

Primary entry #54: Aspect Hunter School



THE HAWK AND HORN



DESIGN: Students use technology to craft future ideas.

Youth plan a vision for the city's future

By WARATAH WEST
SATELLITE CLASS

THE Newcastle 2020 competition has just closed entries for another year, inspiring local designers and creative participants to design new ideas for how the city of Newcastle could look in the future.

The competition asks for entrants to create a new vision for how one of the key streets in Newcastle, Hunter Street, could look in eight years' time with a bit of creativity and inspiration applied to its design. Design entries can be visual creations, or can be written ideas.

Some students at Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) have been creating potential designs using iPad apps by taking photographs of Hunter Street and drawing ideas straight on top of the photos.

Students entered entries last year as well, responding to the brief that asks young people for their "wildest ideas" for temporary events to be hosted in Hunter Street Mall.

Last year students envisaged a dance floor made from a giant, spinning vinyl record, as well as a car park made of lava lamp walls and virtual reality hologram safety railings, and a series of rooftop bridges and walkways that would connect tall buildings across the city.

Winners last year created ideas around a coffee academy, art installations using coloured deck chairs, and a lantern festival event.

New friends game on

By WARATAH WEST
SATELLITE CLASS

SOME young people from around the Hunter have recently been enjoying a new social club, facilitated by staff from Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) and Ron West, owner of local business DownForwardPunch, a venue in Newcastle West for keen gamers to enjoy competitive video game tournaments, LAN and electronic sports events.

Electronic sports, or "eSports", have become increasingly recognised globally as professional gamers have elevated the status of the genre at major tournaments, such as the World Cyber Games.

In 2007, a World Cyber Games event was held in Seattle, in the United States, with a total prize pool of USD\$4,000,000 for participants competing in games such as *Age of Empires III*, *Counter-Strike* and *The Need for Speed*.

The DownForwardPunch video game social club has been partially structured around the popular online game *Minecraft*, a game that is referred to as a sandbox game in that it allows creative freedom for gamers to construct buildings and environments in a manner guided by imagination rather than levels and high scores.

Club participants can play the game collaboratively, working



IN CONTROL: High scores all around as the new friends game together.

towards strategic projects, or just casually explore shared online environments.

Participants at the club are also able to casually play other games in a socially supported, comfortable environment.

One of the most popular games has been the Nintendo Wii hit *Super Smash Bros*, a game that allows up to four players to play on

the screen at one time.

"I love playing these games with new people", said Angus, a teenage participant.

"It's the best way to meet people that you might not have otherwise had anything in common with."

Club tournaments and special competitions are being arranged at the club to test and celebrate new skills participants are acquiring.

One of the club facilitators, Craig Smith, said: "It is exciting to start a club like this and to see how we can now build on the great experiences being had."

"There is so much potential to implement new challenges and strategic collaborative opportunities for our gamers to allow them to continue excelling in this environment."



TEAM SPIRIT: Pride for the Hunter as the students celebrate the sports day. Picture: Mark Durie

Success at unique sports carnival

By WARATAH WEST
SATELLITE CLASS

ON September 19, nearly 700 students from Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) came together in Sydney Olympic Park for Australia's biggest sports carnival for children with autism.

Now in its sixth year, students from all around the state competed and had fun at this unique event. Hunter

students had a practice session at Edgeworth for their track and field skills and to try out their carnival war cry.

Riley and Ethan, two students from the Hunter, said how much they enjoy the running races and high jump events. Another student, Chase, commented how he hoped that carnivals like this would generate attention to the great time that students have in the school.

Students wore orange to represent the Hunter school, and made posters for the day to celebrate their success.

Carmen, a teacher from the Waratah West Satellite Class, said: "It's great for the students to catch up with others from around the state that they often haven't seen since last year."

"Seeing friendships rekindled on the field across the day is an absolute joy."



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