What’s happening...

Parent Forum... We have received numerous positive comments about the Forum held last Wednesday evening. Approximately 20 staff and 58 parents joined in discussion on a variety of topics that were prioritised with the skilful assistance of the acting Assistant Regional Director North Western Victoria Region (NWVR), Joe Corbett. The evening started off with looking at four broad topics, Communication, Student Wellbeing and Engagement, Curriculum/Programs and Parent Participation. Parents and staff then contributed to topics so that by the end of the evening everyone had an opportunity to share their ideas and viewpoints e.g. Languages (other than English), Grade Structure, Parent Involvement, Technology, Numeracy, Homework and Transition. Much of the information received will be translated into a short term or long term action with School Council, staff and community working on some of the topics and sometimes the staff will be working on other topics where they relate to school organisation. The goal of the Forum was for all stakeholders to share information, ask questions and work together so that all students attending Westgarth Primary School benefit from the outcomes. Where appropriate some of the information we received last Wednesday night will be actioned through this newsletter and/or reported on. Please watch this space. Thank you to all parents, School Council members and staff for attending.

At the Forum we also received questions which we did not have time to answer on the night. I will include some of these in future newsletters. Here are two questions/answers that we hope will assist.

What processes does the school have in place for selecting applications and computer programs? How do we keep students safe when using computer technology?

The school is currently developing Safe Use Guidelines, Acceptable Use Policy (for students) and Cyber Safety Policy. Policies require school community consultation and soon you will receive more information through the School Council Policy Sub Committee.

In regard to selecting computer programs this is done through the Technology Strategic Planning Team. The school Technology team are also in the process of investigating “Super Clubs” which will allow students to learn about cyber safety in a protected primary school age environment.

Parents indicated that they were happy with the grade structure however wanted more information in relation to why the school has a mix of composite and straight classes?

When prospective parents ask for a school tour we outline that Westgarth PS has a mix of composite and straight classes. In the neighbouring Northcote schools and the greater area of NWVR many grade structure options are available. Some schools may have single straight classes from prep to year six, others may have multi age classes say P-4 or 3-6, and others like Westgarth PS have a mix of both. One of the positive aspects of having a flexible mix of both is that during the seven years children are at WPS they will have experienced both straight and composite classes. The flexibility provides a better opportunity to maintain a lower teacher/student ratio therefore smaller class sizes. The feedback from WPS staff is that a combination of both is favourable for students; this particularly applies in year 2 to year 3 where students are moving from Brooke Street to Clarke Street. We currently have 5 straight year preps, 9 composite year 1/2 classes, 6 composite year 3/4 classes, 4 straight year five classes and 2 straight year 6 classes.

Con’t next page.....
This structure is subject to change depending on other factors that are considered in term four when classes are being organised (e.g. behavioural, cognitive, physical, social needs of students, teacher recommendations, classroom spaces). Most research indicates that the teacher makes the single most important difference to a student’s education.

Processes for some of the topics covered are currently being considered and through the newsletter we will keep you informed of how you can participate. Staff and School Council look forward to working with you.

School Uniforms... Thank you to the many students who donate their outgrown school uniform back to the school. We currently have some pieces at the school available, please enquire at the office about a second hand item, we may just have your size and just what you need. We currently some second t-shirts and gingham dresses. Natalie, one of our parents does an absolutely amazing job coordinating the uniforms sold from the small uniform corner; this is a mammoth task if you consider the school has almost 600 students. The office staff support Natalie in selling bags and hats and assisting with orders left at the office. Natalie generously volunteers her time in helping all the WPS families. Thank You Natalie 😊

3/4 Blog... We are excited about the launch of our first blog which Sarah Morris, year 3/4 teacher is currently trialling with her students. Tash, one of our pre service teachers is assisting with this task. To begin with Sarah’s class will be trialling the program for two weeks and then the trial will commence in other 3-4 classes. Initially we plan to trial the blog for the duration of Term 2, however depending on its success, it has the potential to be adapted and used throughout the year and in other year levels. The purpose of the blog will be to enhance the use of digital literacies within the classroom - a fundamental need of the 21st century. This format will also allow students to integrate different learning areas in a more collaborative class format and will allow students to authentically share their research. The experience will help students gain a more comprehensive understanding of how to create webpages, upload images, insert links to other sites into their webpages; develop their keyboard skills and their ability to navigate the internet confidently in a safe environment.

Students will be creating daily updates about the information they have been researching from their inquiry unit of work on Endangered Animals. This may be a simple factual sentence/paragraph, a link to an approved web site, an artwork or even a piece of poetry they write in response to the topic. The use of the blog will also allow for broader teaching opportunities which will focus on how to stay safe on the internet.

Student Health and Well Being - Anaphylaxis Meeting... You are invited to attend an Anaphylaxis Support Group meeting on Friday 17th May. This meeting would be of interest to any parents or carers of children who suffer from allergies, anaphylaxis or have a school medical management plan. During the meeting parents/carers will be able to share ideas or latest information about promoting student health. Please call the office if you are able to attend on Friday 17/5 at 9.10 a.m. and 10.10 a.m. on 9481 5577 and leave a message for Chloe (WPS parent) or Grace.

WPS Nurse... You or your child may have noticed that during the past two weeks we have had two relief staff in the first aid room. I am sad to report that Pauline has made a decision to resign from her role as WPS nurse and will finish off next week. Pauline has made a big difference to the team at Westgarth and all the staff and students will miss Pauline’s smile, professionalism and willingness to provide the best possible advice to all of us. On behalf of everyone, thank you Pauline.

Mother’s Day/Special Persons Day Stall... Thank you Emma and all the helpers comprising about a dozen mums and 2 dads! Our students really appreciated being able to purchase a small gift for their loved one/s. Emma will be kindly setting up a stall on Friday afternoon from 3.00 p.m. to sell left over goods. Feel free to check the stall over on Brooke Street. Emma would also like to encourage everyone in thinking about assisting on the stall next year, all mums, dads, carers welcome.

Hoping your week brings some unexpected gifts. Grace Conway
School Council Report

Parent Forum

It was great to see so many people come and share their views at the Parent Forum last Wednesday evening. We were very fortunate to have Joe Corbett from North-Western Victoria Region of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to facilitate the discussion. Joe skillfully guided us through the session and we covered many more issues that I would have thought possible in one and a half hours! Many staff were present to make sure everything ran smoothly and I am sure found it interesting to hear the points raised. It was certainly beneficial for school council members to be there both as observers and participants.

What comes next? It depends on the particular issue. As Joe said on the night, a small suggestion could be put into action by the school in a matter of days; another may make its way into the next strategic plan; while yet another will require further and broader consultation.

We are in the process of working out the best way to ensure the ideas and themes raised at the Parent Forum will be properly considered and (where appropriate) implemented. We will also make sure those who could not attend but want to contribute ideas will have the opportunity to do so.

Thank you to all those staff, parents and carers who were able to participate in the Parent Forum - it was a great display of our engaged and caring school community.

Ully Merkel, President

Review of Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy

One of the roles of Westgarth’s Policy Subcommittee is to ensure that all of the school’s policies are reviewed on a regular (usually three year) basis and that the school community has a chance to be part of these reviews. This year, the school’s Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy is one of a number of policies due for review. Unlike most of the school’s policies, DEECD sets out the format for this policy and provides each school with a template into which each school inputs its own content. The aim of the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy is to capture in one (large!) overarching document the entire ‘culture’ of the school and its approach to behaviour and inclusiveness.

A copy of the current Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy is available at:

The Policy Committee is now seeking feedback from the school community to inform our review of the policy. Read the entire policy now if you wish but in particular, we would ask you at this point to focus on 3.6 Rights and Responsibilities of Students, Parents and Teachers and 4. Shared Expectations. These sections are on pages 15-17. Over the coming months we will be seeking feedback on other specific sections of the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy with a view to having the entire policy reviewed by the end of the year.

You can send your feedback to the Subcommittee by emailing the convenor Belinda Johnston at belinda@cobwebs.id.au or you are welcome to attend the next Subcommittee meeting (date to be advised in the Newsletter) and join in the discussion.
**Diary Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 9th-15th May</td>
<td>Book Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 14th-17 May</td>
<td>NAPLAN Grades 3 &amp; 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 20th May</td>
<td>Education Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 22nd May</td>
<td>Open Morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 23rd May</td>
<td>First Whole School Assembly in the gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 28th May</td>
<td>School Photos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat 1st June</td>
<td>Westgarth Idol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun 20th Oct</td>
<td>Westgarth Fete</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 12th Dec</td>
<td>Grade 6 Graduation</td>
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**Meetings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Thursday 9th May 8.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Council</td>
<td>Wednesday 15th May 7pm</td>
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**Term Dates 2013**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>15/04/2013 - 28/06/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>15/07/2013 - 20/09/2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>07/10/2013 - 20/12/2013</td>
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**Uniform Shop**

Open Tuesday from 3:15pm

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**Victorian Premier’s Reading Challenge – A Final Reminder**

If your child would like to take part in the 2013 Victorian Premier’s Reading Challenge, this is your final chance!

Please print out and complete the attached consent form and return to your child’s classroom teacher by Thursday 9th May. If you are unable to print out the consent form, you can collect a hard copy from the school office. Student logins will be distributed by Friday 17th May.


Thank you, Noreen, Emily & Glenn - Premiers’ Reading Challenge co-ordinators

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**Year 7 Transition**

A reminder to parents of all Year 6 students that transition paperwork is to be returned to the office by Friday 17th May. Thank you to those parents who have already returned these forms.

Carolyn Shiels - Transition Co-Ordinator

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**School Photos**

School Photos will be taken on Tuesday the 28th May. Forms will be sent home next Tuesday.

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**Grade 1/2 Art News**

We have asked all Grade 1/2 students to bring in a small interestingly shaped bottle, such as a San Pellegrino bottle. We will be applying yarn to the outside of the bottle as part of our Threads & Textiles Unit in June. Please bring a bottle into your classroom and these will be taken to the art room on the day of the student lesson.

Thank you for your support, Rushe & Julia (Art Teachers)

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**Next Jammy Cook-up, Sunday 19 May 10.30am to 2.30pm**

The jammy cook-ups at the Farmhouse (on the Clarke Street campus) are a fantastic way to meet other lovely parents and contribute to the fete by cooking delicious jam! Conversations flow when hands are busy! You don’t need to be a super cook: most of the work involves chopping!

We need more small and medium jars! Please if you can, leave jars, cleaned if possible, on the trolley at reception before Friday 17 May. Also, if you have any spare fruit in your garden, please call Trudy on 0434 376 411 to arrange collection. Please let us know if you are coming by texting 0432 413 419 or emailing mmsiemensma@gmail.com and if you have a favourite knife please bring it along. Children are warmly welcome - to play or help as they see fit. See you there - Meg

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Westgarth Primary School
Cross Country Selection Trials

We had many children turn up to the boys and girls 10 and under Cross Country trials last week. This week there is a slight change to the trials. The 11 girls will now be held next week and not this Wednesday as previously stated. The 11 boys will still be on Wednesday this week and the 12/13 boys and girls will be on Thursday (please see below timeline).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 8th May (week 4) - Lunch time</td>
<td>Boys 11 years 3000m (6 laps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 9th May (week 4) - Lunch time</td>
<td>Girls 12/13 years 3000m (6 laps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys 12/13 years 3000m (6 laps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 15th (week 5) - Lunch time</td>
<td>Girls 11 years 3000m (6 laps)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Also with so many children interested in running and at the request of a few parents, starting next Monday will be extra running activities to be held at lunch time. Every Monday for the rest of the term (and if enough interest until the end of the year) any students in grade 3-6 interested in running can meet me under the big tree on Clarke Street turf. Students will then run laps of the Clarke Street play area for a period of time. The aim will be for children to achieve their personal best and try to beat their best each week.

The results of the Cross Country trials will be published in the newsletter once all trials are completed. Good Luck. Cheers, Ricky Davis. PE

Carlton Footballers Came To Our School

Last Tuesday all the 3/4s had a visit from Kade Simpson and Troy Menzel from the Carlton Football Club.

They came to tell us about their life, how they became footballers and what they have to do to stay fit. They told us about their diet and Kade said that he thought that breakfast was the most important meal of the day. We learnt that they had to train every day in order to stay fit. They also told us they both started footy playing Vic kick (now Auskick). They were both drafted to Carlton Football Club at the age of eighteen. They both were very excited when they got in. They both used to barrack for Collingwood before they joined the Carlton Football Club, but now they barrack for Carlton.

We think it was a very good experience for the Grade 3/4s and we are sure that everyone enjoyed it very much. By Chloe P and Baptiste E. Edited by Joshua S.

What’s happening in OSHC? Term 2, Week 4 - 6th May to 10th May

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inside</th>
<th>Outdoor</th>
<th>Raining (gym)?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Menu</td>
<td>Indoor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Spaghetti Napoletana</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Sandwiches / Fruit</td>
<td>Paper Weaving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Pizza</td>
<td>Paper Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Pita Bread w/ veggies &amp; cheese</td>
<td>Mother’s Day Cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Sandwiches</td>
<td>Chalk Drawing</td>
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</tbody>
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SPOTLIGHT ON SUSTAINABILITY AT WESTGARTH
What is our school doing to try and improve biodiversity?
The Kitchen Garden Program is a terrific example of how we are trying to improve biodiversity at Westgarth. We undertake all of the following:

- We enjoy seasonal food, making the most of food grown from the school garden or the local area
- We always seek to reduce ‘food miles’ as we grow a lot of our own food, including herbs, fruit & vegetables. Betty sources mostly local ingredients for the program
- Members of the community often donate surplus fruit or veg to the program so the food doesn’t go to waste
- Our meals are generally vegetarian and made from whole foods, reducing packaging and carbon emissions
- Buying local is important as it reduces transport and storage costs in terms of carbon emissions and it is much fresher
- No chemicals are used to fertilise the garden or to control garden pests, we control pests by removing them or planting marigolds and nasturtiums which help deter garden pests
- The food scraps from the classrooms and staffroom are fed to the worms and then turned into rich compost which is in turn used to fertilise the garden. How clever!
- We minimise food waste as we realise how much effort and energy goes into producing food and because it’s so delicious
- Where possible we rehouse any unwanted pests to other locations in the school away from our edibles
- The rich soil encourages lots of helpful minibeasts and birds to visit and live in our garden
- We nurture this environment and it repays us by supplying us with fresh, organic food
- We encourage bees and other pollinating insects to our garden by having lots of edible flowers, flowering plants and trees
- We up-cycle most plastic and paper which is used in the Kitchen Garden Program. We put all paper products into the recycle and compost bins. Plastic bags are reused many times over and plastic containers and tins are recycled
- All menus and information delivered in the program is hand written in the kids Kitchen Garden books.
- We catch rainwater to feed the plants and trees
- We harvest and store seeds to replant in following seasons. Seed packets are made from recycled paper and are often given as gifts to visitors for later sowing.

There is so much life in this one pocket of the school. By 3/ 4 D

Community Advertisements

If you are a parent or a carer of a child aged between 7 & 17 who has been diagnosed with dyslexia and would like to participate in a research project please email katherinelevi@optusnet.com.au or call Katherine on 0409 334 020 for more information.

House to rent in Preston - Mid July for 6 months. 3 bedrooms with BIR, 2 bathrooms, ducted heating, air cond, dishwasher. Can be semi or fully furnished. Rent negotiable. Near Plenty Rod tramline. Contact Effie 0416 510 118 (Mena/Alex 3/4)


The Westgarth Primary School Council does not endorse any of its sponsors or advertisers, but we do acknowledge their support.
Westgarth Primary School – Parents & Friends Association
Requests for Assistance

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Position Description</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fete</td>
<td>Raffle Sales Coordinator</td>
<td>Chloe or Inger</td>
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</table>

Fete
Dan, our Fete Raffle Prize Coordinator, is hard at work putting together a fabulous prize pack for this year’s Fete raffle. But he’d like someone else to handle the sales side. It’s not as scary as it sounds! You would be:
♦ liaising with the School Office for the distribution of ticket booklets to WPS families
♦ calling (via the newsletter) for volunteer sellers at the Fete and at Saturday sales tables set up at local shopping centres/strips
♦ running a roster of people to sell tickets on Fete day at the Raffle stall
♦ organizing sales of tickets at two (or more!) pre-Fete Saturday morning sales tables (booking a site and rostering sellers)

If you can help Dan out, please contact either Chloe 0400 977 849 chloe@parca.com.au or Inger 0412 703 521.

Mothers and Special Persons Day Stall
A massive thank-you to all the many people who helped out with the Mothers and Special Persons Day Stall today. Many volunteers came together to bake, make, wrap and sell nearly 1800 items and it wouldn’t have been possible without you.

I hope everyone has a very happy Mothers and Special Persons Day this Sunday, and that you enjoy the gifts that your child/children selected for you with care, much deliberation and lots of love!

If you are the lucky recipient of some of the delicious baked goods our volunteer bakers have provided and need to know more about the ingredients, please follow the instructions on the buyers guide label attached to your goods.

If you have any queries about WPS Parents & Friends, please contact Emma Savage on emma@weller.id.au or 0413 185 350.

Looking for a Mothers’ Day gift?
Can’t decide what to get mum or that special person? The Entertainment Book is the perfect gift idea as it is the gift that keeps on giving all year round. Let mum choose what she wants to do and when she wants to do it! Shopping, beauty pampering, eating out, going to the movies / theatre, travelling - these are all included. The new 2013/2014 Entertainment Book costs $65 and is packed with over $15,000 worth of valuable offers. Now that would be an impressive gift. Offers can be used right away and up to 1st June 2014.

Plus $13 of your book purchase goes towards our school’s fundraising. So, please forward this offer to family and friends as the more books we sell the more we fundraise. To purchase a book complete the order form which is being sent home today and return to the school or drop by the office. You can also order online (contact me for details).

If you have any questions feel free to contact me Mary Skarpetis on 0423 195 001 or mskarpetis@optusnet.com.au. Happy Mothers’ Day!
Westgarth Primary School Fete 2013

The news is in! Saturday 20th of October is Fete Day 2013!

Its early days yet, but we thought you might like to know that we have a Fete Committee who is even now organizing what promises to be one of the best Fetes ever.

We’d like to thank the following people for stepping up to the mark:

- Infrastructure Coordinator: Inger Pearce
- Market Stall Coordinator: Chloe Crawley
- Finance Coordinator: Melissa Officer
- Set Up and Pack Up Coordinator: Meaghan Siemensma
- Parents and Friends Rep: Emma Savage
- Kids Activities Coordinator: Janine O’Connell
- Food and Drinks Coordinator: Chloe Crawley
- Entertainment Coordinator: John Carr
- Advertising and Marketing Coordinator: Shona McMahon

If you see any of these people around the school, please let them know that you think they’re fabulous!

As you can probably guess, running a Fete is a lot of work so we will be putting out many calls for assistance over the coming months - keep an eye on the Parents & Friends Requests for Assistance page in the newsletter for details of how you can help. In fact we need someone right now to Coordinate Raffle Sales, so please scroll down there and take a look to see if it might be you.

If you have any queries regarding the Fete, please contact:

Chloe 0400 977 849 chloe@parca.com.au or Inger 0412 703 521 inger.pearce@incitecpivot.com.au

Westgarth Idol June 1st: Idols Locked, Hampers Loading.

So anyway with a red hot Idol line up locked away attention now turns to dim sims.

There’s a shop just down from the theatre that sells them steamed and fried. You’d probably have to eat the fried ones on the spot for optimal efficacy but the steamed ones will stay hot till you get back to the theatre. They’ve got good soy sauce.

If you are completely out of your mind and don’t want to eat dims sims all night you can bring whatever food you like and there’s also a bar menu link below. Previously some have brought extraordinary banquets of delicacy, élan and panache. Others have brought chickens still in the foil bag.

Rubbish free paragraph warning: May we note that while Thornbury Theatre kindly allows us to bring food, we cannot bring any drinks at all, soft or otherwise, as this would be in breach of their licence.

There will be a Very Enormous Ticket Sale on Friday May 24th with more details to follow.

Meanwhile you might like to go up to your buddies and say “Hey buddy, wanna go on a table? We can take turns at getting dim sims.” Tables seat 10 as standard, BYO soy sauce dispensers.

Next week: The 2013 Westgarth Idol Form Guide featuring an exhilarating line up from Prep parents to Grade 6 parents and many in between...

Link to Bar Menu (ignore Show Menu on same page): http://thethornburytheatre.com/menu/