

Primary entry #6: Jewells Primary School



JEWELLS JOURNAL



PLANTED: Garden co-ordinator Chris Brown. Picture: Yoey Wahabzadah

Community goes green in the garden

By HAYLEY LANGHOLZ, DYLAN BAXTER, YOEY WAHABZADAH and KAI BATES

BELMONT Habitat in Harmony Community Garden has been operating for almost 20 years, bringing the community together through gardening.

The garden is an extension of the Belmont Neighbourhood Centre, a non-profit organisation designed to meet community needs.

Up to 15 volunteers tender the garden and help with keeping everything green daily.

The garden co-ordinator, Chris Brown, plays the important role of keeping the garden operational.

When Chris was asked what he liked most about his job he said: "I mostly enjoy having conversations with members of the local community."

The garden has a range of organic fruit, nut and rainforest trees and grows a wide range of seasonal fruit and vegetables. No artificial chemicals are used in the growing process.

Around 30 people access the garden each week to purchase seasonal fruit and vegetables.

It is open Monday to Friday 8am-12pm for the community to access, and there are weekly working bees to help maintain it.

Chris stressed the importance of volunteering: "Without volunteers, we would not be able to operate."

By DANIEL NOLAN, LUKE WIGNEY, BRIDGET BEVERLEY and MIKAYLA ARMSTRONG

GATESHEAD Public School and Gateshead West Public School amalgamated to form Wiripaang Public School in Term 1, 2013.

Both schools had low student numbers and had teaching principals, so the P&C of Gateshead approached the Department of Education and Communities in 2011 about the possibility of amalgamation. This would allow them to qualify for a non-teaching principal.

The teachers were very keen to join the two schools as it would provide better opportunities for them professionally and, more importantly, opportunities for the students.

The school communities displayed concern about the amalgamation in the beginning stages. It was particularly tough for Gateshead West parents and students as they had to change school grounds as well as accept a new school identity.

Steering committee meetings and student transition programs involving both schools were held in 2012 for the amalgamation, which occurred in 2013.

All permanent teachers from both schools kept their positions in the transition, except the principal of Gateshead West, who is now



PRIDE: Amalgamated Wiripaang students show off their new uniform.

Picture: Luke Wigney

working as the principal of Pelican Public School.

The new school name, Wiripaang, was put forward by the steering committee. Wiripaang is the Awabakal word for "eagle hawk".

Wiripaang Public School currently has 192 students. The school is now able to offer more opportunities including seven primary schools sports association teams,

two debating teams, a song room and environmental programs.

Wiripaang's school logo is a hawk to represent the school name, and the school motto is "Courage and Character", devised from aspects of the motto from the two amalgamated schools.

The committee also voted for a "fresh, new, modern uniform" made up of the colours black, teal and white.

The old Gateshead West school site is being refurbished to accommodate Lakeside School, which is currently located right next to Wiripaang.

Wiripaang principal Lee Saurins says her vision for the school is to "build a school that is inclusive with strong community engagement that offers students many academic, sporting and cultural opportunities".



CHAMPIONS: Siennah Pirona and Isaac Leadbeater with their awards. Picture: Will Armstrong

Lake Macquarie's shooting stars

By SOPHIE GILLOGLY, LARA FERCH, ISABELLA TROTTER, WILL ARMSTRONG and KAIYA KING

SIENNAH Pirona, 11, and Isaac Leadbeater, 14, both recently won the 2012 Lake Macquarie Junior Sports-person of the Year awards.

Siennah and Isaac received their awards after both successfully winning the 2012 World Championships for Sport Aerobics held in the Netherlands.

Siennah started aerobics at the age of 10 and now trains at Newcastle Sport Aerobics six days a week with her coach and mentor, Allira Bull.

"I would love to win again and make a career out of aerobics," she said.

Isaac Leadbeater also started aerobics at age 10.

Up until 2012, Isaac's coach was Nicole Maslowski. He now trains under Cassie Skully and Anthony Ikin.

Isaac has had great success in aerobics winning the World Championships three times, National Championships six times and State Championships seven times. Isaac said he appreciates the sponsorship of Planet Fitness Belmont for helping with his training.

Rachel - Newcastle Permanent



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