



**Association of Science  
Education Technicians NSW**  
Supporting - Monitoring - Training - Facilitating  
For Labbies by Labbies

[asetnsw.org.au](http://asetnsw.org.au)

Term 1 2026

## In this issue:-

[Pg 1-2 Chairperson's message](#)

[Pg 3-4 Meet the ASET-NSW Team](#)

[Pg 5 ASET-NSW PD Days](#)

[Pg 6 Save the Date!](#)

[Pg 7 Member's Only area of Website](#)

[Pg 8 Calendar](#)

[Pg 9-10 Margaret Croucher award](#)

[Pg 11-12 Behind the Lab Coat - Jane McCormick](#)

[Pg 13 -14 Tips and Tricks, including Element Set Project](#)

[Pg 15 The Element Sets Project](#)

[Pg 16 SETA Report](#)

[Pg 17 Science Funnies](#)

[Pg 18 More of our Sponsors](#)

[Pg 19 See you Next Time message...](#)

## Chairperson's Message

We have some new committee members! Welcoming Kate McLaren and Ella Scott to our team. Kate is our new Secretary, Jasmina has moved to Vice Chair and Lisa has taken over the Treasury role. Ella will be helping out with PD and our annual conference. Read more about these ladies and the rest of our team on [pages 3-4](#).

Please note we have updated our email addresses to [@asetnsw.org.au](mailto:@asetnsw.org.au) so please check address before sending messages to the team. Our original [@gmail.com](mailto:@gmail.com) mailboxes will be monitored less frequently as we all transition.

We have multiple PD opportunities for you this year in Terms 2 and 3. See [page 5](#) for more info. Our ASET Conference 2026 will run at UTS on 16/17 November. Stay tuned for more information on new presentations over coming months. Always a fabulous networking opportunity too!

We have added more information to our ASET MEMBERS area on our website, including 2025 ASET Conference notes shared from our presenters. Please check regularly as we put more resources (see [page 7](#) for how to access).

ASET would like to help facilitate catch ups in your local areas with other lab techs. There's always tips to share and a new like minded friend could be just around the corner 😊. If this is something you would like to help us arrange in your neighbourhood, please email Jo at [chair@asetnsw.org.au](mailto:chair@asetnsw.org.au). Ideas so far include coffee mornings, Stitch and Chat at a local pub, Dinners at a local club. Members and non members welcome – it's just about bringing labbies together.

**Jasmina is starting the ball rolling with a lunch on Sat 28<sup>th</sup> March at Mingara, Central Coast. If you would like more details on this particular event, please contact [Vicechair@asetnsw.org.au](mailto:Vicechair@asetnsw.org.au)**





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## Chairperson's Message cont.

We're incredibly proud of our inaugural recipient of the Margaret Croucher award, **Dearne Stephen**, and the impact she's already had through her dedication to supporting and training laboratory technicians. You'll be able to read more about Dearne's journey in our upcoming newsletters, so keep an eye out.



*Dearne Stephen*

As we look ahead, we're starting to shape what defines an *exceptional* lab technician. Nominations for the **Margaret Croucher Award** will open in late Term 2, so now is a great time to think about colleagues who truly deserve recognition. We'd love our members to help make this award something meaningful and enduring.



We hope you enjoy this newsletter edition from Salena Bryce and the ASET team. Reach out to me anytime with suggestions and ideas for this support group at [chair@asetnsw.org.au](mailto:chair@asetnsw.org.au)

**Jo Walker** (Chairperson)



**ASET-NSW Inc.**

# Meet the ASET-NSW Team!

Behind every great science department is a team of skilled technicians making it happen. We're proud labbies committed to supporting our profession and each other across NSW.

25 YEARS IN LABORATORIES AND I STILL LOVE THE VARIETY AND PROBLEM-SOLVING THE ROLE BRINGS. NO TWO DAYS ARE THE SAME. OUTSIDE SCHOOL, I'M ALWAYS UP FOR A THEMED DRESS-UP AND LOVE SNORKELLING WHEN I CAN.



**Jasmina Hazrolaj**  
Vice Chair  
vicechair@asetnsw.org.au



**Jo Walker**  
Chairperson  
chair@asetnsw.org.au

OVER 20 YEARS IN SCHOOL SCIENCE AND PASSIONATE ABOUT STRENGTHENING OUR TECHNICIAN COMMUNITY. I BELIEVE IN FAIR PAY, PROPER RECOGNITION, AND CLEAR CAREER PATHWAYS FOR LAB STAFF — AND MAKING SURE TECHNICIANS ARE RESPECTED FOR THE SKILLED PROFESSIONALS WE ARE.

A LAB TECH FOR 11 YEARS - PREVIOUSLY IN THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY - BOTH HAVE THE VARIETY, COMPLEXITY AND WONDER OF SEEING ENJOYMENT ... I LOVE MAKING PRAC COME TO LIFE, BEING ORGANISED AND STREAMLINED FOR MY FACULTY. I SPEND MY FREE TIME CROSS STITCHING AND WITH MY CHURCH FAMILY.



**Lisa Corado**  
Treasurer  
treasurer@asetnsw.org.au



**Kate McLaren**  
Secretary  
secretary@asetnsw.org.au

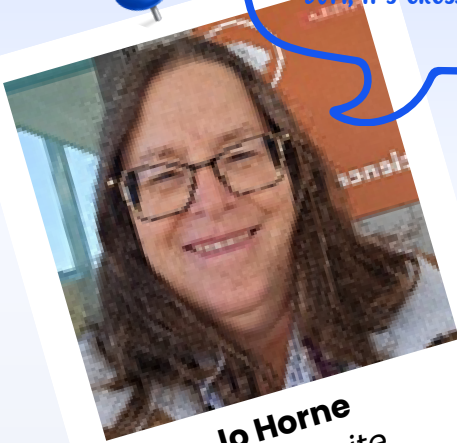
SIX YEARS AT AMBARVALE HIGH AND PROUD TO BE A LABBIE. I ENJOY SUPPORTING STAFF AND STUDENTS AND KEEPING THE PREP ROOM RUNNING SMOOTHLY — EVEN THE ENDLESS GLASSWARE. IN MY SPARE TIME, I'M GARDENING OR BUSHWALKING.



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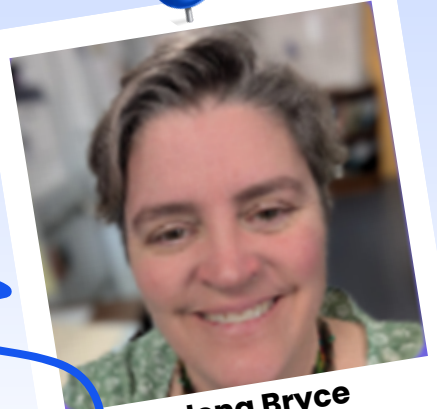
# ASET-NSW Committee 2026

TEN YEARS AT WEE WAA HIGH AND I STILL ENJOY SHARING THE EXCITEMENT OF SCIENCE WITH STUDENTS. I KEEP OUR DIGITAL SPACE RUNNING SMOOTHLY. OFF DUTY, IT'S CROSS STITCH AND A GOOD BOOK.



**Jo Horne**  
IT & Website  
it@asetnsw.org.au

18 YEARS IN SCHOOLS AND THE PREP ROOM IS MY HAPPY PLACE. I LOVE BEING PART OF THE BEHIND-THE-SCENES WORK THAT MAKES PRACTICAL SCIENCE POSSIBLE. OUTSIDE SCHOOL: WALKING, SINGING, GROWING VEGGIES, AND TIME WITH MY DOGS.



**Salena Bryce**  
Newsletter Editor  
editor@asetnsw.org.au

I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT SCIENCE EDUCATION AND HAVE LEARNED SO MUCH WORKING AS A LAB TECH. THE BIGGEST HIGHLIGHT OF MY JOB IS HELPING STUDENTS WITH AN EXPERIMENT AND THEN HEARING THEM SAY THAT THEY THINK SCIENCE IS SO COOL!



**Ella Scott**  
Committee Member

BASED AT PEEL HIGH IN TAMWORTH, I VALUE THE VARIETY AND TEAMWORK THAT SCIENCE BRINGS. EVERY DAY IS DIFFERENT, AND I LOVE BEING PART OF A PROFESSION THAT KEEPS LEARNING.



**Melissa Siddons**  
Committee Member

# ASET PD DAYS 2026

## TROUBLE SHOOTING & EQUIPMENT REPAIRS WITH BOB DEATH TERM 2



WHEN:- MONDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL (SD DAY TERM 2), 9AM—2:45PM  
WHERE:- EVANS HIGH SCHOOL, 166 WALTERS RD, BLACKTOWN  
COST:- \$60 ASET MEMBERS, \$80 NON-MEMBERS,  
INCLUDES TEA, COFFEE, SNACKS & LUNCH.  
PLEASE EMAIL JO WALKER AT [CHAIR@ASETNSW.ORG.AU](mailto:CHAIR@ASETNSW.ORG.AU) TO  
SECURE YOUR SPOT & REQUEST AN INVOICE.  
REGISTRATIONS CLOSE ON FRIDAY 10 APRIL, 2026.

## DAY OF LEARNING AT WENONA TERM 2 WK 8 - THURS 18 JUNE

### HANDS-ON PD DAY FOR LAB TECHNICIANS

PRACTICAL, USEFUL & STRAIGHT FROM REAL CLASSROOMS.

- CATHODE RAY TUBES
- HERTZ RADIO WAVES (YES — WORKING!)
- INTERFERENCE WITH RADIO WAVES
- OHM'S LAW THAT ACTUALLY WORKS
- MOTORS & TROUBLESHOOTING
- ENZYMES IN ACTION
- PINK AGAR & MICROBIOLOGY TIPS
- DISSECTION PREP AND SETUP

LIMITED PLACES SO WE CAN KEEP IT HANDS ON. REGISTER INTEREST

WITH JASMINA AT [VICECHAIR@ASETNSW.ORG.AU](mailto:VICECHAIR@ASETNSW.ORG.AU)

ALL LAB TECHS WELCOME, CATERING PROVIDED

IT WILL RUN AT COST.

COME FOR THE IDEAS, STAY FOR THE LABBIE CHAT.

## SOCIAL CATCH UP

HADLEYS RESTAURANT  
MINGARA, CENTRAL COAST  
LAB TECH LUNCH 12PM  
SATURDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

ALL WELCOME!

CONTACT JAS AT  
[VICECHAIR@ASETNSW.ORG.AU](mailto:VICECHAIR@ASETNSW.ORG.AU)

## TROUBLE SHOOTING & EQUIPMENT REPAIRS WITH BOB DEATH TERM 3



WHEN:- MONDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> JULY (SD DAY TERM 3), 9AM—2:45PM

WHERE:- WE ARE LOOKING FOR A HOST SCHOOL IN NEWCASTLE

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH JO AT [CHAIR@ASETNSW.ORG.AU](mailto:CHAIR@ASETNSW.ORG.AU) FOR  
INFORMATION ON HOSTING OR ATTENDING

## ASET CONFERENCE 2026

16-17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY



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# ASET-NSW Conference 2026

# SAVE THE DATE!

BECAUSE YOU DEFINITELY DON'T WANT TO MISS IT.....

ASET-NSW Annual Conference 2026  
16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November 2026

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*for labbies - by labbies*



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## Member's only area on ASET-NSW website

# Check it out!

All ASET members should have received the password to access the Member's Only area on our website.

We will be regularly adding to the area. Please check out our latest 'drop' which includes useful information and resources from our conference presenters.

Association of Science Education Technicians NSW

Home News Events Membership Positions Vacant Event Gallery Newsletter Archive About Us

MEMBERS CONTENT

### Members Content

Welcome to our Members pages where we hope to provide you with links and resources to help with your work as school lab technicians.

This page will be added to each term with new resources to build up a bank of resources for all members to refer to. If you have anything to add or have something you would like to see here, please get in touch with our committee volunteers!

Newsletters Useful Links Resources Conference Resources

There is also some very useful links which will take you to other science resources, an ASET-NSW newsletter archive, and a great downloadable resource book from MTA, plus some pracs.

Become a member of ASET-NSW today and enjoy the benefits including:

- Access to professional development events
- Regular newsletter and information
- Networking with other industry professionals
- Resources and ideas to support your practice
- Member's Only area on website with stacks of resources and information.

Membership is only \$50/year.



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# Calendar

I am sure you can find an excuse to celebrate here somewhere...!  
(Who decides these days anyway?)

## March

- 23 March - National Eucalypt Day
- 23 March - World Meteorological Day
- 28 March - Earth Hour
- 28 March - ASET lunch @ Mingara, Central Coast**

## April

- 7 April - World Health Day
- 17 April - Internation Bat Appreciation Day
- 20 April - ASET PD Day Penrith**
- 16- 26 April - NSW Youth Week
- 22 April Earth Day



## May

- 2 May World Tuna Day
- 18-24 May National Archaeology Week
- 20 May World Bee Day
- 22 May International Day for Biological Diversity

## June

- 5 June World Environment Day
- 8 June World Oceans Day
- 15 June Global Wind Day
- 18 June - ASET PD Day @ Wenona**
- 19 June World Albatross Day

## July

- 20 July - ASET PD Penrith**

## November

- 16-17 November - ASET-NSW Annual Conference



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# Margaret Croucher Award

Nominations for the Margaret Croucher Award will open to everyone in the school science community in Term 2. A colleague, teacher, technician, supervisor, or school staff member can nominate someone they believe deserves recognition. Self-nominations are also welcome. We understand that many laboratory technicians work alone, and the incredible work happening behind the scenes is not always visible to others. If you are proud of what you do, or if someone has quietly made your lab a better place, this is a chance to recognise that.

A nomination can be supported by teachers, technicians, or others who have seen the impact of that person's work in the laboratory or the wider school community. (Just to keep things fair, nominations from husbands probably won't hold much weight!) We are looking for technicians who go above and beyond: people who keep laboratories safe, organised, and running smoothly; who support teachers and students; who share knowledge, mentor others, or lift the professionalism of our field. Sometimes it's innovation, sometimes leadership, sometimes simply years of quiet dedication, the kind of work that makes everyone else's job easier.

The award is named after Margaret Croucher because she represents exactly that spirit. Since 1988, Margaret has been the quiet powerhouse behind decades of strong, safe, and seriously well-run school science laboratories across NSW. She supported teachers, mentored technicians, helped build ASET-NSW from the ground up, and gently, but very effectively, raised the professional bar for all of us. Margaret never sought recognition; she simply made sure others had the confidence, skills, and support to succeed.

This award carries her name to celebrate technicians who do the same.





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# Margaret Croucher Award

Start contemplating now...

## YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE LOUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

If you mentor others, improve systems, lift standards, solve problems, or quietly keep everything running, this could be you.

This award recognises technicians who go above and beyond for their school and their profession.

Nominate a colleague.

Or nominate yourself.

You've earned the right to be recognised.

Nominations will open in late Term 2.



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get the right reaction.



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# Behind the Labcoat

## Outgoing ASET-NSW Committee member

### Jane MacCormick



Hi, I'm Jane. I am a lab assistant at Richmond High School and an ASET-NSW Committee member.

I have a degree in Agricultural Science and started work as a technical officer on a Biosolids project growing crops and sampling soil and plant material. I then worked for 15 years as Catchment Officer and later Education Officer at Warragamba Dam.

My husband and I took our three boys to England for a year in 2014 and I started working in schools while I was over there. When we returned I applied for the lab assistant position at Richmond High School where I have been ever since.

**Richmond HS Science Faculty, Book Week.**



Outside of school, I enjoy the outdoors with camping, bushwalking, ski touring, kayaking and bike riding my favourite activities. I am a Venturer Scout leader so do lots of those activities through Scouts as well as with my family. I am a member of the RFS in a small brigade in the Hawkesbury. I am about to start my Crew Leader training which is a bit daunting! I also assist with random things at church.





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# Behind the Labcoat cont.

## Outgoing ASET-NSW Committee member *Jane MacCormick*

We are currently owner building a straw bale house. We have been working on it for almost 7 years and are finally getting close to finished. We've finished all the rendering of the walls, sanded and coated all the timber floors, installed all the ceilings, completed the bathrooms and are now working on the kitchen. The end is in sight! We live on 2.5 acres and have a small pound puppy called Swelkie (named after a whirlpool in the Scottish fairy tale book of my grandmother's), a couple of bee hives and 6 chooks who think a house under construction is their personal laying box.



Stacking the straw in the walls.



Rendering the walls



Sanding the floors



Outside rendered



Fun Fact about me:-

When I sneeze, I do 8-12 small sneezes in a row. It has been compared to the starting of a small motor with a rip cord.





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## Tips and Tricks to Improve Your Lab Life

### From Jasmina, our Vice Chair:-



*Last Monday I checked the spinach in the garden bed, beautiful, green, and thriving perfect for our biology photosynthesis experiment. On Tuesday morning, experiment day, I went out to collect it, and it was all gone. Completely gone. Not a leaf left. The look of desperation, confusion, and quiet panic must have been written all over my face. What on earth was I supposed to do now?*

*So, as lab technicians do best, I improvised. In another garden bed there was some common mint growing, so I harvested that instead and set up the experiment. And, would you believe it—it worked even better than the spinach.*

*So, thank you, Mr Possum. Not the outcome I planned, but a successful experiment all the same.*

### **This is the method for the photosynthesis prac Jasmina was setting up:**

1. Fill the 800 mL beaker about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full of water.
2. Cut a fresh mint sprig and place it in the beaker.
3. Position the inverted glass funnel over the mint so the plant is fully covered.
4. Fill the test tube completely with water.
5. Invert the test tube and place it over the funnel stem underwater.
6. Secure the tube upright using a clamp stand.
7. Place the lamp 10–15 cm from the beaker.
8. Insert the thermometer into the water.
9. Allow the setup to stabilise for 2–3 minutes.
10. Start timing and collect oxygen for 10 minutes.

## BOB'S INSTRUMENT SERVICE

Bob's Instrument Service specializes in the service and repair of school science lab equipment including microscope, balances, power supplies, panel meters and other equipment throughout NSW and ACT.

Please feel free to contact Bob Death on 0416721 011 or [bobsinstruments@gmail.com](mailto:bobsinstruments@gmail.com) to discuss your school's needs.

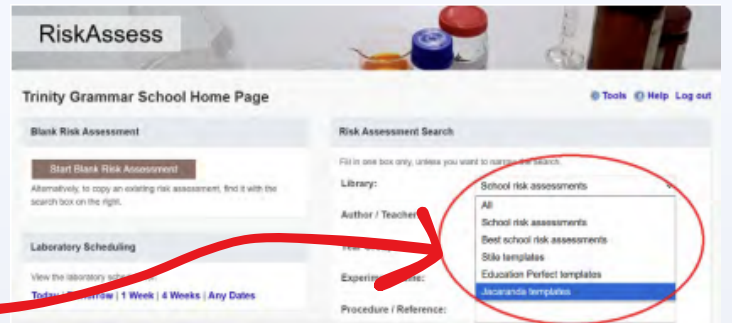
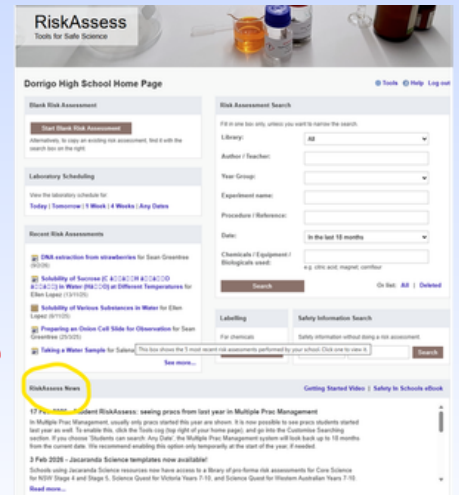


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# Tips and Tricks to Improve Your Lab Life

Don't forget to regularly check the RiskAssess News box at the bottom of the RiskAssess Home page.

Recently there was a news item in the box about how schools using Jacaranda Science resources now have access to a library of pro-forma risk assessments for Core Science. You can find them in the Library section of the Risk Assessment Search box.



### MICROSCOPE – QUICK TROUBLESHOOTING

Quick Checks • Common Problems • Easy Fixes

<b>BEFORE THE LESSON – QUICK CHECK</b> ✓ Lowest Objective (4x) Selected ✓ Stage Lowered Fully ✓ Light Working ✓ Lenses Clean (Lens Tissue Only) ✓ Power Cable Secure	<b>IMAGE IS DARK</b> Light off / dim Condenser too low Iris closed Slide off-centre	<b>FIX →</b> Turn on light Raise condenser Open diaphragm Centre slide
	<b>AFTER THE LESSON</b> Remove Slides Clean Lenses Select Lowest Objective Lower Stage Store Safely	<b>CANNOT FOCUS</b> Objective not clicked Using wrong objective Stage too high
	<b>IMAGE BLURRY</b> Dirty eyepiece/objective Dirty slide/coverslip	<b>FIX →</b> Clean optics using lens tissue only

**Do NOT force knobs - label for maintenance**

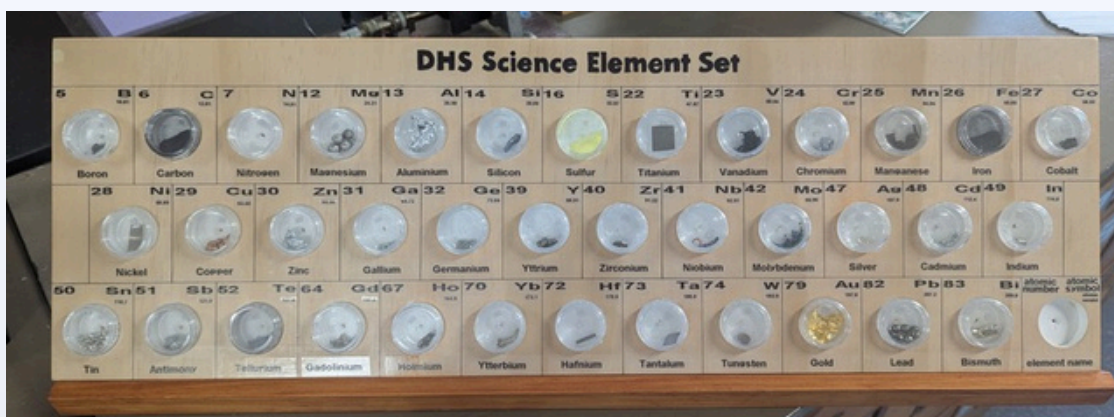
**Calling all wonderful Brain's Trust Labbies out there:**  
 Please share your tips and tricks with us - you are all such a wealth of knowledge and experience, its important we share it with each other to improve our professional lives and wellbeing in general. I know you know so much.  
 Email me, Salena, at [editor@asetnsw.org.au](mailto:editor@asetnsw.org.au), I can't wait to hear from you.



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# The Element Sets Project

In 2019, the International Year of the Periodic Table, The Element Set Project was started, by a group based at Monash University who were passionate about enthusing and inspiring students about STEM subjects. They assembled sets to be distributed free to schools who applied for them. Priority was given to rural, remote, low SES and government schools. The project has officially finished but if you head to the website, [elementsets.net](http://elementsets.net), you can apply for a set if you haven't already got one (there is a limit of one set per school). Please check if your school already has one or not, using the map on the website, before ordering a set. If your school received an original set with 30-33 elements you are eligible for an upgrade of the remaining 5 elements. The sets come with an information booklet which contains a page of information per element. On the website there are also links to download great teaching resources to use with the sets, such as lesson ideas and games. Its well worth checking out.



For our set, see above, the first thing I did was glue the lids onto the container! You guys know why :D

I then worked with our wonderful TAS assistant, Mark, to design and make our beautiful stand. Each little container can be removed to look at. The display board can sit on the stand, or can be lifted off. There is one empty hole, so should be easy for teachers to see if the elements are not all there at the end of class! In hindsight, I should have made one more with Oxygen, (there is already a nitrogen one).

I haven't figured out how to keep the booklet with the stand yet, any ideas are welcome.

If you have an element set in your school and you have figured out a display system for it - please send us a picture or two ([editor@asetnsw.org.au](mailto:editor@asetnsw.org.au)), I would love to see everyone's ideas. If you don't have an element set yet, make haste and get thee one as soon as you can! [elementsets.net](http://elementsets.net)

**-Salena**



If you are in a Primary or Combined School, the Element Set people have a project just for you called Crystal Explorer kits. Check it out [here](#).



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# SETA Report

(Science Education Technicians of Australia)



SETA has recently welcomed new leadership and a fresh wave of energy. The focus moving forward is simple; reconnecting and supporting laboratory technicians across Australia and strengthening the links between our state technician communities.

One of the first steps has been starting a national working group to look at the professional status of school laboratory technicians. The group will explore ways to improve recognition of the role and work towards clearer expectations around training and qualifications for the profession.

It's an exciting time, with new ideas and a shared goal of making sure lab technicians across Australia feel connected, supported, and recognised for the important work they do.

**Jasmina Hazrolaj**

*SETA secretary*





## Microscope & Balance Services

Your microscopes/ balances keep calling in sick & you have **no time** or no idea how to deal with them?

- Microscopes produce out of focus, hazy and unsharp images like the left small image
- Microscopes have loose or missing parts
- Stiff adjustments appear on your microscopes
- Balances produce inaccurate or imprecise weighing results

*It's time to get them treated by our professionals!*

**1300 661 607**

[edusupplies@edusupplies.com.au](mailto:edusupplies@edusupplies.com.au)

If you are in a Primary or Combined School, the Element Set people have a project just for you called Crystal Explorer kits. Check it out [here](#).



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# Science Funnies and other Stuff to Make You Smile

**Scientist:** My discoveries are useless if taken out of context



**Media:**

Scientist claim their discoveries are useless



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LIFE  
GIVES YOU  
MOLD  
MAKE PENICILLIN**





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RTO #5800





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## See you next time!

If you have any interesting stories, jokes, photos, tips, events or other information with a science theme, that I can include in this newsletter please email me, I would love to hear your ideas.

Similarly, if you have any feedback about the newsletter please let me know, it would be greatly appreciated.

*Salena Bryce*

(ASET-NSW Newsletter Editor)

[editor@asetnsw.org.au](mailto:editor@asetnsw.org.au)

