



weekly news

Stagslink



7 April 2017

From the Head Teacher

Dear Parents/Carers

Thursday evening saw another spectacular Spring House Cup – with the theme of STAGS goes to Hollywood ringing in our ears we were treated to seven wonderful performances from students representing each of the Houses. The task of judging is always the most difficult and the wonderful enthusiasm palpable, all organised and choreographed by the students themselves from all year groups and led so effectively by the House Captains and Senior students. We were unanimous in our voting and congratulations go to Franklin, who won the Spring House Cup, closely followed by Austen in second place and Hepworth in third place.

The Spring Concert was another resounding success. The quality of performance and talents of our students never ceases to amaze me and I often feel like a very proud parent with the same anxieties at the start of the performances which are then dispelled by great admiration as confidence grows and all of the rehearsals and practice is shown to pay off – congratulations to all performers and my thanks go to Mrs Warren and Miss Glover and to our peripatetic colleagues, all of whom support and lead our students so well.

We return to the summer term and quickly into the GCSE and GCE A Level examination series. Revision guidance has been provided and I would encourage all students to ensure that revision is active, engaging and that an effective revision timetable is followed. This should also be punctuated with breaks, rest and some physical exercise to balance the sedentary nature of revision. Many revision classes are being organised in school during the holiday and I would encourage all students to make the most of these additional learning opportunities.

At the end of this term we are saying a fond farewell to Mr Fudge, who is leaving us for pastures new. We are delighted to welcome Mrs Beatham as REP teacher, who joins us at the start of the new term. As Miss Glover is stepping down from her role as Director of Learning, to focus on her passion for Music, we formally introduced Miss Potter to Year 10, who will be taking over this role after Easter.

I wish you all a very happy and restful Easter break and look forward to seeing you at the start of the new term on Tuesday 25 April 2017.

Thank you all for your continued support.

Margaret Chapman



UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 8 April

Year 8 Boulogne, France trip departs - returns Tuesday 11 April



Easter Holidays



Monday 10 April - Friday 21 April

Monday 24 April

Professional Development Day

SCHOOL CLOSED

Summer Term Begins

Tuesday 25 April

Wednesday 26 April

Year 12 Economics Revision Conference

Year 13 Grade Booster Economics revision

Year 11 Julius Caesar RSC cinema visit - 7.00pm

Thursday 27 April

Year 11 Unit 3 Drama performances (External Examiner)

Fashion Show, Main Hall - 1.05pm

Year 7 & 8 Junior Maths Challenge

Head Teacher Parent Surgery - 4.00pm

Friday 28 April

Year 11 Unit 3 Drama performances (External Examiner)

Please park in the tennis courts through the blue gates for all evening events

Word of the Week

Every week we promote the use of an unusual word across the school.

This week's word is:

Ameliorate

Definition:

To make something better

Try to use it as much as possible this week!

English Department



Free School Meals

Your child could get a free school meal if you receive any of the following:

- **Income Support**
- **Income-based Jobseekers Allowance**
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999**
- **The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit**
- **Child Tax Credit** (as long as you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and you don't get more than £16,190 a year)
- **Working Tax Credit run-on** (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- **Universal Credit**

Apply today if you receive any of these benefits. It takes five minutes and, in most cases, they can tell you straightaway if your child can get free meals at school.

Just Google 'free school meals Hertfordshire' and scroll down to the pink button labelled, **Apply for free school meals (Year 3 and older)**

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mrs Newman, Deputy Head
menmaths@stags.herts.sch.uk

STAGS Heated Outdoor Pool Re Opens Saturday 6 May 2017



STAGS are delighted to report that the pool will be reopening on 6 May for the start of its 58th Year.

This year the cost is £52 per family, which continues to offer very good value for money. The swimming season will run from May - October.

For further information on membership and private party hire bookings please visit:

<http://www.stags.herts.sch.uk/community/swimming-pool-association/>

STAGS 'Young Writers' Work Set for Publication in 'Winter to Wonderland' Book



It is with great delight that we can announce that students: Siena Donnez-Barnard, Caitlyn Butcher, Amber Clifton, Isabelle Kinghorn, Sophie Brunton, Namam Kadir, Nataya Svasti-Salee, Alexandra Bailey, Amy Westlake, Srushti Khedekar, Aishah Khan, Samira Hanchaoui, Carys MacIntyre and Amelia Kamalarajah have been chosen to have their written work published in a forthcoming book, 'Welcome to Wonderland – Essex and Hertfordshire.' It is the 26th year that 'Young Writers' (an organisation that promotes poetry and creative writing) have run their annual creative writing competition; this year they received in excess of 18,000 entries nationwide. From this figure they have been able to produce a collection of regional anthologies featuring young writers from around the UK.

The competition required entrants to write a mini-saga, a story written in just 100 words, inspired by a fictional world. Students' work was selected based upon imagination, perception and creativity, as well as originality and use of language.

Here are some examples of the selected work for the book:

'Carried into Colosso' written by Amy Westlake 7F

Lashing down onto the ship, thick droplets of rain flooded the deck. Wind whipped the masts and thunder clashed in the sky. Anna was standing at the bow, gazing down into the stormy sea. Suddenly, her insides lurched, she was falling. Hitting an icy surface, she passed out... Waking up, she forced open her eyes. Something was lifting her high above the ground. Turning to her left she saw a giant, glassy eye staring back at her. The creature carried her into a vast forest. It put her down on the wooded floor, stood up and said, 'Welcome to Colosso!'

'The Peacock Lady' by Srushti Khedekar

I stared wide-eyed, at the peacock lady. Her glowing beauty radiated around the room, beguiling everyone's gaze. Her poise was tall and elegant; her face of a delicate peach colour. Purple, blue and green feathers from her jewelled hat cavorted around in the sun, making shards of colour bounce off my face. Yet it was neither her hat nor her posture that attracted the most attention. It was her eyes. Her beautiful golden eyes were outlined by her refined cheekbones. Catching my eye, she beckoned me over and asked, 'You want to know why you've been brought to Annora...?'

Srushti Khedekar, commented proudly on her achievement: *"Being selected for the Young Writers Challenge was truly exciting and I'm very happy that my work is going to be published in a book. It was a fantastic experience!"*

Creative writing is highly valued at STAGS and I am sure we can all agree that this is a wonderful accomplishment for the girls, particularly at such a young age. The work selected was based entirely on its own merits. Perhaps we have the next generation of J.K Rowling in the midst!

Miss Goldup
English Teacher

STAGS J-Club celebrate The Annual Festival of Passover

Over 35 students attended J-club at lunchtime on Monday 3 April to learn more about the Jewish celebration of pesach, meaning 'to Pass over'.

The eight-day festival of Passover is celebrated in the early spring, from the 15th through the 22nd of the Hebrew month of Nissan (April 10–18, 2017). It commemorates the emancipation of the Israelites from slavery in Ancient Egypt. It is observed by avoiding leaven (bread), and highlighted by the Seder meals that include four cups of wine, eating matzah and bitter herbs, and retelling the story of the Exodus.



This annual STAGS event, educating students about the Passover story through an edible 'Chocolate Seder' has proved to be not only memorable but also thought provoking, as students questioned the use of slavery through the ages, as well as drawing poignant parallels with contemporary society and the refugee crisis today. The symbolic notion of 'memory' when the Jews retell the story of their ancestry leaving Egypt, ties in with the REP theme in which to study Judaism, through the lense of remembering. This was captured when explaining the meaning behind each food item on the 'seder plate' which you eat throughout the service; with the students luckily tasting dark chocolate sauce as part of our chocoholic festivities as opposed to the literal bitterness of salt water, to remember the tears of those enslaved.

A packed session saw students enjoying themselves tasting different types of Mazah crackers, (a substitute for bread not eaten during Passover) and drinking little cups of chocolate milk shake (instead of the traditional wine) whilst listening to Year 8 Director of Learning Miss Kalmanson telling the story of the Exodus.

Sincere thanks to Miss Brock and Miss Kalmanson for arranging such a fun and highly informative session which was clearly enjoyed by all who attended.

Miss Kalmanson

STAGS Christian Union Celebrates Easter

Last week, as part of our Easter events, the Reverend Glen Scrivener visited STAGS on Wednesday 29 March and Thursday 30 March to speak to students about why Easter is so important for Christians. Lunchtime meetings were held in the Dance Studio, and outside in the sunshine!

In addition, Glen visited the Year 7 assembly and a Year 10 REP lesson where he talked about the link between Passover and Easter, exploring why Jesus is known as the 'Lamb of God'. Many students asked challenging questions which Glen answered from the Bible. He also handed out copies of his book, 'Love Story' which explores the debates between CS Lewis and JRR Tolkien regarding myth and reality.



On behalf of all members of the STAGS Christian Union, we wish everyone in the STAGS community a very Happy Easter Holiday.

Mrs Buckley



STAGS Team 'Eclipse' Win Place in the Final Dragon's Apprentice

Congratulations to Dragon's Apprentice team Eclipse who have done incredibly well to successfully make it through to the final which will be held at Hertfordshire University on 25 April. The annual Dragon's Apprentice Challenge is made up of teams from local schools, linked to a business mentor, referred to as a 'Dragon'. The Dragon advises the team on creating fund raising events for a designated charity. Each team employs an initial £100 seed capital and aims to turn it into the magic figure of £1000 within 6 months.

Members of STAGS Team Eclipse Katya Alban, Sean Reed, Ella Bettison, Billie Bowbrick, Anna Solomon and Gabbi Goldman raised a total of £1,002.05 for Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline by arranging a vegan bake sale, selling gig tickets, publishing a recipe book, and organising a hugely successful silent disco in February! The team are currently busy working on perfecting their presentation ready to make a big impression on judges during the evening of the Dragon's final.

Eclipse Team Leader Katya said, *"When we found out we were finalists we were all thrilled that our work had paid off. Succeeding in getting to this point is a huge achievement and we will be able to employ all the skills we have learnt in many future situations, especially event management."*

Team Eclipse would like to sincerely thank their mentor Technical Director Jason Sammon from Digital Marketing Company 'FL1 Digital' for giving so generously of his own time to help them succeed. Last but not least, we also thank Business Teacher Mrs Glanvill for encouraging all the STAGS apprentice teams who entered in 2017. STAGS community are all rooting for Team Eclipse and wish them every success!

For more information please follow these links:
<http://www.debenhamsottaway.co.uk/news/2016/10/dragons-apprentice-challenge-2017-launch> or
www.fl1digital.com



Diverse Dining

The diversity of the STAGS community is what makes us an outstanding school, all of us have a place on the map we call home or an occasion in the calendar that brings our families together. Most of these occasions and places can be linked to specific dishes.

We want you and your daughter to team up and share the secrets of your kitchen. Your daughters have been asked to share those recipes for dishes that celebrate the place you call home, the food that accompanies those special occasions and those dishes that identify your little spot on the globe. Whether you are from St Albans or St Petersburg, Watford or Washington, Leighton Buzzard or Lagos, we would love to hear about you and the food that celebrates you and your culture.

Taking part is easy, ask your daughter to log onto Google Classroom and open the 'Diverse Dining' classroom by entering this code **k287f5r**.

Then read the simple instructions on how to write and upload your recipe to the Google Classroom. The deadline to upload recipes is 5 May 2017, this will give you and your daughter plenty of time to perfect your recipe, complete the template and give us the background on your wonderful dish.

All of the money generated from the purchase of the book will be used to support the STAGS PTA in their school improvement projects. Our vision for 'diverse dining' is to inspire your home dining and allow you and your family to cook a range of dishes to celebrate the diversity of our school community.

Mr Barrett



Talented Athlete Phoebe Steer Wins Place in the London Marathon

Congratulations to Year 13 student and talented and passionate runner Phoebe Steer who has managed to get a place in the London Marathon on 23 April 2017. She will be one of the youngest runners at the event as she will not turn 18 until the 9th April, just 12 days before the race! Phoebe really wants to make a difference to her chosen charity Guide Dogs, so all the money she raises will go to them.

Mrs Steer, Phoebe's mother said, *"I am incredibly proud of the way Phoebe has focused. She has taken part in a 20 mile training run recently as well as taking part in the Reading Half Marathon, which she finished in just over 2 hours."*

STAGS community supports Phoebe in her determined effort to raise as much money as she can for such a worthy charity. If you would like to offer her your support please visit her Just Giving page (see below). Good luck Phoebe!

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/PhoebeLondonMarathon2017>

<https://www.virginmoneylondonmarathon.com/en-gb/>



Local Author Camilla Chester Has Highest Bid on Rotary's Silent Auction

Bidding for the embellished canine Gromit figures in the Rotary Club's silent auction has just begun! We are delighted to inform parents that the STAGS Gromit produced by children's author Camilla Chester is the figure currently with the highest bid. The figure stands at £110 and we hope this total will continue to rise!

Author Camilla responded to a request from STAGS Rotary Interact Group to decorate a 'celebrity Gromit'. She kindly agreed to take up the challenge and chose to embellish her Gromit with carefully selected 'wow' words from her book 'Jarred Dreams'. This fantastic book has recently been nominated for the Peoples Book Prize in 2017.

We invite STAGS community to view the Gromit auction on line and maybe even consider making a bid for a Gromit on line!

All proceeds from the auction will be split between the participating clubs and the Rotary Foundation.

For further details please visit:

<http://www.rotary1260conference.org.uk/auction.php>
www.camillachester.com



Year 9 Student Gemma Hanson Increases Medal Haul in Swimming Success

Congratulations to Year 9 student Gemma Hanson who continues to go from strength to strength in her swimming career.

Mr Hanson (her father gives us this report):

"Gemma competed in a regional qualifier meet at Hatfield University on Saturday 1 April in 6 events. She won all of her events and achieved another 4 regional times! (She now has 8 in total). She also competed in a further 5 senior finals (14 and over) and one the 50 freestyle and came second in 3 others, gaining a total of 10 medals 7 Gold and 3 Silver.

This Saturday 8 April, Gemma will be competing in the National Club Arena league finals in Cardiff which will be live streamed via a computer link. After this Gemma will then be competing in a Level 1 meet in Luton the week after to try and obtain national times"

Congratulations Gemma, we are proud of your achievements and your dedicated commitment to your sport. We wish you well for your future swimming competitions and look forward to receiving an update on your progress.



Left to right Jess Simpson (Year 9), Fly Half, Zoe Harrison, Winger Emma Uren, Anouk Denton (Year 9)

Women's England Rugby Players Inspire Next Generation of Sporting Stars at STAGS

STAGS were delighted to welcome two members of the Women's England Under 20s Rugby team at lunchtime on Wednesday 5 April.

Zoe Harrison and Emma Uren came to deliver an enlightening talk to students from Year 9 and 10 about their passion for the game of rugby and their love of sport in general. Emma Uren plays as a Winger for England and is currently studying for a degree in strength and conditioning at St Mary's in Twickenham. Zoe plays Fly Half and studies the subject of Sports Rehabilitation at Middlesex.

The students enjoyed a lively Q&A session and all agreed that the talk was very interesting, informative and above all it was really inspiring.

Many thanks to Miss Potter, Director of Learning Year 11 for arranging such a fantastic visit.

STAGS community wish the Women's England Rugby players every success in their future sporting careers.



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Happy Easter from the Aspens Team

