ... never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee!' We understand that we are very much a part of the global village and attend to the needs of our brothers and sisters in a variety of actions, thoughts and words. The evidence of this has been the numerous activities we have experienced throughout Term One.

One Friday morning we all paused and prayed for the victims of flood, fire and cyclone in Australia throughout the summer. We flew our flags at half-mast and sat still and reflected in a minute's silence for those who died in these recent events. The silence was palpable. The giving was generous and unanimous. This was the first time the College community gathered in prayer this year, having seen a need, and then responded with a positive and pro-active action. Indeed this was the first time for the year that the Avila community took the Gospel teaching: 'you are the light of the world' and lived it out - embraced it with action and prayer - receiving nothing in return except the heartfelt thanks of those who are to be the recipients of our contribution.

In the midst of the busyness of term one the year 7, 8, 11 and 12 students have participated in a Christian Living Day. Each day, though different in content, in its own way was able to unravel further for the students the meaning of being a light to the world for each other and the college community. For the Year 7s it was simple: Friendship Day – holding out a hand of friendship to new people and burning a light of acceptance for all to see. Similarly, for the year 8s and 12s, in a day where stories were told and sharing of ideas were abundant. Each to the other – the light of Christ was burning brightly in these interactions. The Year 11 students enjoyed a day pack-filled with ideas about the dignity of humanity and, in particular, their own dignity as young women. I could see the light of Christ burning brightly in them as they contemplated all that was placed before them.

All of this culminated in the Opening School Eucharist. The theme of the Light of Christ being a Light for the World was further enhanced with the caveat, 'be that light'. In the liturgy the students were once again challenged to take the light of their talents out into the world and to then make that world a much better place because of their light. In his homily, Father Pat Jackson, SAC, said: 'How we live can lead people who are searching to look beyond us to the God who gifts us. Are we aware of the light we give off in our attitudes, words and example? Are we alert to the impact we have on other people’s lives – a smile, a word, a helping hand? You don’t have to tell people about the perfume you are wearing. You don’t parade your light, simply be light. Mother Teresa left a comfortable life to work in the slums of Calcutta. She did it out of love. Malcolm Muggeridge wrote, “I can’t tell you how much I owe Mother Teresa. She showed Christianity in action. She showed me love in action, she showed me how the love of one person can start a tidal wave that can spread across the world.’ She was a light for the world.’

And now it’s Lent. Where we burn our lights ever more brightly in a sacrificial love for our neighbour.

May the Resurrection of Jesus keep casting a light over us as we continue to be people of the Resurrection in our daily living and loving.

Mr John Rhynehart, Faith Development Co-ordinator

The Avila community gave generously to help those affected by floods in Victoria and Queensland. Counting the donations are Deputy Principal (Wellbeing), Mrs Christine Kralj, Faith Development Co-ordinator, Mr John Rhynehart, College Captain Mia Lentini and Liturgy Captain, Neethu Pynadath.
December 2, 2010, was an evening of mixed emotions as the Avila Community gathered together to officially say thank you and goodbye to Principal, Ms Liz Gleeson. There had been many occasions during the final weeks of the year where different groups had said their farewells, but on this occasion the whole community gathered for a Mass and supper to wish her well and thank her.

Much preparation went into the evening to ensure the celebration truly reflected the contribution Ms Gleeson has made to the College since initially being appointed Deputy Principal in 2001, as well as representing the warmth, friendship and love she has given to each member of the Avila Community. Mr John Beekhof, the Religious Education Co-ordinator, led an enthusiastic team of volunteers to create swathes of fabric that stretched across the ceiling of the gym, transforming the space into a beautiful place of worship, unlike we had ever seen before.

The evening began with a very moving ceremony of Aboriginal blessing and farewell. Mrs Vicki Walker, member of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry and long time friend of Avila College, came forward and not only spoke words of blessing but symbolically marked Ms Gleeson’s face, to carry her on her journey. The congregation sat silently and reverently watching this, knowing that this ceremony also represented the commitment and contribution Ms Gleeson has made to the process of Reconciliation at Avila.

Father Brendan Dillon, the Head of the Canonical Administrators of Avila College; Father Tony Feeney, Parish Priest of Holy Saviour Parish; Father Pat Jackson, Parish Priest of St Christopher’s Syndal; and Father Michael Twigg, Rector of Mazenod College; gathered to concelebrate the Mass. More than 800 staff, students and their families attended along with invited guests and family and friends of Ms Gleeson. The Mass began with a trumpet fanfare, a fitting choice as Ms Gleeson played trumpet in the College orchestra. The choir and orchestra played many of her favorite hymns and our soloists gave a beautiful performance of Panis Angelicus.

Father Dillon spoke warmly of the contribution Ms Gleeson made as leader to Avila as Principal over the past five years and as Deputy Principal over the previous six.

At the end of the Mass, Mia Lentini, the 2011 School Captain made a presentation to Ms Gleeson, thanking her on behalf of the student population, Chairperson of the College Board, Mrs Caryl Finnegan gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the Education Board and Mrs Maria Gentile and Mrs Maria Lentini made a small presentation on behalf of the Parent Network. Director of Music, Ms Roxane Lascaris delivered a special surprise when she and the orchestra and choir presented their final song All You Need is Liz ... complete with photos of Ms Gleeson’s time at Avila.

Once the formal part of the evening was completed, families adjourned to the grounds for a sausage sizzle. Despite the rain earlier during the day, the evening was fine and there was a strong community feel as people chatted, children ran about and personal thanks and goodbyes extended to Ms Gleeson. Many ex-students attended which was a testament to the ongoing influence Ms Gleeson has had not just on Avila, but on the thousands of students she has taught or made connections with during her teaching career.

While Ms Gleeson’s departure is a sad event for our community, we wish her well in her new role with the Catholic Education Office as a principal consultant for the Western region which will still see her make a meaningful contribution to Catholic education.

Mrs Marie Stuart
Faith Development Co-ordinator, 2010

Pictured: At the Mass of thanksgiving and farewell, Ms Gleeson with traditional Aboriginal markings; Ms Gleeson addresses those gathered, students, parents and retired staff were among those gathered; Ms Gleeson with friends and family at a staff farewell function.
The Avila Community gathered around the table of the Lord at Eucharist on Thursday February 24 to pray for God’s blessing for the new school year. The gathering also witnessed the commissioning of Ms Louise Gunther as the eighth Principal of Avila College as well as the induction of the 2011 student leaders.

Ms Gunther, who was joined by her parents and other members of her family for the historic occasion, was formally presented to the College community by Chairperson of the College Board, Mrs Caryl Finnegan.

Sister Michele Kennan, representing the Presentation Order, officially inducted our new principal with these words: ‘On behalf of the Presentation Sisters, the College Board and the entire College community, I gladly accept your presentation and am ready and willing to commission Louise. Louise, at your Baptism, on your behalf, your parents accepted a lit candle with the words: “Receive the Light of Christ … you have been enlightened by Christ … to walk always as a child of the light … keep the flame of faith alive in your heart.” Once again receive the Light of Christ from your parents who nurtured you in the Christian Faith. Take this light and let it be a symbol of the light you will become for the Avila Community.

Ms Gunther received the lit candle from her mother. She was then addressed by members of the Avila community who questioned her about her willingness to be a true Christian leader and then affirmed her in her commitment. Sister Michele continued: ‘In commissioning you, Louise, as Principal of Avila College, we pray that you will fulfil all that you have promised. Please know that we will be a light for you as we pray a prayer of blessing over you to our loving God.

Later in the Eucharist, Father Brendan Dillon, the principal celebrant, inducted the College’s 32 student leaders. Each of the students was presented with a candle to remind them that they are ‘lights for the world’. The candles were lit from Nano Nagle’s lamp by members of the leadership team – thus the Light of Christ is passed from one generation to the next.

Ms Gunther led a prayer that the leaders ‘remain true to their commitment of leadership and to being Lights of Christ’ and asked for God’s blessing over them.

Fr Brendan prayed: ‘May God who has begun the good work in you, sustain you in your commitment. May the Light of Christ shine from you always and may you lead with compassion and good example. This we ask in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Opening of the School Year Liturgy and commissioning of Ms Gunther and the 2011 student leaders was a significant and historic event on the College calendar. Special thanks to all those who played an integral part in making it such a special occasion - the musicians, stage crew, readers, special ministers, the priests and most important of all, the students who participated with reverence and decorum. Many thanks to all.

Mr John Rhynehart
Faith Development Co-ordinator
Fire Carrier Groups connect at Coranderrk

Eight members of the Reconciliation Group had the privilege to meet with students from other schools’ Fire Carrier Groups, Wurundjeri elder, Aunty Joy Wandin Murphy, Vicki Walker Clarke and Sherry Balcombe at a gathering at Healesville Sanctuary in March. We learned about the history of the surrounding Coranderrk land. We were welcomed to the country by Aunty Joy, who explained why the land meant so much to her people and Victoria’s Aboriginal community. We discovered that Coranderrk was a mission station, where Aboriginals lived self-sufficiently for many years. The Coranderrk Station was founded by Simon Wonga and, on his death, leadership was given to William Barak – Aunty Joy’s great uncle. The stories of his bravery and pride in his people and culture were inspirational.

Another memorable moment was the traditional Aboriginal smoking ceremony the we participated in. Traditionally a smoking ceremony would be held before you enter another tribe’s land so you couldn’t bring any bad or evil spirits with you. We were told it was a time to cleanse ourselves of anything that might have been burdening us in recent times; it was a time to reflect and purify ourselves before entering the sacred land. We were given the privilege of going to the sacred Coranderrk Cemetery with Aunty Joy, to the place where her ancestors are buried. This experience was incredibly sobering yet enriching. There were only a couple of marked graves and one monument stating all the people known to be buried there. There were so many children who died at such a young age, so many who hadn’t even been given a name, they just had ‘baby’ written next to their last name.

Later in the day we talked about the covenant that each school had written committing themselves to Reconciliation. The day gave the Reconciliation Group and its work so much more meaning. We are truly privileged to have had such an amazing experience.

Kate Riethmuller, Year 10 Pink and Grace Dungey, Year 10

‘Concerned Australians’ listen to elders

The Northern Territory Emergency Response, also known as the Intervention, was again raised as an important issue by ‘Concerned Australians’ at a conference at Melbourne University’s Law School in Term One. Seven Aboriginal elders from different communities talked about the effect of the Intervention on their communities, and what was needed to ensure government policy is protecting the rights and living standards of all Australians. The evening was hosted by award-winning journalist Jeff McMullen, and featured the Hon Alastair Nicholson, QC, and former Prime Minister Mr Malcolm Fraser.

The conference was a call for action by both the public and the government, who were a ‘deserved target of criticism for their human rights track record’, to change the dire situation in the 73 targeted Aboriginal communities across Australia. Recent action shows the government taking resources from previously independent towns so that they become unviable and practically unliveable, forcing people back into centralised locations such as Alice Springs, putting a strain on resources, jobs and infrastructure, and encouraging violence. The lack of respect for land rights is causing problems with youths in gangs, and high suicide rates, and undoing previous efforts in education advancements. In one community, a community owned bus, used to take residents into Alice Springs for $2 to do their basic shopping, has been taken away, forcing residents, many of whom are on welfare that is already quarantined by the government, to catch a taxi at a cost of $40 each way just to buy groceries.

Two of the elders, Rosalie Kunoth-Monks and Rev. Dr. Djiniyini Gondarra, were fortunate to attend the United Nations conference in Geneva to report on Australia’s human rights track record and treatment of Aboriginal Australians, which has currently come under investigation by the UN Human Rights

Aboriginal elders from L-R, Dhanggal Gurruwiwi from Nhulunbuy, George Gaymarani Pascoe from Milingimbi, Rosalie Kunoth-Monks OAM from Utopia, Betty Pike from Geelong, Miriam Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann from Nauyua, Djapirri Munurungirri from Nhulunbuy, Rev Dr. Djiniyini Gondarra OAM from Galiwin’ku and Harry Jakamara Nelson from Yuendumu. Council. They believed that it was only by leaving Australia that they felt a freedom and recognised as a member of the human race. What they had to say ‘fell on receptive ears’, and they were not ‘treated like children’. Australia is seriously lagging behind international standards on human rights policies, and was criticised in 2010 by both the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples’ Rights and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The elders called for greater international pressure on the Australia Government to take action. From a legal perspective, Alastair Nicholson pointed out that there is no proper mention of Aboriginal people in the Australian Constitution, only recognition in the preamble, and our lack of a Charter of Rights. This is the political loophole that allows the Australian Government to intervene in these Aboriginal communities. Like many others, these elders are encouraging more discussion and understanding by listening to their stories before taking action.

Amy Tremewen and Alyshea Rose’ Meyer
Reconciliation captains
Hundreds of Avila students and staff injected their support into the Close the Gap Campaign during their lunchtime on March 24.

Well in excess of 600 members of the Avila community signed the pledge to Close the Gap, the gap being the life expectancy between non-Indigenous and Aboriginal Australians. This pledge is being sent to the Government in order to show Avila’s support for money to be spent on Aboriginal Health Services. By signing the petition these girls are joining with more than 140,000 other Australians and an alliance of more than 40 health and human rights services to gradually make a difference to our Aboriginal brothers and sisters.

Joining us was Co-ordinator of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, Ms Vicki Walker Clarke and Co-chair of Catholics for Australian Reconciliation, Mrs Sherry Balcombe.

Other highlights of the day included:
- ‘Virtually’ closing the gap by contributing to the • virtual Sea of Hands campaign run by ANTaR calling for Reconciliation.
- ‘Close the Gap’ tattoos and facts to be read. •
- A large paper chain, which symbolised the closing the gap, was made with Principal, Ms Louise Gunther, having the honour of attaching the final link.

At Avila, we believe that this gap shouldn’t exist today, so in order to close it, we must all unite to make strong and collective stand.

In addition, 494 signed a petition to Navi Pillay, the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner, who will be in Australia in May in order to examine at first hand Australia’s treatment of Indigenous people under the Intervention, and refugees. We asked her to speak to the Government asking that they consult with Aboriginal people.

Caitlyn Quinn, 7 Blue, Holly Ruby, 7 Orange, and Caitlin O’Keeffe, 10 Pink

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**Year 8 Christian Living Day**

Christian Living Day allows the Year 8s to spend quality time with their friends and teachers.

The main focus of our Term One Christian Living Day was to build stronger relationships with students as well as teachers. Also, to become more familiar with the key elements of the Avila Behaviour Policy and how we can translate our Christian values into everyday life.

The day started as the Year 8s departed Avila and headed down to the beautiful environment of Jells Park. Classes combined as students and teachers worked together. The day was filled with different activities like meditation which enabled us to think about our feelings and the world around us. There were also physical games where girls had to communicate together to work out a solution.

Respect, forgiveness and support were just some of the qualities we thought about. We not only gained knowledge about ourselves, but also different people and how they can react differently to our actions.

The day concluded with a class liturgy drawing on the many elements of the day. On behalf of all the Year 8s I would like to thank teachers, counsellors and Principal Ms Louise Gunther who gave up their day to spend time with us. It was greatly appreciated.

Angela and Georgia Stapleton
Student artwork from Avila was selected for display during Catholic Education Week, 2011. This work was exhibited at the Victorian Artists’ Society Gallery in East Melbourne for a week starting on March 20. Congratulations to Lauren Jones, Jessica Greco, Hannah Jach, Katerina Juzefowicz, Sarah Lambourne, Monique Di Mieri, Adele Calafiore, Gabrielle Carrasco and Tahlia Gunaratne on achieving such an honour.

'Time Travel' is the theme for the 2011 Creative Arts Festival at the Robert Blackwood Hall on May 19. Preparations are well underway and the evening promises to be one of great performances ranging from music to drama, accompanied by exceptional artwork and animations.

Junior Art Club will commence in Term Two. We are planning on creating artwork for display in the building currently under construction. It will be designed and created by our year seven and eight students, with the help of our year level Art Captains: Jackie Chittasorn (Year 8), Nikki Pecora (Year 9), Rachelle Criticos (Year 10), Sally Boxall (Year 11), and Year 12 College Art Captain Rachael Albicini and Vice Captain, Isabella Romano.

We are looking forward to a creative and exciting 2011.

Sally Boxall and Rachelle Criticos

**Public Speaking and Debating**

**Strong delivery in Lions Quest**

Senior students Fiona Canny (Year 12) and Kiara Goldsmith (Year 11) turned on a strong performance for the Lions Youth of the Year Quest in February.

Held every year by Lions Clubs internationally, the Youth of the Year Quest recognises a high level of academic, leadership, sporting, public speaking and citizenship achievement in its potential winners, and is designed to encourage student interest in leadership and the qualities required to take an active and constructive role in the community.

Fiona and Kiara were both interviewed by a panel of judges about their community involvement, interests and current affairs before speaking to the Lions Club of Waverley at a formal dinner. The girls delivered two impromptu speeches in response to the questions ‘Is it becoming more acceptable for women to become leaders in their field, and why?’ and, ‘If you could invite two Australians, living or dead, to dinner, who would you invite?’ Kiara then delivered a five minute speech about young people making a difference, and Fiona spoke about Wikileaks and the importance of freedom of information. Fiona was successful in going through to the second round of competition. Congratulations to both of you on a fantastic effort.

Ms Amy Foster
Public Speaking and Debating Co-ordinator

**Exhibit selection honour**

Student artwork from Avila was selected for display during Catholic Education Week, 2011. This work was exhibited at the Victorian Artists’ Society Gallery in East Melbourne for a week starting on March 20. Congratulations to Lauren Jones, Jessica Greco, Hannah Jach, Katerina Juzefowicz, Sarah Lambourne, Monique Di Mieri, Adele Calafiore, Gabrielle Carrasco and Tahlia Gunaratne on achieving such an honour.

'Time Travel' is the theme for the 2011 Creative Arts Festival at the Robert Blackwood Hall on May 19. Preparations are well underway and the evening promises to be one of great performances ranging from music to drama, accompanied by exceptional artwork and animations.

Junior Art Club will commence in Term Two. We are planning on creating artwork for display in the building currently under construction. It will be designed and created by our year seven and eight students, with the help of our year level Art Captains: Jackie Chittasorn (Year 8), Nikki Pecora (Year 9), Rachelle Criticos (Year 10), Sally Boxall (Year 11), and Year 12 College Art Captain Rachael Albicini and Vice Captain, Isabella Romano.

We are looking forward to a creative and exciting 2011.

Sally Boxall and Rachelle Criticos

**The Arts**

**Multi talented stars**

Performing their way to success are Ruby Robertson (left) and Margaret Tanjutco. Ruby topped others in Australia to win an Australian Institute of Classical Ballet’s intermediate scholarship while Margaret was awarded Best Actress for her performance as Belle in a ‘Beauty and the Beast’ production. Ruby, a Year 10 Music captain, also plays piano, drums and sings. Jazz and tap dancing are part of Margaret’s repertoire.

President of the Waverley Lions Club, Geoff Ferguson, presents Fiona Canny with her club-level perpetual award.

A vila has shown it is a force to be reckoned with in the 2011 DAV debating competition with 12 of our 15 teams winning their first round at Wesley College on Thursday March 10.

Ten of our students were also awarded best speaker in their debates. Special congratulations to: Hashsanthie Jayaratna, Meera Fernandes and Georgia Delaney of Year 12; Nathalie Dabrowski and Sarah Genovese of Year 11; Bridget Jackson, Courtney Lindeman and Genevieve Townsend of Year 10, and Molly McQueen and Kala Gare of Year 9.

The Year 9s began their DAV careers with the topic ‘That we should ban violent video games’; Year 10s argued over whether or not the government should fund major sporting events; Year 11s grappled with the question of whether we should ban the building of homes in areas prone to natural disaster, and Year 12s debated whether or not Scientology should be banned.
Just as the world has changed the way business is conducted, so too has the way students access information and learn. One-to-one computer programs such as the one that Avila College is introducing at Year 10 facilitate holistic, integrated and personalised learning, anytime, anywhere. Avila students will use their computers to create, collaborate and communicate.

The Federal Government’s Digital Education Revolution funding has provided for the purchase of the powerful 13” MacBook computers at the College. At an official ‘roll out’ on the evening of March 2, Year 10 students collected the MacBook computers that they will use both at school and at home for the next three years.

Students and staff are being supported by 22 Tech Angels, with at least one ‘Tech Angel’ in every Year 10 homeroom.

There was fierce competition when students applied for the new Tech Angels leadership positions late last year. Aspiring Tech Angels needed to be confident and assertive young women with strong problem solving skills and a passion for using IT creatively. After classes finished last year, educators from Apple Australia conducted a full day of Tech Angel training.

The Tech Angels are the first port of call for both staff and students if there is a problem or question about using the computers. Not only do the wings on their badges readily identify Tech Angels but also their bright red computers help others to spot them in class.

The Tech Angels attend regular lunchtime meetings with the Systems Administrator, Mr Russell Curr, for additional training and sharing of ideas and strategies for streamlining the use of ICT at Avila College. A Tech Angel wiki also enables easy communication with experts, both at Avila College and in other local Catholic girls’ schools.

By using cloud-based technology such as gmail, Avila College has reduced the need for a local email server and saved thousands of dollars. In future years, other year levels will be included in the 1:1 program with costs to parents minimised through the use of ebooks and other online resources.

Avila College undertook much research in preparation for the 1:1 program. The research shows that 1:1 computer programs increase student interaction both in and out of class, improve critical thinking and problem solving skills, provide enhanced opportunities for personalised learning and reduce the time students spend passively viewing information or television.

Avila College students are proud to be known as ‘can do’ young women. The vision for the 1:1 program has been designed to enhance the learning process to empower students to become digitally literate, flexible and socially aware of their future with the skills to contribute responsibly as member of a global community.

Mrs Madeleine Franken
Deputy Principal (Curriculum)
Past students and their daughters, from L-R, Megan Fisher (Class of 1991) and Emily, Tammy Morgan (Class of 1990) and daughter Bianca Baldwin, Julie Pogliaro (Class of 1984, nee Hutchinson) and daughter Catherine, and Joanne Newport (Class of 1985, nee Moore) and Jemma. Megan was delighted that the lavender walk she helped plant is still thriving.

Mother/daughter tradition

Testimony to the strong reputation that Avila enjoys is the constant flow of past students who send their daughters to the College.

This year’s intake of new Year 7s includes 14 girls whose mothers attended the College.

Established in the 1965, Avila College has grown tenfold from 110 students to 1100 in 2011.
Friday February 4 2011 was a very important day for 199 very excited Year 7s when they arrived for their first day at Avila College.

Since that day the students have made a wonderful start to their secondary schooling and are settling in well. They are fast becoming part of the Avila Community.

The girls have embraced the Year 7 motto ‘Go For It’ in so many different ways... They are becoming masters at their combination locks, they are easily able to navigate their way around the College campus and they are joining many of the extra curricular activities that Avila has to offer. They are beginning to discover their inner talents, whether it be a drama queen, an avid bookworm, a super swimmer, a musician or even an energetic aerobics performer.

The Year 7s have also participated in many special events. They have attended Friendship Day, where they were able to get to know each other, play games and practise their skills in making new friends. They have also participated in the Year 7 Swimming Day with enthusiasm as well as their first House Swimming Carnival.

The Peer Support program has certainly helped ensure a smooth transition to secondary school and the Year 7s are also enjoying the opportunity to work with and get to know their Peer Helpers.

With Term Two fast approaching, excitement and anticipation is mounting for the Year 7 camp from Wednesday May 4 to Friday, May 6.

What a terrific start to the year and to Secondary Schooling! Well done, Year 7!

Mrs Tanya Induni
Year 7 Co-ordinator
**Best foot forward for Oxfam**

An Avila staff team again participated in the Oxfam 100km Melbourne Trailwalker event on April 1 and 2. The team comprising, pictured above from L-R, Ms Meg Gilfedder, Mr John Beekhof, Mrs Sarah Macdonald, and Mr Steven Francis said the event was a challenge but well worth the effort knowing that they were helping to fight and raise awareness of world poverty and injustice. They thanked the Avila community for generously supporting their fundraising activities.

**Summer wedding**

An Avila teacher and Student Leadership Co-ordinator, Miss Karis Dalton and Jeremy Magyar chose St Peter and Paul’s Catholic Church in Geelong for their summer wedding on January 22.

Many of Karis’s Avila friends joined the couple for the occasion with Miss Catherine Ohlsen, Avila’s Year 7 Transition Co-ordinator, reading the prayers of the faithful and former Avila colleague, Miss Lisa Harkin, MCing at the reception held by the picturesque Barwon River.

Miss Dalton’s husband Jeremy is a wine maker in the Mornington Peninsula area.

**Welcome to new staff**

Former College Captain Mrs Catherine Spurritt (nee Davenport, Class of 2003) is among the new staff welcomed to the College this year.

Mrs Spurritt, has come on board as Head of General Studies as well as a teacher of Religion and French.

Mrs Julia Armstrong, husband Daniel and son Harry have welcomed Sophie into their family. Sophie was born on January 3, weighing 3.3kg (7.8 lbs). Her arrival was an early birthday present for Harry who turned two the next day.

Mrs Armstrong, who teaches Science and Geography at Avila is on 12-months maternity leave. She said she misses Avila but is relishing the time with her young family.

Pictured: The growing Armstrong family.
One of Avila’s own rises to the challenge

Avila’s new Deputy Principal (Administration), Ms Rebecca Cetrola, is testimony to the ‘can do’ culture of the College. A past Avila student and a teacher who has worked her way up through the ranks, Ms Cetrola lives and breathes the philosophy that makes Avila unique. In the following article, Ms Cetrola, describes the influence Avila has had on her own journey and her commitment to the empowerment of young women through a well-rounded education.

To me, Avila has always been a community full of love and laughter. As a past student I have many fond memories of my involvement in College life, inspiring teachers, and heartfelt relationships. When I finished Year 12, I left Avila knowing that I wanted to teach, and that I had developed a love of music, thanks to the beautiful and talented Mary Saunders, College Music Director 1987 - 2001. My tertiary studies involved undertaking a Bachelor of Teaching/Arts with a major in music.

My teaching career began at the all-boys St Joseph’s College in Ferntree Gully where I was responsible for the Music Department and taught year 7 to 12 music and directed College ensembles and choir. I loved my time at St Joseph’s, however, I was extremely excited when Ms Filomena Salvatore, Principal of Avila 1995 - 2005, offered me a teaching position at Avila, commencing 2002.

Ms Salvatore was a wonderful mentor and inspired me in so many ways professionally and personally. In particular, Ms Salvatore encouraged me to pursue further studies and was instrumental in guiding me to complete a Masters in Educational Leadership. She also encouraged me to apply for, and pursue, leadership opportunities within the College.

During my 10 years at Avila, my leadership roles have included time as Year 7 and Year 11 Co-ordinator. My responsibilities as a year level co-ordinator, a Music teacher with extra-curricular responsibilities, a Religious Education teacher and a member of various College committees including the School Improvement Framework Project Team, Restorative Practices Core Team, Consultative Committee, Curriculum Committee, and Levels Team, have provided me with an in-depth knowledge and richer understanding of the mission, vision, and culture of the College and the operational procedures in place that enable me to take on my new role of Deputy Principal with confidence. I have a real sense of Avila’s identity.

The diversity of my responsibilities in my new role as Deputy Principal has provided great insight into school business and management. My responsibilities include the organisation and logistics of all College events and programs, overseeing all college excursions, camps, and interstate and overseas study tours. Another key area of my role is that I am the VCE and VET co-ordinator.

My first term as Deputy Principal has been a busy one with numerous whole-school events including the Opening School Mass which involved arranging the logistics of moving approximately 1100 students and their chairs into the gym in an ‘orderly’ manner. I’ve also sported the fluoro vest regularly over the term in loading students onto the fleet of buses for events, and overseeing the safety of students outside college grounds.

I am fortunate to be working in a leadership team - led by our visionary new Principal Ms Louise Gunther - whose commitment is to our core school business, the education of our young women. The comraderie and support of all my teaching colleagues has also eased the transition into my new role. I am blessed to work in a community where I am continually inspired and challenged.

In closing, I feel privileged, and rewarded daily, to be involved in the education of young women and to help empower them to be the best they can be as a person and as a member of our global community.

Ms Rebecca Cetrola
Deputy Principal (Administration)
Property Improvement Works

In addition to the building progress of the new junior school complex, Mr Del Mastro reported on a number of works that have been completed in recent months. One of the most noticeable was the conversion of a garage at the VCAL house into a spacious new uniform shop.

Other works included:
- Year 11 and 10 areas - remove platforms, re-carpet and paint classrooms
- Remove brick wall between two classrooms to make way for a wall
- Remove louvres windows and instal seals on doors to help reduce noise
- Replace lockers in year 10 block to accommodate laptops
- Resolve ongoing problems with hot water in food technology
- Segregate power for IT (new switchboard)
- Re plumb sink in the clay pottery classroom
- 12 new interactive white boards installed in the year 10 and 11 areas
- Instal new airconditioners in IT server room and in the library office
- All dead wood from all trees and shrubs removed
- 110 cubic metres of mulch distributed to all garden beds in the school
- New jarrah edging and Lilydale topping in the Saint Teresa’s Garden

Site works commenced in November 2010. It is hoped the complex will be completed by the end of 2011, ready for occupation at the start of the 2012 school year.

On behalf of the College project management committee, Property Manager, Mr Tony Del Mastro, said all the structural steel is in place, waiting arrival of concreting sub contractors to form up the columns and also the second-storey slab, ready for pouring. Despite the size of the project, it is having no impact on the day-to-day running of the school.

The new two-storey complex will feature 16 classrooms, with eight on each level, plus an open-plan multi-purpose area, and provision for offices for the year-level co-ordinators and special education, a lift and toilets.

Completion of the new junior school will help pave the way for other stages of a multi-million dollar College building program which will feature a new library/Year 10 complex and chapel.

College Business Manager, Mr Norm Phillips, said the new junior school would be self-funded by Avila. There will be no building levy to finance the project but donations would be welcomed, particularly the debenture refunded to parents when their daughters complete Year 12.

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Even the rumblings of Mount Merapi in Yogyakarta, which had erupted just weeks beforehand, failed to dampen the level of enthusiasm when I met up with 11 other students from Victoria and one from Adelaide to fly to Yogyakarta, Indonesia for a 6-week stay on December 6. Despite some delays and rerouting, we were met in Yogyakarta by our very excited host families who had prepared many tables laden with food.

I stayed with a family with three daughters aged 12, 15 and 18. My host sister’s name was Rizka. My oldest sister and my Bapak (father) both lived in Jakarta so I didn’t see them often, however they tried to visit me as often as they could. So I mainly lived with Athaya (my younger sister), Rizka (host sister) and Ibu (mother). My host family took me sightseeing and I also met many of their relatives. I often spent time with a three-year-old cousin who would teach me Indonesian and I would teach him English.

I attended what is considered to be the top school in Yogyakarta. There were 34 students in my class and we went to all lessons together. I found it quite difficult to understand some of the lessons as they were all in Indonesian. Lunchtime was fascinating as we could go to the front of our school and literally buy a bowl of noodles through a gap in the fence. The noodles cost the equivalent of 20 cents Australian.

Not only was I able to improve and practise my Indonesian during my stay but I was also able to learn Javanese, which is the traditional language of the Jawa Island. I was able to experience a new culture and learn more about the Islamic religion as majority of Yogyakarta is Islamic. I also learned how to cross a road when there were about 300 motorbikes surrounding you. It was a life changing experience and I am so grateful that I was able to have the opportunity to make so many new friends and memories that I will keep with me forever.

Pertukaran untuk Indonesia

Year 11 Blue student, Erin Smart spent most of her summer break at school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia to improve her language skills and absorb the culture. She was also to catch up with Marinda Primadini Kusuma who she hosted while she attended Avila on an exchange mid last year. In the following article, Erin describes her wonderful experience.

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World Maths Day

On March 1, 8 Silver enjoyed a fun mathematical experience at the Apple Store in Chadstone.

The students were involved in an online maths quiz, using laptops, iphones and ipads to complete as many questions as possible in sets of 60 seconds. Before beginning Tatiana, the Australian winner of the 2008 World Maths Day, gave the girls some tips on answering questions successfully.

The excitement was palpable as the girls competed against students from countries such as Canada, England and Switzerland. Endeavouring to beat these students’ scores created a sense of urgency but was overshadowed by the girls’ desire to beat their own individual scores. The focus and improvement shown by the girls was a great learning experience and all came away from the event feeling a renewed confidence in their mathematical abilities. Avila’s top scorers were Klaudia Sperac, Isabelle Hanna, and Natasha Sharma.

Ms Rosie Ryan, Head of Mathematics

HPLC, GC, AAS - all in a day’s work for Chemistry students

2011 is the International Year of Chemistry so what better way to kick off the year than to have our senior students use the Chemistry laboratories of Monash University to analyse some commercial products.

As part of the Chemical Analysis area of Unit 3, students have learned about analytical techniques using instruments such as High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), Gas Chromatography (GC), Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy (AAS) and UV-Visible Absorption Spectrophotometers. The students reinforced their learning at a Year 12 Chemistry Instrumental Analysis Workshop at Monash University where they completed an analysis using one of these techniques and were able to see the other instruments in operation.

Dr Sue Liston, Head of Science
This time last year, we would never have imagined that we could have organised successfully a classy occasion for almost 340 people. But that is exactly what we achieved with the 2011 Year 12 Formal at the Brighton International on February 25.

Arriving in limos, taxis, party busses and hummers, everyone looked stunning in their beautiful dresses and immaculate suits. From the delicious three course meal to the packed dance floor, the evening was a great success.

The event was organised by the Year 12 VCAL students (pictured below with Mrs Lisa Meaklin) and took a lot of time and effort. Some of the challenges we faced included collecting forms back on time, meeting deadlines, handling large amounts of money, designing and creating tickets and allocating and arranging seating for 338 people. We all learned so much about our teamwork abilities, administrative strengths and weaknesses and how to resolve conflicts! Whilst it sounds glamorous, event management is indeed hard work.

Celeste Fisher, Luisa Curcio, Ashleigh McGregor and Brittney Elsey
Year 12 VCAL
Geologist sisters go west with skills

EW scenarios could be more extreme than two sisters from a comfortable suburban upbringing and an all-girls school education working in the traditionally blokey mining industry in Western Australia, and loving it!

But that certainly sums it up for geologists Chiara and Cristina Lorini who graduated from Avila in 1998 and 2005 respectively.

The sisters love their jobs and the opportunity to experience unique environments like the Pilbara desert. From the 52 degree days out in the field, to the epic thunderstorms and lightning that lights up the entire sky, it is certainly an amazing place to be, said Cristina.

They also love the people they work and live with at the camp. And, the 8 and 6 roster, enables them to have a six days off a fortnight in order to relax, have fun, or even go on a trip. Only three hours flying time from Perth, Bali is a regular destination.

Sandra Ghali, now in Year 12, conducted an email interview with the sisters at the end of last year for a Business Management unit on publication relations and marketing. The following are the sisters’ responses describing how they became interested in geology and what it is like working for the Fortescue Metals Group in Western Australia.

What inspired you to pursue the career you have?
Chiara: I fell into geology quite by accident at university – my degree required a physical science compulsory component. I enjoyed it and pursued it throughout my degree. I commenced a masters in geology but wasn’t really enjoying it – I was encouraged at the time by a research fellow at the university who had significant industry experience to take on a short term contract role in WA for a small company. I found industry work very refreshing after being in research/academia and never returned back to university.
Cristina: I have always looked up to my big sister Chiara, and so in that way she inspired me to pursue a career in geology also. In my first week at university Chiara suggested that I give Earth Sciences a go, and then continued to encourage and support me in my geology studies throughout my degree.

What have been some of the highlights of your career to date?
Chiara: It is pretty rare as an exploration geologist to actually find a deposit that will end up as a mining project. As a junior geologist I was fortunate to be a part of an amazing team of experienced geologists who discovered a resource which is now becoming a mining operation. It was really fortunate, and exciting, to be involved at the very beginning of a mining project. On the fun side – I’ve seen some amazing parts of the Australian outback - by 4WD, quad bike and helicopter - with my job that I may never have seen otherwise!
Cristina: I completed my studies in June 2010 and have only been working with the Fortescue Metals Group since July. I am loving my job so far, the people I work with and the amazing team environment.

What course did you undertake/experiences in order for you to be doing what you are doing now?
Chiara: I completed a double degree from Monash university in Arts/Science majoring in Earth Science, History and Archaeology. I began a Masters in Structural Geology but once I began working in my industry I realised that it wasn’t a useful qualification to have and never finished it. It was a valuable lesson to get out of the academic university structure and realise the benefit of practical hands-on experience. I am currently undertaking a diploma in Mine Engineering.
Cristina: I completed a Bachelor of Arts/Science at Monash University Clayton, with a major in Geology for my science degree.

What advice would you give to students who are not sure about their career path in the future?
Chiara: There are so many career options out there that you don’t even realise when you are in secondary school because your experience and exposure is so limited. Also, remember that you don’t just have to limit yourself to one career in your life!
Cristina:
Students should focus on doing the best they can while they are at school, and eventually they will discover something that interests them. I had no idea what career I wanted to pursue but my sister assured me that I would discover something I liked and I have! There is plenty of time to find something you love doing and work towards achieving your goals.

Do you find it challenging working and living in such a male dominated and remote environment?

Chiara: Small scale, remote operations can be more challenging for a female. I worked on a small 12-week project where there were eight of us living out of tents and I was the only female. It was a bit tough towards the end as I was just getting sick of being around a bunch of blokes - I began craving a good chat and a laugh with a female. Larger operations are easier because the mining industry is attracting more and more females. My department at the moment is about 30 per cent female and most of us socialise together outside of work. The lifestyle can be challenging – sometimes, at the end of the day, you really want to be home like a normal 9-5 job and not living with your work colleagues. Work can be all-consuming when you’re on site.

Cristina: We have some fantastic, strong females that work at FMG and the men I work with are all lovely and so, although the work place is male dominated, it is not intimidating. As for working in a remote environment, there are always phones, internet, and so many people at camp and activities happening that I never feel isolated from the rest of the world, despite working so far away.

What are your work hours like? Could you describe a typical working day? How do you spend your leisure time?

Chiara: I work a fly-in-fly-out role (FIFO) where I spend eight days living and working on a mine site in WA. I then spend my 6 days R&R back home in Melbourne going out, catching up with friends, renovating my house etc. At work I do the standard 12-hour days. I get up at about 4.30am (3.45am if I decide to go to the gym). At about 5am I head to our mess hall, have breakfast and pack my lunch for the day. I leave for work at 5.30am and arrive at the office at about 5.55am. The mining industry is very strict on drug and alcohol abuse so every morning everyone on site must pass a breathalyser (you must be 0.000 at work) and occasionally we have random drug testing as well. My shift is a combination of production and planning meetings, pit work and office work. As a supervisor I also spend a lot of time helping other people with their roles. At 6pm I head back to the village where I have dinner. At the village of an evening there is a pub where you can have a drink and a chat with your workmates, there are organised sporting events, a gym, pool, tennis courts etc. Otherwise I head back to my room to watch TV or read before going to sleep.

Alps trek for Muscular Dystrophy

Past student and 2002 College Captain, Joy Goubran is in training for a fundraising trek in the Swiss Alps to help people with Muscular Dystrophy.

As an occupational therapist at the Royal Children’s Hospital, Joy devotes a lot of her time to finding ways to help make children with Muscular Dystrophy as independent as possible.

Muscular Dystrophy is a devastating genetic condition that involves progressive degeneration of muscles that eventually leads to premature death (remembering that the heart is a muscle and that our lungs are supported by muscles). Muscular Dystrophy sufferers are often in a wheelchair by the age of 10, require enormous amounts of equipment, and have few community activities in which they can participate.

To date there is no cure for Muscular Dystrophy. A vast amount of research is required to answer many unanswered questions about this serious genetic condition. Unfortunately whilst the daily challenges these children face is extremely real, so is the gap in funding. Funding is essential to provide services and support to these children and their families, as well as to fund critical research that hopefully one day will lead to a cure.

‘Muscular Dystrophy is a condition I feel extremely passionate about and so in June this year I will be undertaking an enormous challenge in support of the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) in a bid to raise awareness and much needed funds for sufferers’ Joy explained.

‘My first challenge is to trek the difficult Mont Blanc in the Swiss Alps in 14 days. My second challenge is to raise $7,770 prior to departure. At least 50 per cent of funds raised will go directly to the MDA. The rest will help make this challenge a possibility.’

Anyone who would like to make a donation can do so at http://www.challengemd.org/2011/RiderProfile.asp where Joy’s name will be listed as a trekker. Please remember no matter how small your donation, you are helping these individuals move forward, and live life to their fullest capacity.

How did Avila help you develop into the person you are today?

Chiara: Avila provided a wonderful environment to develop into strong independent women with thoughts and opinions of our own.

Cristina: My years at Avila helped me to work out my strengths and develop the confidence in myself that I needed to pursue my goals.

What would you consider the greatest strengths/attributes of Avila?

Chiara: When I attended Avila I certainly found that it encouraged strong friendships, school spirit and belief in self. However I also feel that Avila distilled a great sense of community spirit and responsibility – thinking about those less fortunate than yourself and how you can make a change.

Cristina: I think the support network that Avila provides for it’s students is wonderful. I always felt that I had someone to help me if ever there was a problem, and that there was always someone to talk to if I needed. I also think Avila is a great school because students are taught to be strong and confident young women who can achieve their goals.

Sandra Ghali
12 Blue
Avila days helped fuel drive for justice and equality

With an unflinching determination for the pursuit of justice and equality, Dr Julie Debeljak is a fine example of the benefits of dreaming big and working to create positive change in our world. Julie, who graduated from Avila in 1988, is a highly successful human rights lawyer and academic and believes Avila equipped her well to pursue her dreams.

A gifted student, Julie initially completed an Economics/Law degree at Monash University. However it wasn’t until a trip to South East Asia, where she experienced the plight of refugees in a developing nation, that her desire to work to improve the lives of others was solidified. Julie had the wonderful opportunity to undertake her Masters of Law on a scholarship at the University of Cambridge, and work as an intern at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in 1998, both significant highlights of her career. In 2004, Julie completed her PhD on comparative domestic human rights protection with a scholarship at Monash University. Currently, she is Foundation Deputy Director of the Castan Centre for Human Rights Law at Monash University. The Castan Centre is a non-partisan, non-profit organisation committed to the protection and promotion of human rights throughout the world by way of research and education. Julie is particularly passionate about the creation of a Bill of Rights for Australia, as a way to adequately protect rights for all Australians. As a part of her work with the Castan Centre, she also designs and delivers training programs for both Australian and international government officials, educating them on human rights obligations and how to respect, promote and fulfil human rights obligations in implementing their policies.

As the daughter of refugee father from Slovenia (formerly Yugoslavia), and with a mother that tirelessly volunteered for various community based organisations, Julie was aware of human rights from a young age. However it was her experiences travelling which truly inspired her to focus more specifically in the human rights field. She encourages all young people, especially those interested in human rights law, to see the world in order to gain a greater sense of themselves and the challenges the global community faces.

Julie fondly remembers her experiences as an Avila student. She is most grateful for the ‘can do’ mentality, where no aspiration was beyond reach. Avila also played an important role in giving Julie a broader sense of community, and providing countless opportunities for social justice pursuits and awareness.

She encourages Avila students to embrace the opportunities presented to them during their education, and to immerse themselves in the world around them. She stresses that nothing is out of reach for Avila women, and hopes students will follow their passions wherever they may lead.

For those interested, the Castan Centre is open to anyone to become a member, and can provide students interested in human rights or law with information, updates and a like-minded perspective to make a difference in the world. For further information, contact the Centre Administrator, and another past student, Janice Hugo (Class of 1996), on 9905 3327 or visit www.law.monash.edu.au/castancentre.

Recalling early Avila times

As part of her ongoing work as College Archivist, Mrs Marion Wilson, is interviewing past principals to build up an oral history resource.

Mrs Wilson is pictured chatting to Sister Raymonde Taylor who was principal from 1971 until 1973. Sister Raymonde celebrated her 90th birthday in November.

Amy Tremewen, 12 Green and Fiona Canny, 12 Gold
Amy and Fiona interviewed Julie at the end of 2010
Past student, Susan Kantor (Class of 1998) is a woman who believes in being open to what life brings, including changes in direction and focus.

At school she enjoyed music and debating and subjects like History, Legal Studies and Italian. Twelve months into an Arts Degree at Monash University, Susan transferred to Arts/Law and graduated with Honours in Law. She then went on to become a Senior Associate at a top-tier law firm, Minter Ellison.

In 2009/10 Susan took six months leave from work and travelled overseas with a two-month stint in Tanzania, Africa, volunteering as a teacher in a primary school and as a care worker at an orphanage. She was struck by the cultural differences and the poverty she witnessed in the lives of so many Tanzanians. Her experience in Tanzania prompted her to undertake new challenges in life.

She resigned from Minter Ellison in November 2010 and moved to KPMG. KPMG is one of the largest professional service firms in the world and one of the Big Four accounting firms. She is undertaking a new role in risk management. Whilst her new role requires her to draw on her legal skills, she is also learning a lot about how the business is run. She particularly enjoys working with people from a diverse range of backgrounds and has found her new role gives her a greater work/life balance.

Susan values her time at Avila, the friendships, and the teachers who taught her. Susan believes that Avila provides the girls with a good grounding, by placing an emphasis of the independence of the girls, and allowing them to express themselves freely.

For the girls who are coming to the end of their school life, she suggests that they should be open to change and not afraid to try new experiences as you never know where they might take you!

KruttiKA Pawar, 12 Pink

Artist immortalises her dream on canvas

It is no surprise that 1974 College Captain, Veronica Caven Aldous (nee Caven) followed her dream to become a successful artist...in fact, she quoted a definition of a ‘successful artist’ as one who was still going, she believe she fits that bill.

Veronica attended Avila during the College’s formative years and, given her passion for art and creative flair, it was very timely that her secondary schooling coincided with Sister Raymonde Taylor’s era as Principal. Sister Raymonde was head of Art at Star of the Sea before her arrival at Avila, so was a great inspiration to students with a similar leaning.

To this day, Veronica believes that Avila has strongly influenced her life’s journey and the type of person she has become. She said that friendships, passion and school spirit were always considered to be important and are among the values she has carried through to adulthood. Veronica believes Avila’s all-girls environment enabled her to learn more and be more – learn more about herself and be more confident about who she was.

After Avila, Veronica completed her Diploma of Art and Design, Fine Art at Caulfield Institute of Technology. She has also completed a Masters of Education and Masters of Visual Art and worked intermittently as a teacher while looking after her young family before becoming a full-time artist. She has just commenced a studio PhD in Visual Art at Monash, Caulfield.

Veronica has a studio at home and exhibits at a range of galleries, as well as having her work included in a number of private collections. Last year, Veronica donated one of her works, ‘Mobile phone stripes’ to Avila College. Her work acknowledges an appreciation of the aesthetic experience involved in the art-making process. The colourful pigment she uses is very much inspired by her travels and work in Europe and India - the spice stalls and markets, and the colourful clothes and festivals – as well as the Australian outback with its intense orange soil and the expansive blue sky.

Veronica’s three sisters attended Avila. Therese (Class of 1972) runs her own online web business. Tezgems, selling handcrafted jewellery, Cathy (Class of 1977) is a massage therapist and teacher, and ceramic artist, and Trish (Class of 1975) teaches hairdressing, has her own salon and is a women’s self-defence expert with her Second Dan black belt in karate. Veronica’s parents were very active within the Avila school community; her father Vin was one of the original College Board members.

Veronica urged senior students to keep their options open in terms of tertiary courses and career paths. She recommended attending Open Days to explore as many options that interest them as possible.

Tenille Grebert-Craig, 12 Blue

Tenille interviewed Veronica late last year for a Business Management unit on public relations and marketing.
School of the waves at Point Leo

Water safety, life-saving skills and how to be safe at the beach was the focus of the Year 8 excursion to Point Leo on March 16 and 17.

As part of the Physical Education program two groups went to Point Leo on consecutive days and experienced vastly different weather conditions ranging from perfect beach weather to showery conditions with the occasional boom of thunder.

During the session we learned how to wear life jackets properly, what to do if we were stranded in the middle of the ocean, how to paddle out into the water on boards. We also learned CPR and what dangerous creatures to look out for in the sea.

We had a lot of fun catching waves into shore, running along the beach and just spending the time with our friends. It was a very different way of learning and it was something new for everyone. New friendships were made and we learned skills that we never thought we would, and enjoyed new experiences.

Lifesavers from Lifesaving Victoria gave up their spare time to run activities and provide instruction. We are all very grateful to be given this opportunity and we would all go back and do it again one day. It was a fantastic day!

Report by Lauren Santalucia, 8 Pink and Isabelle Hanna, 8 Silver

‘The whole day was fun and educational. A very good way to interact with our peers.’ Gabrielle Jonas, 8 Blue

‘It was very good and I learned a lot more about being water safe.’ Jana Andritsos, 8 Pink

SCSA results - Tennis

On March 7, Avila competed in the SCSA tennis competition at the Boroondara Tennis Complex. Our three teams played five matches each 30 degree heat. The three teams placed fifth with the seniors and juniors only just missing out on finals.

Congratulations to all the Avila tennis team on a great effort for the day and thank you to Mrs Trish Williams and Mrs Carmella Marino for Coaching for the day.

Congratulations to all the girls who participated with enthusiasm and persistence especially the Year 7s who played in their first inter school tournament for Avila.

Hannah Wright
Tennis Captain

Genazzano Swim Meet

On February 18, the Avila College Swim Team raced against Genazzano, Sienna and Sacre Coeur, at the annual Genazzano Swim Meet.

All girls who participate swam exceptionally well the whole night with Avila College placing fourth overall.

Well done Avila!

Dannielle Costello
Swimming Captain

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Swimming Captain
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Alexandra Bell, has won herself an athletics/academic scholarship, valued at about $53,000, to study, train and play in the United States. Alexandra, who captained Mackillop and the College tennis team in 2010, is undertaking a Science degree course at Drexel University, Philadelphia, majoring in Nutrition Science. She is a member of the university tennis squad, training six days a week for up to three hours a day, and competing. It is little wonder that life is full speed ahead for Alex as she juggles her full-time studies for an undergraduate degree with her tennis commitment. Alexandra applied for the scholarship because it offered such a golden opportunity in terms of her tennis, tertiary studies and desire to start exploring the world ... while gaining a tertiary qualification to become a dietician, specialising in sports performance nutrition, Alexandra is advancing her tennis, experiencing another culture, and seeing another country as she travels around to compete in the many tournaments. ‘The American varsity system is unique in that it allows me to do all this,’ said Alex whose older brother Sebastian has been in California on a similar type of scholarship for the past two years. ‘I don’t want to turn pro, I just want to take my tennis to the best level that I can ... I know from Sebastian’s time in America, there is so much to gain in terms of tennis, the type of people you come in contact with, and just the overall experience of living in a foreign country.’ Alexandra, who is living on campus, said college life was more relaxed than Year 12. However, the pace for her is still hectic as she needs to keep up with the classes she misses because of training and competition. The university is in the city and has a student population of about 10,000. Philadelphia itself is big on sport with its own ice hockey, football and baseball teams and a very patriotic following. For those interested in pursuing a similar dream, Alexandra said it was worth applying. She specifically looked for a university strong in sport and academia. Part of her application process involved sending coaches her resume, references, a video of her playing tennis and her VCE results.

Birthday blitz in Victorian titles

What better way for Nana Owusu-Afriyie to celebrate her 12th birthday than to win, not one, but two State running titles in the Victorian Little Athletics State Track and Field Championships. The Year 7 student, pictured at left with her medal haul, won the Victorian Under 12 100m and 70m running events on March 19, just three days before her 12th birthday. Clocking up personal bests, Nana was also third in the 200m event and fourth in the long jump in the track and field championships. Nana, who has been with the Waverley Little Athletics Club for two years, would one day like to compete in the Olympic Games.

Sarah shines in state soccer, softball

Whilst most students enjoyed a well deserved break over the Christmas/New Year period, Sarah Papadimitriou was busy balancing her representative soccer and softball commitments. In soccer, the Year 7 student competed for the North East Diamonds U13 Girls team (representing the north east metropolitan region of Melbourne) in the Victorian Champions Soccer League. Her team won the title. In softball, Sarah captained to a premiership, the Waverley Softball Association’s Under 13 Girls team in the Australia Day carnival in Canberra - one of the largest junior softball carnivals in the southern hemisphere.

Making waves in water polo

Year 9 student, Rebecca Andrews (pictured above) is carving quite a reputation as an up-and-coming water polo player. Rebecca has been selected as the second goal keeper for the 18 and under Victorian squad.
Nagle broke an 18-year drought to take out the honours at the 2011 House Swimming Carnival at the Oakleigh Pool on Tuesday, March 8.

Nagle finished the day with an impressive 707 points followed by Chisholm on 680, Flynn on 506 and Mackillop on 438.

It was a great day with participation, enthusiasm and team spirit and chant offs at an all-time high. From the very start of the day there was lots of cheering, and animals prowling around the pool, thanks to our creative Year 12s.

The level of participation was amazing, especially in the points swim with many girls across the year levels jumping in and having fun with their friends while also earning points for their respective houses. One of the highlights of the day was the staff versus student relay which attracted three staff teams and two students teams, who pulled of another amazing victory by taking out first and second place. A special mention to Teaghan Sutherland and Emma Chan who swam an impressive 100m each in the 400m event to earn themselves second place after the four-member student team.

Congratulations to the following Year level champions and runners up:
Year 7 - Rashmitha Perera; Lucy Dever
Year 8 - Natalie Costello; Stephanie Della Penna
Year 9 - Rebecca Abbott; Rhiannon Pearce
and Rebecca Andrews
Year 10 - Emma Chan; Ruth Smith and Isabelle Wright
Year 11 - Katherine Konstantinidis; Teaghan Sutherland
Year 12 - Danniedle Costello; Lil Smith

Ashlea Christenson and Emily Papadimitriou
2011 Sport Captains

Pictured above right: Sports captains Ashlea Christenson (right) and Emily Papadimitriou congratulate a proud Nagle captain, Melissa Harrex claiming the cup for the first time since 1993. Pictured at left: The 2011 Year-level champions and runners-up.