

# Personal Best



**Issue 9 - Spring 2007**  
**Park House School & Sports College Newsletter**

## Reporting on Success!

**The range and pace of activity at Park House over the last term makes it impossible to identify a single 'lead story' for this issue of Personal Best!**

A Young Sports Ambassador visit to South Africa, BBC Young Reporters project, the Schools Shakespeare Festival and numerous sporting achievements all feature among the highlights of an outstanding term.

At the time of writing, our Year 12 Sports Ambassadors, Matt Green and Helen Bate, have just departed to South Africa where they will be working with students from our partner school in Durban on an international citizenship

project based around the theme of 'fair play'. The project is currently being tracked by our team of BBC Young Reporters from Year 8 (pictured above with Maggie Philbin), who will be broadcasting live on the event to a live national audience on BBC News 24 on 22 March! Both of these activities will also be developed further as part of our next 'Theme Week' in June and covered in the Summer edition of Personal Best.

Creativity has also been a key feature of the work of a group of our Year 11 English and Drama students who have successfully directed, produced and performed in their own production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* at The Corn Exchange in February. The superb

production, which received outstanding reviews from the organisers of the Festival, has now been performed to all students in Year 8, inspiring the next generation of gifted and talented performers and directors as they move through the school.

It is exactly these sorts of activities which enrich the student experience at Park House, motivating and inspiring achievement at every level of the school. It is therefore no coincidence that recently released performance tables from the Department for Education reflect our best ever results in Key Stage 3, with 'value added' in every sense of the term.

● **Derek People, Headteacher**

# BBC Young Reporters

We start by joining Year 8 student Jasmine Andradý for some initial feedback on her experience so far in training for the BBC Young Reporters Day on 22 March.

"From our three lessons on our first news day I have learnt to meet deadlines and how to edit video clips. The most important thing I have learnt is how to work in a team. I most enjoyed shooting news clips and shooting an interview because when you play it back you now what you need to improve on next time you come to film something. From the beginning we all had lessons on how you choose what stories should go into a news report to prepare us for the news day.

To start with on the day we had to find stories that were in a newspaper or on the internet and think about how they would appeal to our target audience. We had some help but we mainly did it ourselves, it was quite challenging but fun! We were able to speak to the Met Office to gain more information on one of our stories so this was a new experience for us.

I have really enjoyed it so far and can't wait to do the real thing I also want to say thank you to Miss Herbert who organised it." ●  
**Jasmine Andradý 8 Sigma**

**Miss Herbert writes:** The Year 8 students have worked really hard on this exciting project and I am looking forward to seeing how they perform on March 22nd when we will put our video report on to the BBC website. They have learnt so many skills, and not just technical ones – learning how to work as a team under pressure and meeting deadlines has been valuable experience for them all!



## Mentored by Maggie

The Young Reporters at Park House are lucky to be working with Maggie Philbin as their mentor. Some of us oldies will remember Maggie in her first job as a presenter on *The Multi-coloured Swap Shop*. Maggie joined *Swap Shop* after finishing a degree in English and Drama at Manchester in response to what she thought may be a hoax advert asking "Do you want to be a top TV Personality?".

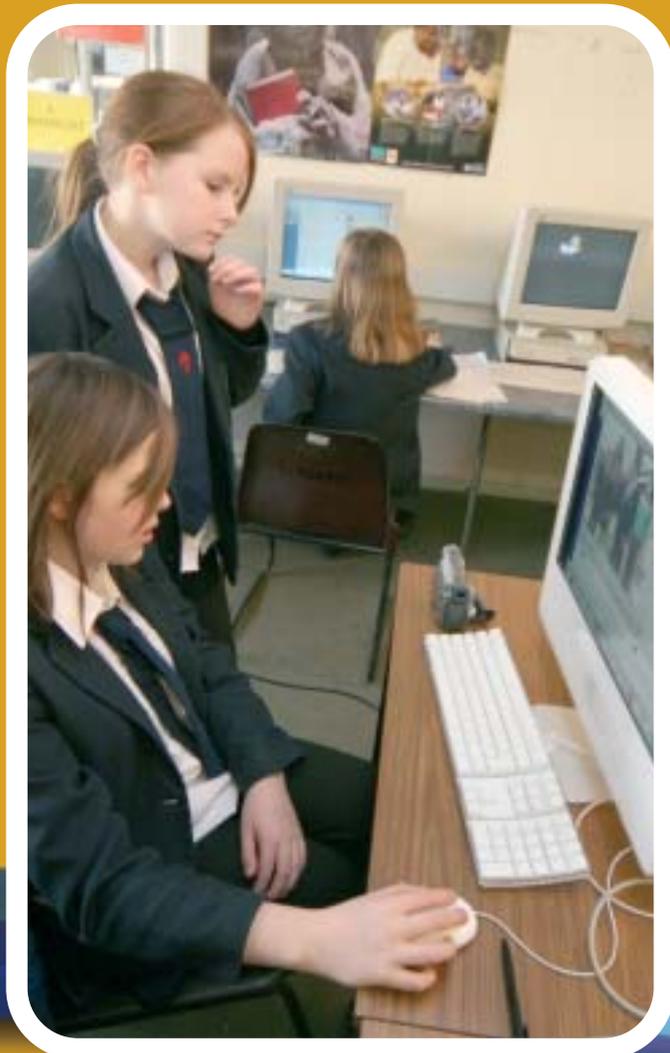


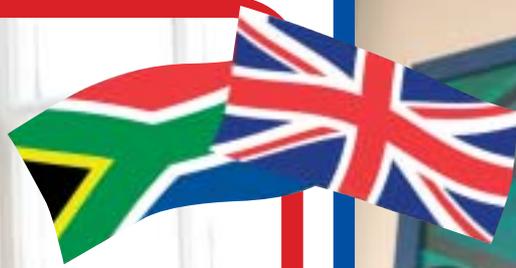
Of course that is just what happened when Maggie joined what since became a legend in kid's TV! Maggie then spent a further eight years as a presenter on *Tomorrow's World* and has since held a variety of presenting and journalistic roles in the media including her current role at Radio Berkshire.

Maggie was already working with Park House students on a Young Reporters' project when she realised that the BBC were planning a similar national scheme. And, when she heard about the school's connection with South Africa and that the planned link-up coincided with the BBC's National Young Reporters' day, Maggie felt this would be a great opportunity to combine the two events at Park House on 22 March. One hundred schools are taking part in the BBC Young Reporters' event across the country and our live link-up with South Africa and our Sports Ambassadors will be the focus of our students' news feature.

We asked Maggie why the BBC were so keen to have a Young Reporters Day. "There are two main reasons. Firstly, teenagers are typically uninterested in News and watch or listen to very little of it. The BBC sees this as a way of encouraging a more healthy interest in the News. Secondly it is a way of helping the students understand the real life application of skills they have been acquiring throughout their school life – responsibility, creativity, imagination, team work and research," explained Maggie.

"Hopefully students at Park House and the other schools will realise that actually the BBC is accessible and that we are interested in stories that we all too often miss in our cosy offices. So if students at Park house know of anything interesting happening in their local community I would encourage them to contact us via [radio.berkshire@bbc.co.uk](mailto:radio.berkshire@bbc.co.uk) or by phoning the Newsroom on 0118 946 4200!" ● C Waddell





## A South African Perspective...

A little local knowledge is a wonderful thing which is why our Sports Ambassadors and members of staff who are currently in South Africa will appreciate the presence of Mr People's recently appointed personal assistant Vicki Bruce on their trip. Vicki's family and friends have clubbed together to pay the fare for her trip back to her homeland and the timing couldn't have been better.

Vicki will be on hand to help with her insight, local information and social connections while the group visit Sithengele High School and the Durban area. "One of the first questions I had to answer from the staff was 'Do our Blackberries work over there?' Of course I was able to reassure them that, yes, South Africa was well and truly in the twenty first century!"

"People in the UK wrongly imagine the worst when they hear headlines from South Africa. In fact it is a fast developing nation with a very impressive recent economic record. Although, with roughly 14 Rand to the Pound, the exchange rate takes some getting used to. I was born in Swaziland and grew up in South Africa and saw many changes before coming over to the UK with my English husband in 2001," said Vicki, "but I still absolutely love the country. It is a beautiful and diverse place with friendly people. And you really haven't lived until you have seen an African sunset or sunrise – it is truly one of the most unforgettable experiences you could ever have!"

"That isn't to say there aren't still areas of extreme poverty in the townships. However, my husband, Rob, was a minister in a non-denominational church and often spent time visiting the townships and he never once felt nervous about visiting what, to many, are perceived wrongly as no-go areas," continued Vicki. "Crime is an issue for all of us wherever we live."

Well, with all this praise of South Africa I guess you won't be staying in the UK long? "Actually my ambition is to stay. I like the UK and I really love my job. My husband has family here and a job as a family support worker, here at Park House. My youngest daughter is at junior school at the moment and my eldest is hoping to join our sixth form next year. So I am afraid that you'll have this straight talking South African here for a while yet!" ● C Waddell



## West Berkshire's Sports Ambassadors

We have been in the role as West Berkshire's first sports ambassadors since July 2006. We were nominated for our role by the P.E department due to high standards of sporting ability and our previous experiences as Junior Sports Leaders. Our role, briefly, is to encourage participation in sport within the West Berkshire area, and develop awareness of the 2012 London Olympic Games. The way which we plan to do this is by delivering a series of assemblies and P.E lessons to younger children aged 10-11, and in doing so, introduce new events which they may not previously have considered participating in. Ultimately, we aim to use the London Olympic games of 2012 to show pupils attending local primary schools that sport can be enjoyable as well as beneficial.

During our time as sports ambassadors, we have received training from Sport England at Chelsea football club, met Kelly Holmes and other Olympic athletes, planned a series of assemblies aimed at raising the profile of the 2012 Olympics, and set down the foundations for developing partnerships with local primary schools in the West Berkshire area. Both Helen and I now aim to use our role, training and experience in an active way to develop sporting attitudes within West Berkshire. We are both greatly looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead in the forthcoming year. We are proud to have been given such a responsibility and are keen to rise to the challenges of developing and upholding Park House' status as a specialised sports college. We will keep you updated in the next issue of Personal Best. ● Matthew Green

Since writing this, Matthew Green and Helen Bate have been chosen to visit our partner school in South Africa, accompanied by Miss Hayes and Mr Jones, to take part as our representatives in an international citizenship scheme.

# CHRISTMAS CAKES?

With Easter upon us we thought it would be look back to Christmas 2006 and a story which missed the Winter edition of Personal Best...

Teresa Butler, one of our parents and an expert at making and decorating cakes of all sorts volunteered to come into school before Christmas and lead an extra curricular project for our able and talented Year 13 Food students.

Over 4 weeks she took us through all stages from making to marzipanning, icing, decorating and ribboning up our products. All students and staff benefited greatly from her patient and inspirational tuition. The outcomes were much admired by all the staff that joined us for refreshments in December. Friends, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles were amazed at the high level of achievement!

We are very grateful to Teresa for all the time and effort she put into this exciting project which enabled our talented and able students to learn new skills and produce a product for which they could all be proud. ● Tania, Katie, Jodie, Laura and Mrs Roberts



# A Michelin

Kiara Maher is a student who has been, from a very young age, unusually certain about her ambitions. As a young girl when Kiara lived in South Africa her grandmother taught her how to bake and from there on Kiara was hooked on cooking!

Kiara moved with her family from South Africa to Newbury at the age of seven and has maintained her interest in cooking to this day. In fact she was so fascinated with cuisine that during a Mother's day meal two years ago she made the bold move of asking to look around the kitchen at the Pot Kiln Gastro Pub in Frilsham, Yattendon. The staff and management were so impressed with Kiara's ambition that they offered her a part-time job.

At the Pot Kiln, Kiara works alongside TV chef Mike Robinson and Head Chef Duncan Welgemoed (another South African) who has worked at Heston Blumenthal's Fat Duck and Raymond Blanc's Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons. "Cheffing is seen as a glamorous job thanks to the world's TV chefs but anyone who thinks that chefs spend their days fluting

mushrooms, flambéing prawns and carving venison is fooling themselves," explains Kiara. "As a chef you spend most of the day doing Mise En Place, whilst the proprietor is under pressure to send meals out on time. After working two insanely long shifts we might then cook for friends of the boss who have arrived at closing time. This is of course followed by cleaning the kitchen ready for the next day's service!"

So does Kiara share her love of cooking with anyone else in her family? "Well, although I need to be a bit more patient, I do try and help my little sister to bake bread every Sunday."

In fact, Kiara may be being modest about her teaching skills because she was recently congratulated on her work teaching baking skills to children at Stockcross Primary School where Assistant Head Teacher Alison O'Halloran described her as a credit to Park House!

What does Kiara wish for the future? "I hope to go to Westminster College in London after A' Levels to further my catering education so that I can eventually open restaurants in London, Oxford and overseas." That leaves one last question – why does it say Kiara M.I.T. on the overalls? "That's my dad's fault. It stands for Michelin In Training!" See, we told you she was ambitious! ● C Waddell

**"Kiara is an ambitious and capable chef who will surely do well in this very hard profession."**

Mike Robinson, Chef and Proprietor of the Pot Kiln

**"Kiara has proven her leadership ability by organising a busy kitchen and working hard under pressure."**

Duncan Welgemoed, Chef at the Pot Kiln

# Star Pupil...

“From an early age I have been curious about life as a professional chef. I have always been interested in cooking and cooked lots when I was little. I would like to specialise in French cuisine – the way it is made with such attention to detail, complex flavours and textures, colours and presentation fascinates me.”





## *The Reaper, the Witch and the Shark*

As well as being a day hugely celebrated by our Welsh members of staff, Thursday 1st March was also World Book Day. A day created to celebrate literature, it was only fitting that the entire English staff marked the day by coming to school dressed as their favourite character from a novel.

Characters ranged from Jack, a schoolboy turned savage, complete with tribal facepaint and half a tree as a headdress (proving Miss Greaves' favourite novel really IS Lord of the Flies) to The Grim Reaper from Terry Pratchett's The Hogfather, a role Miss Vare took so seriously she even refused to speak for much of the day lest she 'ruin the effect'!

Mother-to-be Ms Thomas spent the day carrying around a shovel as well as her unborn child, as The Warden from Louis Sachar's Holes while new Head of Department Mrs Ellard dressed as Aladdin, hoping against all hopes that her lamp would sprout a genie and give her 3 wishes.

Miss Viney proved her love to all things Potter by spending the day as Professor McGonagall, while Mr Rasman followed suit and spent the day trying to escape as prisoner-on-the-run Sirius Black. Mrs Haverson tried to scare her students into work by threatening them as J M Barrie's Captain Hook and Ms Thomas shocked us all by turning up in full biker leathers as Buddy's dad. While Miss Norwell served us all as the uptight butler Stevens from Remains of the day, Mr Miles and Miss Herbert chose to further celebrate the day by having a 'bite-off' to see who had the sharpest teeth, Dracula or Jaws (Miss Herbert won!!)

A fun and inspiring day by all accounts, next year will be an even bigger celebration, mostly due to the fact that the Sixth Form students spent the day complaining that they wanted to dress up too! ● R Vare

# Skiing

**It snowed! After all the debate about how much (or little!) snow the Austrian Alps were receiving, prior to the visit of sixty-odd anxiously, exuberant Park House students, it snowed. It snowed, in Newbury! No form of weather could dampen the spirits for a trip that was eagerly awaited. In fact the white blanket that had formed around school, only fuelled our desire to get on to the slopes. Ahead of us was the minor challenge of attempting to get any sleep on the dreaded 26 hour coach journey.**

With many of our translucent lunch boxes containing mountains of sweets and chocolate bars, packed by wonderfully caring parents, the sugar content in our bodies was at sky high levels. The sweet smell of 'Haribo StarMix' was a pleasant smell to awake to, after a tough night's sleep. The general buzz and vibe of excitement was still present, though slightly muted from an exhausting night. We did not have to wait long; several hours after waking up, we were greeted by the sight of towering snow peaked mountains, a pleasant change from the endless Ford's and long haul cargo trucks. This was keenly followed by the welcoming halt of the coach, pulling up to a picturesque hotel with the ambience of a traditional Austrian skiing chalet.

The hotel staff were welcoming, to say the least, however keen to point out that the hotel must stay in prime condition during the week! This, all the staff are glad to report, was a request that all the students adhered to. The 'traditional skiing chalet' was a tag that the hotel lived up to during the week, with a roaring fire to return to as well as some hearty meals at the end of each tiring day.

The days skiing were extremely tiring. Boasting some of the best slopes in the area, Kitzbuhel had lots to offer. Whether skiing the Olympic downhill slope or staring over the edge of your first slope, with nothing more than a posh, fibre glass tea tray strapped to your feet; Kitzbuhel offered great entertainment and slopes for all abilities. The rugged mountain scenery, provided a perfect backdrop, for practising jumps and turns, and on a clear day the distant mountain ranges provided sights to behold. Contrary to all the rumours, the snow was plentiful; providing a soft cushion for the vast numbers of us who became extremely friendly with the ground by the end of the week. Although a few minor injuries provided some funny stories, the trip was one of the most successful yet for the lack of broken or damaged limbs except for one notable injury sustained, not by a student, but in fact by Mrs Challenger who hurt her arm while boarding and then later found, once back in England, that it was fractured. Might I add, she switched to skis and carried on taking anything the slopes could throw at her, showing true commitment to the cause; and yet some say teachers aren't role models anymore?





However, tired as one was after a vigorous day on the mountain, the action did not cease there. The night life provided as many talking points as the day; as the sun set, a number of the teachers started to be seen in a totally different light. Mr Golding's end of day prize giving was genuinely very funny and as entertaining as he makes his Geography lessons; I very much doubt he has received as many laughs before as he did that week!

Although Mr Rasman does not come across as the dancing type, he proved he could 'Bust-a-move' or two in the disco, forget MC Hammer, Mr Rasman stole the show. One of the most memorable nights of the week, if not the coming year, proved to be the Tirol Dancing. A 'thigh slapping evening,' that got nearly everyone of us on our feet, singing and cheering along. A good few also graced the stage during the interval, testing our hands at the newly learnt moves; surprisingly much tougher than it first seemed.

A great week then, full of laughs, achieved goals, new friends and learning about what you can do when you put your mind to it. A special mention must go to our bus drivers for the week who were

particularly amusing. Not only in stature, with one standing at 5' 7" and the other at around 6' 1", but in true 'two Ronnie's' style they kept the group in good humour all week. The coach journey home was, as you guessed, significantly quieter, with more sleep being acquired – I still haven't quite caught up; the effects, I suppose, of an all round brilliant time.

Thank you to the staff and in particular Miss Herbert, for organising the trip. ● **Charles O'Halloran**



# Lakeside – wet, yet wonderful...

Cold, Rain, Mountains. December. I'll be honest and say I wasn't exactly hopping up and down with excitement as I boarded the bus very early one cold, Saturday morning in December. We were on our way to the Lake District for ten days of outdoor adventure. It was most definitely an adventure for me. I like to think of myself as quite a fearless person (why else would I be a teacher?!) yet even for me some of the activities we had to do required a considerable amount of bravery. Walking along a wooden pole thirty feet about the ground, canoeing across a lake amid torrential rain, hiking up a mountain (or four) knee deep in snow. I did question my sanity on occasion.

Yet believe it or not I actually enjoyed it. More than that I felt I had achieved something. And that, I believe, is the essence of Lakeside. It is about finding your limit and then going beyond. We laughed (mostly at Mr Rasman), we cried (especially climbing up a mountain in snow so deep your legs disappear) yet we had fun and, more importantly, learnt something about ourselves and other people. It was an amazing experience and this December I think I will be hopping up and down with excitement as I board the bus! ● Miss S Norwell

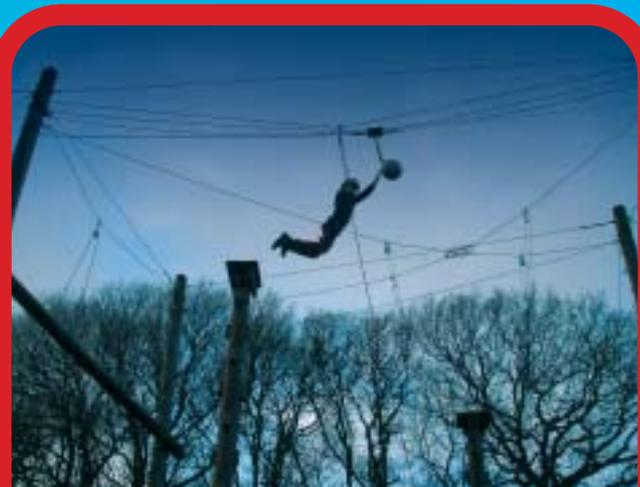
Although it has been a few months since a group of 37 year 10 students left Lakeside, any strong memories still remain.

Before the trip, we had high expectations as Mr Rasman said it was a 'once in a lifetime opportunity' and that Tirabad was good, but Lakeside was the next step up. We were wrong. Lakeside was 10 times better than Mr Rasman made out and I'm sure that everyone who went will say that it was extremely enjoyable. Not only was the Lakeside centre itself well managed and cared for, but the huge variety of events and activities kept us all very busy and entertained. As well as this, although, for most of the week it was tipping it down with rain, our spirits were not dampened and the replacement activities were just as much fun. A special mention has to go to the centre's food and their staff who were all so helpful and enthusiastic. Highlights of the trip include the views, the snow at the top of Helvellyn, the King Swing' in the dark and unbelievably tall climbing walls.

Overall it was an amazing experience that a lot more people deserve to enjoy. ● Nick Whitworth & Michael Thatcher

**The Lakeside trip runs in December and we are currently booking places for Year 9s.**

**If you want to come, see Mr Rasman for more details. Hurry, the spaces are running out!**





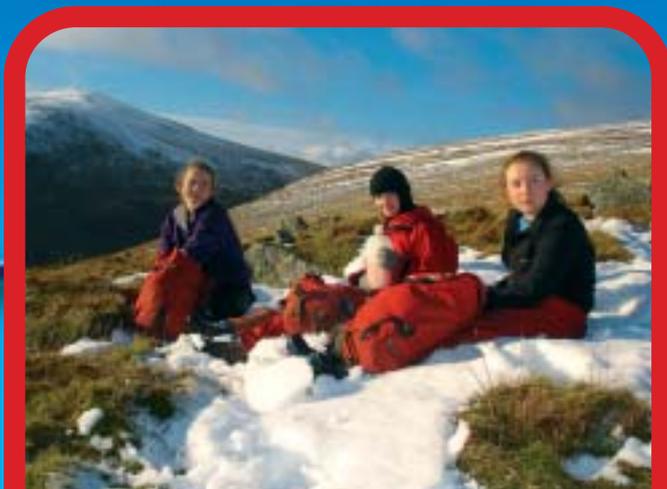
I thought it would be very physically tiring and that we would spend most of the time separated into groups, but when we got there the days were great. We would do physical activities but they were well timed and we had loads of free time to spend with our friends in other groups. There was a great range of activities that challenged all abilities. I found the high ropes course and the canoeing hard, however I was surprised to find the King Swing was one of my favourite activities.

The review on the last night was what can only be described as hilarious with some groups reducing people to tears of laughter, especially when one group impersonated the teachers and my group recreated Catherine Tate. Looking back I am so glad that I went as I would have missed out on a great trip and meeting and getting to know some great people. I would strongly recommend this trip as everyone gets along with everyone even the people you least expect, it brings friendship groups into one and makes everyone equal and welcome. If you do not go on this trip you will regret it, guaranteed. ● **Jake Hirons-Palmer**

Before I arrived I did not know what to expect. I have many visions but nothing certain. When I arrived it was nothing like I thought it would be, but the accommodation was nice and the food was great. Nothing fancy but tasty!

There are many really good memories but being at the mountain huts was the best! The Mountain walk whilst we were there was brilliant. Covered in snow, and really great fun.

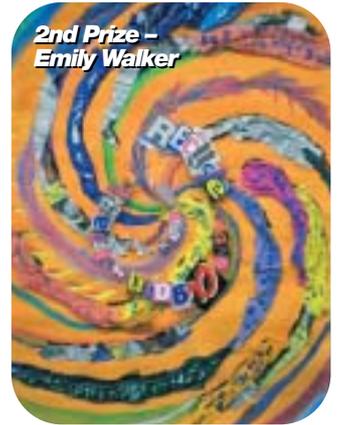
This trip is brilliant – you are with your friends having fun and pushing yourself at things you may not have tried before. If you were to go on this trip, and I strongly recommend you do, you should give it your all, have fun and try everything because you will enjoy it. If I had the chance I would definitely want to go back. ● **Toby Thorne**



# Turning Year 9 Green...

## Eco-Schools

Following the success of last years hoax calling project and the school's joining of the national Eco-schools action plan, the Art Department have been running another competition for Year 9 students. This year the year 9 students were asked to research environmental issues and design a poster based on their research. The students had the option to create a poster that was either pro-recycling or anti-pollution.



All Year 9 students were involved in the competition. Amy Billington, 3rd prize winner, said "I didn't realise what impact humans are having on the planet. In my poster I wanted to say that we need to recycle because the problem is not going to go away."

The competition was judged by Mrs and Mr Waddell and last years' winner Nick Whitworth and the final decision was unanimous. The winner was Nicole Kent from 9 Theta. The judges all liked the simplicity of Nicole's design and the effectiveness of her slogan 'Turn the lights off, before the world turns its lights off on you'. Winning the competition means that Nicole is now the owner of a 35mm SLR camera. 2nd prize went to Emily Walker of 9 Omega and 3rd prize to Amy Billington from 9 Beta.

The winning posters have now been entered into a national Eco Schools competition and will also be reproduced and put up around the school, hopefully to encourage staff and pupils to always turn off unused lights and recycle as much as possible! ● L Clarke

# Rain Forest Matters

In January the Geography Department organised four day trips to the 'Living Rainforest' in Hampstead Norreys. This trip was to support a unit of work that they are currently studying on Brazil and rainforests.

The 'Living Rainforest' seems to change and grow every year and the pupils had four guided tours of the forest environment found in the glasshouses there. The tours focussed on the adaptations made by plants and animals to the climate of the rainforest. The tours also emphasised the key issues of sustainability and conservation of this unique environment. Following the tours the pupils were shown a short DVD presentation emphasising the wider issues concerning the rainforest. Finally the pupils were given time to look at the interactive resources available and of course to visit the shop.

Over 200 of our year 7 pupils participated in this years visits and we really feel that it gives them a valuable introduction to the rainforest and the globally important issues relating to them. As usual, the 'Living Rainforest' staff and members of the public were complimentary about the appearance and conduct of our pupils who were all a credit to the department and the school.

● A Davis, Head of Geography. For more information visit [www.livingrainforest.org](http://www.livingrainforest.org)



1st Prize – Poster by Nicole Kent



turn Off t**HE** Light  
Before t**he** World turn  
it's l**igh**T**S** Out on you

as a nation we could save 18.6 BILLION DOLLARS



## Tempest Wows Snow-covered Audience

**Park House took part in this year's Shakespeare Schools Festival (SSF) in February. As the lights went up and the cast prepared their entrances, everything was perfect...apart from the fact that the auditorium was only a quarter full due to the heavy snowfall that had hit Newbury the evening before!**

Upon seeing such a sparse audience, even the most Oscar-worthy actor could be forgiven for letting their professionalism slide and present a rather more lack-lustre performance but our students not only performed to a flawless standard, they were also praised by the SSF team as being one of the most competent and professional groups they had worked with in the entire event!

Designed as a celebration rather than a competition, the event, held at Newbury's Corn Exchange, saw schools from all over Berkshire create a 30 minute piece that encompassed the major plot points of the bard's best known works. Our entrance to the festival was a 'modern meets classic' version of The Tempest, a play set on a storm ravaged island full of mystical and magical creatures.

The cast comprised of a group of extremely talented Year 11 students who helped with all aspects of the production, from acting, to directing (with Chris Scott acting as Assistant director and Stage Manager), to



lighting and sound (expertly designed and managed by Aaron Walker, Peter Couling and Ollie Smets).

Beginning the piece with an original composition by one of our Year 13 Music Technology students, the play saw a ballet dancing Ariel (Clare Butler) impress both audience and cast alike as she fluttered across the stage towards her commanding Prospero (Charles O'Halloran). The drunken butler and jester were updated to a drunken 'mosher' (Fiona Banbury) and 'chav' (Danielle Pearson), who entertained the audience with their arguments over who got the WKD Blue and Prada scarves while King Alonso became Queen Alonsa (Kiana Newman-Zand), CEO of a multinational fashion corporation on a luxury cruise with her evil employees, Antonia (Georgia Bradley) and Sebastiana (Lisa Edwards). Serving Sebastiana in any way she deemed fit was a toned and shirtless Francisco (Giles Coutinho), proving that servants should never be trusted around an unconscious boss as they will always exact their revenge with a kiss...!

The voice of reason in the play, Gonzalo (Daniel Morris), gave the production a much needed sense of austerity...even when he was being used as a chair for his much maligned boss, Alonsa. To give the play a final sense of purpose and beauty, the young lovers, Miranda and Ferdinand, brought together on the barren island were expertly (and believably!) played by Lucy Joliffe and Simon Kay while a decrepit and destructive Caliban (Emma Coxhead) switched her allegiance almost as often as she dropped her logs!

Overall it was a perfect production, full of mystery, magic and fun, well worth the incredibly hard work put in by all involved! ● Rebecca Vare (Director and Producer)

**From Newbury Weekly News 15th February 2007: 'It was most impressive to see the way this company worked together, creating fully-rounded characters, a true ensemble piece of theatre.'**



**Thanks to Andrew Stevenson for taking these great photos of this performance. This is the culmination of some very hard work by Andrew who completed his photography A' Level early in Year 12.**

## Mobile Phone Safety Campaign

Park House School Art Department were approached by Thames Valley Police to take part in a leaflet design competition with the message being 'how to look after your mobile phone'. Students in year 7 and 8 took part and produced their design as a homework task. Art staff were really impressed by the design skills used by these students and found it really difficult to choose a winner. However, after much deliberation, Mario Jones of 7 Theta was awarded first place, Lorna Beeley of 7 Alpha, second place and Emma Heath of 7 Lambda, third. These winners will be going through to the finals from lots of junior and secondary schools in the area on Friday 23 March. ● L Waddell



**1st Prize - Mario Jones**



**3rd Prize - Emma Heath**



**2nd Prize - Lorna Beeley**

## Extended Services Development...

Our school has become the hub of extended services for South Newbury under the new umbrella name "Springboard". Working in partnership with Greenham Court, The Castle and Falkland Schools we have looked at out of school hours activity provision not only for students but the wider community and between us developed an action plan for the next 2 years. The plan could be seen as a 'wish list', activities and services that each partner school has identified as a need or gap in their provision.

Our cluster is well on its way to providing all of the core areas and are keen to develop and grow the service to further include health professionals, community groups and volunteers, and embrace further ideas and initiatives to create a wide and varied amount of activities that the whole community can have access to and influence on.

The main focus has been to identify each schools priorities and working out how we can fund those needs. At the same time extended services needed to be seen to be active in delivering real things to do and we will also be looking at ways of encouraging and supporting community groups to come into schools using them either as a base or for one off activities and events.



### Activities In the pipeline:

- Breakfast Club
- More holiday activities – particularly for summer
- Community music band
- Community art project
- Increased holiday 'care'
- Parenting courses
- A 2nd Experience the Experience Day
- A club festival – to showcase existing community clubs and activities currently available at Park House School.

For more information contact Val Howard on 01635 573915

# Safety First

With local and central government encouraging more of us to walk to work and school, Year 7 pupils were greeted during their first assembly after the Christmas holidays with a timely reminder of how to remain safe whilst travelling to school and returning home at the end of the day. The message was delivered by members of the local authority safety team and supported by local solicitors firm Gardner Leader.

The children who make their way to school every day by various means including walking, riding their bicycles, taking buses, and arriving in vehicles were reminded how important it is to be aware of their surroundings and to act appropriately when they find themselves near traffic. "It was encouraging to see so many children confirm that they wear safety helmets whilst cycling" commented Alastair Goggins, a Partner at Gardner Leader who took part in the assembly. "The children seemed to grasp the importance of taking precautions and paying attention to traffic whilst making their way to and from school" he added.

Margaret Newell from West Berkshire District Council stressed that "the message of road safety is a very important one for all of our children to grasp and fully understand at an early age".

Every year approximately 440,000 public school buses travel more than 4 billion miles and daily transport 24 million children to and from school and school-related activities many more travel to school on foot or by bicycle. For many children this experience is a new one, and they may not understand the safety rules. Young children do not have the same frame of mind



for safety as adults do. They may not "look before they leap", which is why it is so important for families to supervise young children and practice safety skills with their older children.

Each Year 7 pupil received a fluorescent wrist band donated by Gardner Leader to wear when they are out and about. It is hoped that they will remember to wear the bands when travelling to school. Please don't forget to look out for them and to ask your child about the lessons they learnt during assembly.

The Local authority with Gardner Leader Solicitors also visited Year 7 pupils at Trinity and St Bartholomew schools in February 2007 to ensure that all children in the area are more aware of their surroundings. ● Alastair Goggins, Gardner Leader Solicitors



## THE YANKS ARE COMING...

Well, actually, they've been already but you get the idea...

From the 28th February until the 1st March Park House School hosted 32 students from the town of Laconia in the lovely lakes region of New Hampshire, USA. Many students were able to reacquaint old friendships from our exchange last October, whilst others forged new, and hopefully lasting, friendships with those they hosted.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody involved in housing the American students, particularly those who stepped into to help at the very last minute! We will soon be making plans to return to New Hampshire in October 2008 so if any students are interested then please see me as soon as possible!

● Mr. Watkins, Teacher in Charge of American Exchange

# Park House Business Enterprise Day

On Thursday and Friday 8th and 9th March, the whole of Year 11 took part in a Business Enterprise day, where representatives from Vodafone, Charles Lucas and Marshall and Brunsdens came to judge the competition.

Each business was judged on its presentation, its professional qualities and how well it sold the product and company, if everyone in the group was involved and other aspects. The winning group overall was Harmony Hands who were: Emma Coxhead and Mark Cronin, Daniel Worth, Josh Poole, Lindsey Atkins, Danielle Pearson, Georgia Bradley, Natalie Brown and Lisa Edwards.

They were chosen, above all others, for their originality and professionalism throughout everything they did: planning for their presentation, involving every member of the group and many other aspects of the business. ●



## Remarkable Berkshire Double Produced by the O'Halloran Brothers

Christopher O'Halloran (9S) has repeated a unique double last achieved by his brother Charles (11D), when he was in year 9. Christopher like his brother before him has been chosen to play for Berkshire at Rugby and also for Football. Mr Jones Head of PE said: "For one boy to gain a representative honour in either Rugby or Football in Berkshire is a great achievement especially as the level of competition is so high, to do it in both sports is outstanding

and to repeat it twice in one family is quite a remarkable feat and shows what exceptional athletes these two boys are."

In addition, Christopher was spotted by the London Irish coaches at the County trials and is now one of only 4 Berkshire boys at U14 level who have been invited to train with their academy at their Sunbury headquarters every Wednesday. ●



# PHSA NEWS

PHSA have had one of their busiest terms yet! We have managed to raise £3,500. Discos, quiz nights, bingo evenings, draws and raffles along with refreshments at various parents evenings we are exhausted! Thank you to all those members and parents who have helped us.

Mrs McKay, pictured with Mr Peaple, was the lucky winner of first prize of £100 in the Grand draw at Christmas. We will be having another Grand Prize Draw next term.

The Music Department of Park House School now have some very smart music stand banners. These have been provided by The

Park House School Association with a donation made to the Association from Unified Group. The banners were made in record time by local Burghclere Company "Dress without the Stress" and completed within a week of the order being given so that the banners could be used for the Christmas Concert.

We will be holding an evening with The Globe Players in the Summer performing outside – weather permitting! Bring your picnic and we will provide drinks etc.. more details to follow soon. The next Yr 7/8 Disco is 15 June.

Remember that if you are a Vodafone employee and happy to help in any capacity- even if it is donating a raffle prize - it would be very useful if you could let yourself be known to the PHSA because Vodafone can help us raise even more money for the school by matching funds already raised on certain events – up to 5 times a year! Perhaps the company you work for already do a fund matching scheme please contact me to discuss. Call Jo Brunsdon on 01635 255501. Thank you to all those Vodafone parents who have already helped us this term. ● **Kind Regards, Jo Brunsdon, Chair – PHSA**



## Further Cross Country Success

Following on from their success in the Yell Reading Schools Cross Country League (5th overall), the cross country teams have continued their excellent run of success at County and national levels.

Michael Randall from Year 8 has been at the forefront of these achievements. Drawing on his experiences of competing for Team Kennet, for whom he has recently won both individual and team titles in the Oxford League, Michael regularly leads the warm-up for the other students prior to races. His own performances have been exceptional, including placing second in the Berkshire Schools Championships held at Wellington College in January – competing against students in Year 9! Michael's performance has resulted in selection for the English Schools Cross County Championships in Leeds on 23rd March. Michael will be joined in the Berkshire teams by James Moorcroft, Katie Pontin and Melissa Mason. This is an unprecedented achievement in terms of representation, and we wish them all well on 23rd March at this highest profile event in the junior cross county calendar. Even former greats such as Seb Coe failed to win an English School Cross County Championship!



L to R: Jack Savage & Ben Cookson



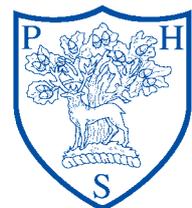
Reflecting upon the achievements of the past season, Michael explained that cross country was hard work and involved a lot of training but this paid off in the races. The team train for four nights a week and are joined by other students who want to keep fit. The training involves hill training, circuits, long distance and recovery sprints. ●

L to R: James Moorcroft, Michael Randall, Matt Green, Katie Pontin & Suzi Cookson

We need the help of staff and students to produce Personal Best – thank you to all those who have contributed to this issue and we're sorry if your story couldn't be included this time.

Do you wish to say something positive about school life? Please submit ideas and stories for future issues to Headteacher Derek People.

Don't worry if you're not sure what to provide, the production team can help you make the best of what you have to say and any photos that you supply.



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