



Westcliff High School for Girls

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Westcliff Newsletters are available online at: www.whsg.info

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NEWSLETTER 124

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WHSG Pupil Wins Poetry Competition

Budding poet Gemma Flaxman has won a poetry competition organised by SEPT (South East Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust) and Essex Libraries. The competition's aim was to raise awareness of mental health problems. Gemma's poem, "If Only You Knew Him," was inspired by her uncle, who suffers from mental health problems. Gemma, who is currently in Year 9, received a £25 WHSmith voucher and a certificate. Her poem will be made into a poster and displayed in libraries throughout Essex.



Girls Experience the Horror of War

The harrowing reality of war was experienced by Year 10 pupils earlier this month when they visited Ypres, Belgium. Ypres was the centre of intense and sustained battles between German and Allied forces during the First World War. "There has never been a more important time for teaching a generation about the horrors of war," said Linda Jenkins, Head of History. "We are living in an age where death has become trivialised as a result of new technology, particularly computer games, and it is important that the girls see what war is really like."

Pupils visited: the Flanders Field Museum; Tyne Cot, the British war cemetery and Langemark, the German cemetery. They also visited a set of First World War trenches. The day culminated in a trip to the Menin Gate where the death of one soldier is commemorated each day. Pupils were told how thousands of soldiers went into battle and never returned. "Sadly, there were not enough body parts for a full burial so these soldiers' names are inscribed on the Menin Gate," said Mrs Jenkins. The Last Post is played for them at 8pm every day.

Drama Teacher "Races the Sun"

Drama teacher Colin Bell cycled 50 miles, climbed a mountain and canoed across a lake - all in one day - to raise money for the charity, Action Medical Research. The event, "Race the Sun," took place in the Lake District last month. The event started at 6am and the fund raisers, working in teams of four, had to complete the three events by 8pm. The money raised by Action Medical Research is used to fund medical research into serious diseases and disabilities. Anyone wishing to make a donation can contact Action Medical Research on 01403 210406 or at www.action.org.uk.

News in Brief

Wedding Bells Sound for WHSG Art Teacher

Art teacher Peter Vinten married his fiancée Sam Hill at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Leigh-on-Sea, on Saturday 26th September 2009. Congratulations Mr and Mrs Vinten!

Shakespeare Festival

Seventeen girls took part in the Shakespeare for Schools Festival this month. The girls performed an abridged version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Palace Theatre. Well done girls!

Harvest Festival

Food donated by WHSG parents was presented to HARP (Homeless Action Resource Project) whose aim is to provide aid for the homeless.

November Sports Dates

- 2nd • Yr7 Essex Cup netball at Gable Hall
- 11th • U16 basket ball vs. Cecil Jones
- 18th • Borough cross country
- Yr7 Essex Cup netball vs. Deanes
- 19th • Yr7 netball vs. Cecil Jones
- Yr8 netball vs. Ceil Jones
- 25th • Yr7 Essex Cup netball at Sacred Heart



The Eagle Lands for "A" Level Students

"A" level Geography students braved freezing temperatures to develop their understanding of contemporary issues such as flooding and global warming during a visit to the Eagle's Nest Field Study Centre in southern France this month. During the week long trip to the Cevennes National Park they investigated rivers, ecosystems and urban development.

"The thirty two students developed their skills in field work, analysis and evaluation, and data manipulation," said Assistant Headteacher Neal Glucksmann-Smith. During the early part of the week, students were involved in studying the changing characteristics of the River Souteyran as it flowed downstream.

Students then spent time in the mountains looking at the geology within the area. A day at the coast was spent studying how sand dunes develop over time, and students observed and analysed the changing diversity of plants. Finally students were taken to the town of Mende to study urban development.

Engineers Regional Finals

A group of WHSG engineering students won an impressive array of awards at the Young Engineers Regional Finals held at Anglian Ruskin University in Chelmsford earlier this year.

The school entered students into three categories: Club Showcase, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 5. The Key Stage 3 team, comprising Gemma Frith, Abigail Graham, Kelly Thompson and Julia Gibb, won second prize for their product, "Buzz It" which locates an individual's cat around the home and garden. Jessica Galsworthy, who entered the Key Stage 5 category with her "Grow Your Own Project" came first and the judges were so impressed with her work they created a new award for her.

The Showcase Team, comprising Vaishanjali Bhiman, Daniella Rourke, Susan Springall and Lilith Ellis came joint first.

Further information on dates and events, PTA news, buildings updates and headteacher reports can be found online at www.whsg.info

HPV programme set to continue

Girls in Years 8, 10, 11, 12 and 13 last month received the first of three injections designed to protect them against cervical cancer. The second and third HPV injections will go ahead in November and March 2010 despite the tragic death of Coventry school girl, Natalie Morton, soon after she received the injection. WHSG Headteacher Dr Paul Hayman said: "Although it initially appeared Natalie had had an adverse reaction to the injection, it was sadly later discovered that she had an underlying health issue. We will be continuing with our vaccination programme so that our girls get the full level of protection offered by the programme." Attendance administrator Mrs Burnett commended the behaviour of WHSG girls.