Students help for VINNIES

One of the most popular community events on the Chevalier College calendar is the celebration of Advent, held on the last day of the school year. For 20 years students have shared their Christmas spirit with disadvantaged families in the Highlands through the work of St Vincent de Paul in a program initiated by Fr Bob Irwin, 1994 Chevalier College Principal.

"We are very lucky to have Chevalier supporting us" said Mr Bruce Cowan, Regional President for St Vincent de Paul on receiving 25 Christmas hampers brimming with gifts of food, toys, essentials and comfort items.

Mr Cowan said: "Vinnies would like to thank the Pupils, Parents and Staff at Chevalier who work so hard to support the people that will be doing it tough this Christmas." This year's focus for the project was an awareness of social justice issues, displaced people, refugees and those in our community who need support. Students used their own pocket money or funds from their part-time jobs and buy the gifts for their Home Room hampers with Year 9 students giving the gingerbread houses they had made and packaged for the hamper appeal. And after hosting many of Tanger's students at Chevalier Day this year, Year 12 student leaders organised a Christmas giving campaign to ensure each of the 26 children at Tanger received a special gift for Christmas from Chevalier Assistant Principal, Peter Reeves said it was characteristic of the generosity of the students at Chevalier.

To help Vinnies' Christmas Appeal visit https://www.vinnies.org.au/donate/begning

By Debby Cloran

Toni spreads Christmas cheer at Vinnies

Shopping at the various Vinnies' store around the country is one of the most effective ways to donate to one of Australia's most popular and hardworking charities. Lattelife's Toni Whitelaw visited Vinnies' Mittagong store where St Vincent de Paul conference members (out of town volunteers) were busy packing Christmas Hampers for families in need in the Highlands. Toni donated over $1000 worth of toys for local kids on behalf of Lattelife to spread some Christmas cheer. The Hamper distribution commenced this week.

Healthy mind, healthy Christmas

To ensure a stress-free and healthy Christmas, local health experts are encouraging people to have simple, low cost and joyful celebrations this festive season. South Western Sydney Local Health District Acting Director of Mental Health Dr Claire Jones said one in five people found Christmas to be a time of high stress. "Stress is a word often associated with Christmas for many people who can feel enormous pressure both financially and emotionally during this time," Dr Jones said. "The extra costs, arrangements, get-togethers and running around can all add up and trigger stress-related conditions and ailments. These factors have the potential to cause depression and anxiety if not effectively managed. "It is important for people who experience these feelings to know they are not alone. Keeping Christmas simple and affordable will help ensure the festive season is joyous and stress-free," she said. "And if you see someone who doesn't seem to be coping, offer your support in whatever way you can."

Dr Jones tips include: - Set a limit on how much you want to spend - Have a Kris Kringle within your family or workplace to reduce cost - Share the cooking load for Christmas lunch or ask each family member to bring a platter of food to share - Drink alcoholic beverages in moderation - Make sure you get enough sleep - Exercise regularly in order to keep up with the demands of the season - Above all relax and enjoy the time with family and friends.

For help go to: www.youthbeyondblue.org.au www.beyondblue.com www.lifeline.org.au or call 131114

Cleaning up for NEPAL

The Adna Connections program is a charity that connects students with communities throughout Asia, Africa and the South Pacific. It's a way younster through their church or school can visit communities and make a difference in the lives of people living in poverty or despair. Participating are a group of Bowral kids from The Seventh Day Adventist Church who held a fundraising car wash last weekend to help fund their working bee trip to Nepal next April. The students will help to install a new water supply and make general improvements to the Shree Bhuwan Secondary School in Nepal and increase their knowledge of how other communities struggle in their daily life.

By Jane King

In a carwash: Anthony, Dereece, Ben, Aaron, Benjamin and Serena