

Welcome to the September issue of the Gawa news. Gawa is a place that is growing in many ways and our stories reflect the enormity of changes that continue to take place. Many new buildings and projects have been completed, additional teachers are now employed, Gotha and Basma are teaching Yolngu Matha in the classrooms and the kids are streaming ahead in their learning. This excites me. However, I have been particularly delighted to be part of a growing excitement within the community to worship our Lord. Please pray for Gawa as people open their hearts to Jesus!

Lara Hvala – Teaching Principal



Gawa news

September 2010

Community Dinner

Dinner, dancing, worshipping and singing – our school and community dinners are always enjoyable! The children love to dance and the adults love to join in too. Laughter, giggles and screams of delight fill the air as we all come together around the fire to share our joys. It always amazes me how tightly knit the community is and we are blessed to be sharing in the lives of the children and their families.



Djadawayngu dressed up for community dinner

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him. For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.

(2 Corinthians 2:14-15)



Amala Yothu

It makes me happy to see the kids learn. I love to see them learning the letters of the alphabet, numbers, counting, and writing their own names. They enjoy playing games like cooking in the kinder playground and dressing up. The little kids are so funny – we laugh a lot in the Amala Yothu classroom!

I love the children and want to give them a good opportunity to learn about things in school and about God and the Bible. I want to say thank you to Gawa Christian School staff for the opportunity to work in the school and encouraging me with my teaching. God bless you!

Gawutjurrwuy with nephew, Mika

By Daphne Guwutjurrwuy

Sports Day

Ready, Set, Go!
Pom poms are raised
Banners hung.
Faces are painted,
Sports Day has begun!



Gawa students participated in their first ever Homelands Sports Day this September. A sea of red and blue faces; filled with anticipation, were ready to race!

The day commenced with rotational activities including trampolining, skipping, skittles, footy handballing, long jump and soccer. The points were tallied and by morning tea Red team was leading by the smallest of margins. Next, we enjoyed some good old fashioned fun with egg and spoon, three legged and balloon races. An adult sack race was included to the delight of the children who cheered and laughed simultaneously.

The day was definitely heating up, literally! It was time for some cooling off action. Buckets and water pumps were filled and sprayed. Everyone was drenched!



Back into action!

Blue team were

superb in the team events and children ran with every fibre of their being in the flat races and the final team relays. Would there be enough points for Blue to steal the lead?

Both teams had competed throughout the day good naturedly and with high energy and enthusiasm. The final cheers were shouted as the team gathered for the announcement. The winner this year is ---- BLUE!

By Grace Cumming



Three Legged Race



Men's Sack Race

Prayer and Praise

We pray for our school and community.

We pray for a time of rest and renewal during our school holidays.

We give thanks for amazing fellowship within our community. Thank you Jesus!



Damala Class

Damala class have begun their study of an old favourite, "The Lorax" by Dr. Seuss. Whilst enjoying the clever rhymes, crazy characters and wonderful illustrations, we have also been running through our normal reading, comprehending and spelling routines. In particular we have modelled our writing on the first page of this children's classic. Here is one example of a poem written by a few of the senior boys:

At the far end of the island,
where the wild apple tree grows,
and the wind smells strong and salty
when it blows.
And all day you hear the hungry crows
is the home land of Gawa.



Mayawa Class

Student artwork used in book illustration

You and Me: Gawa (adapted from 'You and Me: Our Place' by Leonie Norrington)

Every day when the tide is coming in, Damarju goes turtle hunting. His longgu (spear) is long, sharp and strong!
The motor pushes his boat out to sea. The water splashes hard against the boat. Damarju throws the rope far out to sea to catch the turtle. Sometimes he catches a guya (fish), a mudcrab, or yindi (big) stingray with his spear.
Sometimes the sun burns! Damarju drinks gapu (water) to keep cool. Boparni sings songs from his clan. Gawutjurrwuy lights a fire to cook at the beach. Sometimes we collect pipis or oysters or find mangrove worms in the dead roots of a tree. Damarju tells stories of the old times to make sure we never forget. Even though there are new buildings and many changes in Gawa... there will always be us!

Written by Mayawa Students



In the last week of term we had school camp.....but with a difference! This time Gawa was the *host* school as 14 Year 8 and 9 students from Nhulunbuy Christian School came to visit. For three days the boys and girls, as well as their teachers, experienced the whole range of activities associated with living on a remote homeland. There was everything from crab hunting to wild turkey dancing, sailing to spear making, skipping to shell bracelets

School Camp

The boy's major activity was in making a spear in the traditional Yolngu fashion. This involved travelling to the right part of the island to find the appropriate tree and cutting down various straight branches. Next they had to fire them to straighten out their spears and strip away the bark. After leaving them overnight to dry the boys then fired up their prongs and attached them to the spears and sealed it all with some binding. There were many scratches and burns along the way, but the only serious injuries were inflicted on the mud-crabs and stingrays when the spears were put into action at Goranga creek!

By Ben



Straightening spears in the fire



Some proud boys with their spears

While the boys were busy with their 'men's business', the girls also took the opportunity to try their hand at some traditional arts and crafts. We took it a bit easier than the boys and sat on the ground, in the cool breeze for several hours while we leisurely made our own hair paintbrushes and practiced the traditional painting technique of cross-hatching. When the tide was low we collected small shells from the beach and cleaned and prepared them for jewellery making. As we sat together, chatting and enjoying each others company the girls made beautiful memory bracelets and necklaces. The short time together was a great opportunity for our students to teach and share in the enjoyment of activities that are part of everyday life here in Gawa. New friendships made and fabulous memories to take home!



The girls working together



Making use of whatever was handy while threading bracelets!

