

AVS Notes 17th March 2017

New Junior Cert Talk

A talk takes place in the school on 29th March on the New Junior Cert programme. This talk is open to all interested parents. Ms. Jacqui Dillon Director of the Donegal Education Centre, Ms. Geraldine Diver Principal and JCT school coordinator, Mr. Shane O Neill will deliver the talk.

Talk from Dr. Fergus Heffernan on Family Dynamics and Wellbeing

Dr. Fergus Heffernan will deliver a talk on March 22nd at 7.00pm in the AVS. This is an evening presentation of about two hour's duration, which is suitable for any community or organisation with an interest in family. All welcome. Our Leaving Cert students will have a presentation from Dr Heffernan in the afternoon and the staff will also attend a workshop after school on the same day.

First Year Induction Day

The Induction day took place for first years on Tuesday 14th March from 9.30 am to 2.30 pm. Students completed a taster day in the various subjects on offer in the school. For example, in business students completed an enterprise project where they had to create a prototype for a toy. Students used lollipop sticks, cups and tape to construct their examples. The Art room had students focused on their creative side as they modeled clay with the Art teachers. Many of our musically talented students performed music on the day: Adam Maziri, Rebekah Sweeney, Ciara Joyce, Maciej Ferlwicz, Marie Mc Girr, Conor Mc Allister, Alison Edwards, Jonathon Crawford and Robyn Harvey Moulding performed some energetic numbers. Thank you to all the staff and TYs who were involved in organising the event.

There was also an Information Evening for parents with students starting in the AVS on Wednesday evening. Our Principal, Geraldine Diver and Deputy Principal Ronan Doherty spoke to prospective parents about our school's expectations, policies and answered any questions parents may have had.

Golf Classic

Following on from the very successful Golf Classic in 2015, the Abbey Vocational School Parents' Association is holding the 2017 Fundraising Golf Classic in Donegal Golf Club, Murvagh on Wednesday 10th May 2017. This is the Parents Association's main fundraising event and is hosted every 2 years. The event raises much needed funds for the school and committee members are currently approaching local businesses seeking sponsorship of Teams / Tees / Prizes.

Anyone who would like to enter a team on the day can do so by contacting Donegal Golf Club on 074 9734054 or Teresa on 0877863796.

Team of 4 - €120, Prize sponsorship - €75 or Tee - €50. All contributions big or small welcomed

Healthy Schools

Monday 13th March the Healthy Schools Committee held a walk or run event. The committee and students walked from Solis Castle around the scenic route of Lough Eske finishing at the Famine Pot where they enjoyed healthy snacks and treats.

Students participating in the Healthy Schools Project are also part of the 'Couch to 5k' venture. A date is yet to be confirmed for the 5k event which will take place early in May

Christy Toye will complete activities with the group involved in the Healthy Schools project on Wednesday 22nd March.

Music Practicals

Music Practicals for Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Music students will be taking place in the next number of weeks. On Monday 27th and Tuesday 28th March the Leaving Certificate practical exam will take place and the Junior Certificate practical on Wednesday 29th.

Student Portfolios

Students are slowly completing portfolios for college application purposes. These portfolios are for students interested in applying to Art, Music, and Drama or Acting courses.

Jigs and Reels

The Abbey Vocational School will host its very own dance competition, Jigs 'N' Reels, next week on Friday 24th March. The show starts at 7:30 pm sharp with doors opening at 7pm. Thirteen couples from all year groups will take to the dance floor to showcase their intense rehearsal efforts over the past few months.

On the night, you can vote for your favourite couple. Tickets are priced €10 Adult or €7 Students and are available at the School Office. Tickets can be purchased in the assembly area at lunchtime also.

We are also running a competition on our Facebook page where you can be in with a chance to win two tickets to the event. For more information, visit the 'AVS presents Jigs and Reels' Facebook page by searching @avsjigsandreels. Videos of our couples are available to view also on the Facebook page. Good luck to all our couples!

Seachtain Na Gaeilge

The Irish Department held events to celebrate Seachtain na Gaeilge this week. This included Lá Fhéile Pádraig card competition for 1st years. The winners of the card competition in 1st year were: 1st: Anna Gillow, 2nd: Natasha Prendiville and 3rd: Caitlin Ward. The winners of the second year competition were: 1st: Roisin Feeney, 2nd: Marie Mc Girr and 3rd: Bronagh Mulroy. Thank you to everyone who took part.

In addition, all Irish classes interacted with one another through our native tongue by playing games, quizzes and other fun – filled activities in their Irish lessons. Clement Gallagher had our 5th year's Céili dancing on Wednesday 15th March. They had a great time not only being active but learning lively dance moves.

Students participated in a 'Lá Glas' on Thursday 16th March to celebrate the national event by wearing green.

ETB Student Choir

The ETB Student Choir will take place on Tuesday 21st March in An Grianán Theatre in Letterkenny. The students of the AVS will be performing with other ETB schools in the Donegal district along with ETB staff. The choir is comprised of 50 members of teachers from ETB schools and offices.

Gambia Coffee Morning

The staff of the AVS held a wonderful coffee morning in aid of the Gambia project on Thursday 16th March. Thank you to staff members who baked delicious goods and donated much needed funds on the day.

EU Business Debate

Ms. Mc Cafferty's senior Business class attended a debate last week in Dublin Castle on Friday 10th March. The students represented the EU member state Hungary in the debate; the representatives discussed whether they thought international trade would be beneficial for European trade and business. The task was a great experience for our students and they were exceptional on the day however, they were up against stiff competition. Many of the schools involved were very experienced in debating but our school showed outstanding potential and we are very proud of those who represented us.

Spanish Club

Club de Espanol takes place every Thursday in room 1 with Ms McNulty during the second half of lunch. This week the club completed quizzes in Spanish on Kahoot; an interactive learning site and tasted some Spanish food to tingle their taste buds. Anyone in 1st year is welcome to join and improve his or her Spanish.

Book Club

Members had a meeting this week on Monday 13th March to review 'The Hobbit' by J.R. Tolkien. Students picked their own books to read and review for the next meeting. The members will meet again in 2 weeks' time on Monday 27th at lunchtime.

Transition Year:

The Donegal "TASTY" Project 2017

Mr Patsy Barr, Chairman of Donegal Town Credit Union, formally launched the Donegal "TASTY" Project 2017 on Tuesday 14th March. "TASTY" is a pilot food tourism project that is unique to Donegal with elements of "MASTER-CHEF" meets "THE APPRENTICE". Top Chefs from seven of our leading 4**** & 5***** Star Hotels and Restaurants in South Donegal have teamed-up with Abbey Vocational School TY Students. Together, they are set to cook-up a storm and have been challenged to produce a new "TASTY" food dish that features locally sourced ingredients. Following an interview process, forty-two budding young food-industry entrepreneurs selected from TY Students in the Abbey Vocational School, Donegal were split into seven teams of six students. Each TY team has been assigned a local hotel and restaurant that will mentor the TY Student Team over an eight-week period.

During the course of the project, each of the participating AVS TY students will get the opportunity to work alongside tourism industry professionals and learn "first-hand" about Food Origin and Sourcing, New Product Development, Culinary Arts, Food Packaging, Marketing, PR and Presentation Skills. Sponsored by Donegal Town Credit Union, the project is overseen by a voluntary steering committee, which include:

- Ms. Geraldine Diver, Principal of Abbey Vocational School;
- Dr Seán Duffy, Head of School of Tourism, LYIT Killybegs;
- Mr. Conor Daly, HIVE Donegal;
- Mr. Donal Cox, Operations Manager, Solis Lough Eske Castle;
- Mr. Enda O'Rourke, www.toomanycooks.ie, Mountcharles and
- Ms. Emily Browne, Smuggler's Creek Inn, Rossnowlagh.

Mr. Liam Kelly, Manager of Donegal Town Credit Union explained why their Board of Directors choose to sponsor the TASTY 2017 project. “The ethos of the Credit Union is people working together; for the People, with the People, and for the benefit of the People in our Donegal Community” “This innovative pilot programme gives our TY students real-life insights into the varied career paths and opportunities within the local tourism industry and fits perfectly with the community ethos of Donegal Town Credit Union”.

Dublin Trip

On Wednesday 15th March TYs travelled to Dublin and visited the Croke Park Stadium. Students were treated to a lovely tour of the stadium, which included visiting the All-Ireland team dressing rooms, going pitch side via the players’ tunnel and sitting in the incredible VIP area. Our students also got to enjoy the views of the famous pitch from the top tier of the stadium that can induce an episode of vertigo but it a breath – taking view and well worth the dizzying height. The display of trophies and medals were on show in the museum and interactive games and activities were also available there to highlight the stadiums history and achievements.

Students were then split into two groups, one went to Dáil Éireann at Leinster House and another group went to Kilmainham Gaol. Students had a guided tour of Kilmainham Gaol, getting to see the cells and courtyards. They learned that today the building symbolises the tradition of constitutional nationalism from the rebellion of 1798 to the Irish Civil War of 1923 and that leaders of the rebellions of 1798, 1803, 1848, 1867 and 1916 were detained and in some cases executed in the Gaol. Many famous leaders involved in the Rising were detained and executed in the barracks such as: Pádraic Pearse, Thomas Clarke, Thomas MacDonagh, Joseph Plunkett, John Mac Bride and Eamonn Ceantt.

Those who visited Dáil Éireann were given an extensive history of the building, a guide to a day in the life of a TD and a brief explanation to how the parliament functions, how the Oireachtas works, the Seanad Éireann and the Committees. Thank you most sincerely to Pat the Cope Gallagher who greeted our students and invited them for refreshments in the Dáil.

Alan Devine Public – Speaking Workshop

Alan Devine returned to see our TY’s on Thursday 16th March. The final workshop will take place next week on Friday 24th March. Alan Devine who has performed in Fair City and has over twenty years’ experience as an actor. The workshops were an enjoyable and interactive experience. Students learnt how to find their confidence speaking aloud and he encouraged students and praised them to smile, speak and stand confidently when speaking to an audience. All TYs who have participated in the workshop said it was extremely enjoyable” and Alan showed them that being confident can help us through many obstacles especially public speaking which is a daunting experience for some.

Chess

Competitions are ongoing to select the Junior and Senior chess champion. Chess club continues in room 3 at lunchtime. There is a growing membership to this club, which welcomes all of our students.

Sports:

U14 Boys Gaelic Final

The U14 county final next week will take place against PCC Falcarragh in Fintra on Friday 24th March. The boys have had an anxious wait for the date so we wish all the U14 squad good luck in the final. Regardless, of the result we are proud they have achieved so much already.

Basketball

1st and 2nd year boys' basketball will be take part in another competition at home on Monday 20th March.

Girls Active

Girls Active are heading for the end of year celebration in the Aura Leisure Centre in Letterkenny on Wednesday 22nd March. Girls Active is a non – competitive sport group for girls it is “a joint programme between the Health Services Executive North West, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, Youth Sport West and Donegal Sports Partnership and is aimed at teenage girls who are not currently participating in sport. The programme was initiated in 2003 and aims to increase the number of teenage girls involved in long-term regular physical activity through developing more supportive environments for teenage girls' physical activity in schools” (www.sligosportandrecreation.ie).

The theme on the day is: Ladies' Rugby and the 27 girls involved from the school will meet and train with an All-Ireland coach on the day. Training will take place for all girls involved after lunch on Monday.

Athletics

Well done to Mia Mc Calmont who finished 9th in the All-Ireland school's cross-country final in Belfast last Saturday. She competed in the U17 race a year over her age group. This is a huge opportunity for Mia and she only missed out in Irish International School's by one place. Our athletes now look forward to a training season. Training times are as follows: Tuesday: 4.00-5.15pm and Friday at lunchtime.