

15th SCHOOL AWARDS

Ellison Public School recently hosted the 15th Blue Mountains School Environment Awards on 13 November 2009. This year there were a total of 24 environmental projects nominated by 10 Blue Mountains schools including both primary and high schools. Blue Mountains schools make significant contributions in protecting and improving all aspects of our natural environment. The School Environment Awards aim to recognise these achievements by our local schools. Our Blue Mountains schools are modelling sustainability with projects that include kitchen and waterwise gardens; environmental journalism; solar panels; recycling; composting; and worm farming. This year a new category was created called The Giant Dragonfly Achievement. This category identifies three milestones that schools can achieve in sustainability projects with a Bronze, Silver and Gold level. The 2009 winners of the Sustainable School Award were Warrimoo Public School & Blaxland East Public School. The Giant Dragonfly Bronze Achievement was awarded to Ellison Public School & Warrimoo Public School. Environmental Education Award, this year went to Lapstone Public School & Blaxland East Public School. Planning Awards for projects not yet complete were won by Winmalee Public & Katoomba High. In the area of Waste Management, Wentworth Falls Public & Ellison Public School were thought to be leaders. Many schools now have Kitchen Gardens, but those at Katoomba Public & Leura Public School were judged to be the best. A special Green Achievement Award was presented to Blackheath Primary School which will miss Ms Bahnisch as its Principal next year. Thankyou to Robbie & David from Blue Mountains Council, all the teachers and students who have worked so hard and the sponsors, particularly Cons Soc. *KHS Press Team*



A BLUE RIBBON DAY

The oceans are absorbing about one-quarter of the carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere from the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation. The result has been to change the chemical balance of the oceans, making them more acidic and causing serious problems for corals and marine life that need to produce shells. By 2100, it is thought that about 70 % of cold-water corals, a major feeding ground for fish will be exposed to acidic water.



On the 11th December students (and teachers) at Katoomba High and other schools in the Mountains wore sky (or ocean) blue shoe laces and ribbons to school to support strong action on climate change in the lead up to "Walk Against warming" Day. They also sold Danish Pastries to raise \$200 for the Australian Conservation Foundation. Thank you to the Western Shoe Company in Katoomba for donating the laces. *Yr 11 KHS Env Science class*



IN COPENHAGEN

Cecelia Vagg, a student raised in the Blue Mts is in Denmark at the Climate Summit trying to spread the word about what Australia should be doing about climate change. She said that "growing up in the Mountains I have a love of the bush and I am worried about increasing fires and drought".



COAL COMFORT

Philip Parsons of Katoomba High has had his artwork "Coal Comfort" chosen for ArtExpress.



The work is a comment about our reliance on coal and the damage it is doing to our climate. Meanwhile two new power plants are proposed in the Hunter Valley and here in the Blue Mountains near Lithgow. Any new power stations built should use renewable energy. This could provide many more jobs than currently exist in coal-fired power stations. Around 15,000 people are currently employed in the state's coal-fired power stations and the mines that support them. A recent University of Newcastle report estimates 74,000 jobs could be created by using renewable energy instead.

KHS Newsletter

PETS PESTER POSSUMS

Blue Mountains Schools should become actively involved in native wildlife education since many of



us have cats and dogs as pets. Meredith from Con Soc spoke at the Term 4 Environment Network meeting about how schools can play a role by creating native gardens, bird boxes and frog ponds. Responsible care of family pets will keep pets safe and care for wildlife too. Cats are best indoors at all times as possums and gliders move around at night, whilst birds, and lizards move around in the daylight. Dogs should be walked in parks on a leash, or in Council Offleash areas. *Daniel*

Glider Gossip

Instead of the regular Quoll Corner we have renamed this section for younger readers "Glider Gossip". Con Soc has sponsored a feathertail Glider at Taronga zoo. If you visit in the school holidays, make sure you pay it a visit. The Feathertail Glider is the smallest gliding mammal in the world with an average weight of 12 grammes.



It lives in forests and woodlands and feeds on pollen, nectar and insects. Predators which eat the Feathertail Glider include currawongs, kookaburras, foxes & cats. *Scott*

CLIMATE CLEVER

A \$5 million program is available to both primary & secondary schools in 2010-2013. The program aims to engage students in energy saving & greenhouse gas proposals. Tell your teacher that they can go to one of the workshops in Term 1 2010 and that your school can apply for money to lower your school energy use. *Chris*



A WOLLEMI XMAS



Finally, why not buy a Wollemi Pine at Christmas this year? You can decorate it like a pine tree and either keep it in the pot for next year or plant it out forever.

www.bluemountains.org.au