



ST JOHN'S D.S.G.
PIETERMARITZBURG
Small school. Big heart.

the

yellow

pages

Edition Seven - 2023



SOME OF THE EXCITING THINGS IN THIS EDITION...

- ♡ Nou Gaan ons Braai
- ♡ Impact Conference
- ♡ Holiday Sports Achievements
- ♡ Do we Need to Teach Kindness?



GENERAL NEWS

Long Service

Congratulations to Mrs Desiree Murugan (Science Dept. Assistant) and Mrs Princess Sumo (Catering Team) who were recognised at our final assembly last term for their long standing service to the school – Mrs Murugan has been with us for 25 years and Mrs Sumo has been with us for 10 years.

Thank you for your dedication to our special school, we greatly appreciate you both.



Welcome

A very warm welcome to our new staff members who have recently joined us this term.

Mrs Kirsty Hancocks: Junior School Remedial and Support Teacher
Mrs Penny Nel: Junior School Remedial and Support Teacher
Mrs Phumela Luthuli: Business Studies
Miss Zoë Horner: Driver

It is great to have you part of our "Small School with Big Heart!"



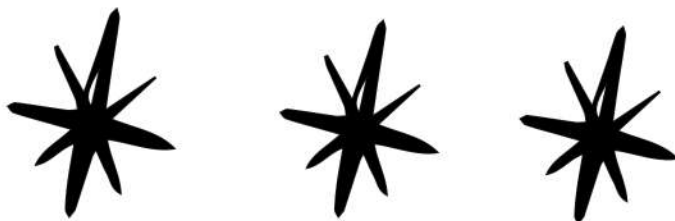
Impact Conference

On Friday, 21 July, St John's D.S.G. hosted their first Impact Conference. The idea was born out of a need to network with fellow educators in the KZN area and share the wealth of knowledge that teachers have accumulated over the years. There were 175 delegates from 15 schools who attended with 17 speakers presenting every 45 minutes. The excitement and enthusiasm was tangible as teachers connected over a cup of tea before heading off to hear the talks.

We caught up with some of the teachers after the conference to see what they had to say about the afternoon:

"Thank you so much for hosting this wonderful initiative. The sessions were bite size pieces of info which were easy to digest. Thank you for the yummy food spread. I will definitely be back next year!"

"I was so grateful for the opportunity to indulge in my development as a professional teacher. Your conference was so refreshing and served to remind me of why I am in this profession - to develop and support young people and to EDUCATE them and how not to just be focussing on exam and test preparation. The presentations I attended were professionally delivered and had been so well researched and prepared. Thank you for initiating this!"



A New Arrival

A BIG congratulations to Ms Sam Evans (Junior School Resource Centre Teacher) and her husband, Wes, on the arrival of their precious little girl, Matilda Daisy Evans, who was born on a day close to Ms Evans' heart, 18 July - Mandela Day.

Matilda's name holds a powerful meaning as it signifies "Warrior and mighty in battle." She may have arrived five weeks early but is already showing strength and resilience in the NICU ward where she will be spending the next few weeks.

The St John's D.S.G. girls and staff can't wait to meet the next "book worm" in the making.



First Aid

During the Winter holidays, St John's D.S.G. hosted a First Aid Course for staff and girls which was facilitated by Barry and Fiona May from Turtle Life Support. A total of 24 participants, seven of whom were girls and 17 staff members, completed the Level 2 First Aid Course.



Congratulations to Sr Belinda Kidgell and Sr Tracey Poole (our two lovely school nurses) as well as Kayo-Lita van Staden (Grade 9) who completed the Level 3 First Aid Course.



PARENTS' ASSOCIATION NEWS

Golf Day

Last week the P.A. held their annual Golf Day, and it was a huge success!



Take Away Coffee

For the coffee and tea lovers amongst us, the Parents' Association has organised a mobile coffee van to be available every Monday morning at the Harwin Road parking area from 06h15.

This forms part of the fundraising efforts towards the Astroturf Flood Lights!

They would love your support so pop in and enjoy the delicious treat!



JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWS

Do We Need to Teach Kindness?

by Rowena Freese (Grade 1 Teacher)

'Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together.'
Johan Wolfgang Von Goethe



Kindness is a buzz word right now. It is strange to think that kindness needs attention as it should come naturally. I feel that during the Covid pandemic families were so busy trying to survive and to keep harmony in the home, that kindness was somewhat neglected. We were all doing whatever we could to keep our heads above water and keep home life as stress free and comfortable as possible. After the bans were eased, and we could move forward from that life-changing pandemic, families tried to get things back to normal as quickly as possible.

Children were allowed to do so many things, that although were previously part of normal life, were simply not permitted during Covid. Socialising, stage performances, sports activities and birthday parties. This 'open gate' scenario led to some anxiety, which is what we now need to rectify.

How do we get back to normal after such an upheaval?

We need to teach our children to become more robust, even though this can be tough. Life lessons, which help to build character, are learnt through hardship rather than through an easy pathway. We need to equip children to deal with difficult situations.

Children learn best from what they see, and this leads to how it makes them feel. By witnessing kindness, often random deeds, they learn to think outside of their own emotions and of those around them instead.

Here are some of the guidelines on how to encourage kind behaviour:

- ♥ Keep commitments.
- ♥ Children need to know boundaries, at school and at home.
- ♥ Giving in is not being kind.
- ♥ Encourage actions which result in other people's happiness.
- ♥ Don't live in the past, live in the present. Begin each day anew.
- ♥ Random acts of kindness are worth the hype.
- ♥ Kindness can be compared to candlelight. It is subtle yet very effective. Use a candle as a reminder.

*'How far that little candle throws his beams,
so shines a good deed in a weary world.'*
William Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice



Nou Gaan ons Braai

At the end of Term 2, the Grade 7s got together to complete their "Braaivleis" theme that they learnt in Afrikaans during the term. The lesson began with the girls making up dialogues in Afrikaans using as much vocabulary as they could to present to the rest of the class. The girls were rewarded with a delicious braai at the end to enjoy.

Gentle Parenting

By Mrs Michelle Gevers (Junior School Counsellor)



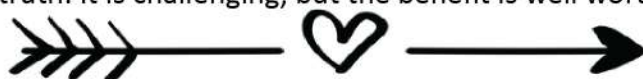
We certainly started our term with a fresh and cold start! God created all seasons for a purpose. Winter is typically a season of dormancy, pruning and feeding a root system in the plant kingdom, perhaps we should use this as an example in our lives. As parents, this is a perfect season to feed into our lives as well as our children's. We can use the darker evenings of being indoors as an opportunity to spend more time connecting, a time to listen and seize opportunities to teach them ownership.

I have recently spent time facilitating EQ workshops with our Grade 8 and 9 boarders. A popular current behavioral trend that is on the rise is "ghosting". We have been looking at the causes and the behavioral patterns that exhibit themselves. This is not a new term, it originated after WW2 but has been adopted in this digital era even more-so. Ghosting is defined as, "suddenly ending all communication and avoiding contact with another person without apparent warning or explanation and ignoring attempts to communicate." This has been a challenging exercise because ghosting has been normalized in society, we see this in both the Junior and Senior Schools. This behaviour is saying more about the "ghoster" than those receiving this behaviour. Ghosting speaks of the lack of courage to identify and deal with the issue. It is a lack of self-awareness, accountability and ownership. It is born in a place of insecurity and fear.

Rev. Di recently addressed this from an emotional health perspective and quoted Peter Scazzero (Psychologist, Author) and our shadow self, which feeds into to our theme for the term - OWNERSHIP. What is it that we need to face in our lives? What do we keep hidden from others? If these go unanswered and unresolved, we fall into the trap of reacting and putting up defense mechanisms. When we are honest with ourselves and look deeply into our shadow self, we can take ownership of it and we can allow Jesus into that space, to heal and restore. We cannot disciple to others if we ourselves do not possess it, so this is where our authenticity is paramount. Teaching ownership is a drip philosophy, it needs to be ongoing.

When we become aware of this, the next step is to own it. From there, I ask myself, "Why?" Why did I feel that way and why did I respond as I did? We should not allow ourselves to remain in the emotional state of this, but rather once we own it, we should be able to apply logic and then ultimately our behaviour should change. However, if I do not take ownership, this response becomes a pattern and perpetuates itself and no learning or growth can take place, as energy is used to justify behaviour as opposed to correcting it. This process is not a quick fix, that is why our parenting role is an incredible gift, an opportunity to mould and influence a beautiful young life into a wholesome young adult.

As parents we need to seek out "teachable moments", don't let them pass but rather speak and train the next generation to be a generation of truth. It is challenging, but the benefit is well worth the effort.



SENIOR SCHOOL NEWS

Colour me Sunshine



Reese Peters, our Head Girl, proposed and spent many long hours planning and organising the Colour Run on Saturday, 22 July to raise R35k for a food tunnel at Sobantu High School. The food tunnel will make a real difference to those pupils as food security at Sobantu High is often a problem, due to supply issues through the government-funded programme, when many students rely on that meal, often being their only one of the day.

Needless to say the girls had an absolute ball with the highlights being the opportunity to splash Mr Moore and some of the other teachers in colour! Our Prefects really stepped up, and arrived dressed as the police. Their oversight of the event ensured that it was a safe and festive day. Our Head Girls, Reese, Tamlyn Khan, Alex Lutz and Sienna Porrill, deserve special mention, as does Mrs Mkhulise, Mr Zondi and Mrs Heather Evans, who also assisted with logistics, planning and setup with their teams.

We are delighted to have raised the full amount we need for the food tunnel, and are grateful to our entire community for their generosity. We pray that we can continue to love our neighbours and work together to make a difference in the lives of those around us.



Honours Blazer

Congratulations to Caitriona Strydom (Grade 12) who was recently awarded her Honours Blazer for Dramatic Arts.

Caitriona's quiet and consistent pursuit of excellence has led her to achieve the highest honour in Dramatic and Performing Arts. Working diligently behind the scenes, often away from the gaze of onlookers, she has meticulously honed her craft and steadfastly worked towards this remarkable achievement.

Caitriona's commitment to her passion extends far beyond the school arena. With a relentless drive to explore her talents, she has actively participated in productions outside of St John's D.S.G., proudly representing her school on different stages.

May her unwavering commitment continue to fuel her artistic journey, guiding her towards endless creativity, fulfilment and success. Well done, Caitriona! We are very proud of you.



SPORTS NEWS

Basketball

A BIG congratulations to Sibongokuhle Mnqayi (Grade 11) for being selected for the South African U18A Basketball Squad during the holidays at the Inter-provincial Tournament held in Bloemfontein. The KZN team, in which she played, finished third - bringing home the bronze medal!

We are very proud of you, Sibongokuhle and we can't wait to see you and the rest of the "Yellow Hoops" in action this term.



Polocrosse

A BIG congratulations to Amy Cocker (Grade 12) and Lauren Heynes (Grade 11) who have been selected for the South African Polocrosse Ladies team to play in the 2024 Polocrosse World Cup Tournament taking place in South Africa.

Only four ladies are selected to represent their country, so this is an outstanding feat considering that both Amy and Lauren are still Juniors competing at adult level.



We congratulate them both and wish them well as they prepare for this prestigious international competition.

Fauresmith Race

During the July holidays, Alexis Louwrens (Grade 11) participated in the Fauresmith 204 National Endurance Race. This is the oldest and toughest endurance horse race in the country with over 300 riders from around the country and Namibia.

Alexis competed in three qualifying events during the year and was selected to captain the KwaZulu-Natal Juniors Team of five riders.

Alexis achieved a bronze medal in the Junior section and 7th place overall. Her KwaZulu-Natal team finished in silver medal position in the Team category. She also earned a Green and Gold Top 10 day-sheet for her Horse and her permanent number as well as South African Equestrian Federation Colours.

Well done, Alexis on this outstanding result. Your hard work, dedication and many weekends of riding have certainly paid off.



Sailing

Congratulations to Daniela Cantarelli (Grade 9) on being awarded the Telemecheneque Cup at the HMYC Prize Giving for the Best U14 Sailor over this past season.



Squash

A number of our Squash players participated in the Inter-provincial Squash tournaments from 24 to 28 June.

- U19A – Gold medal
- U19B – Gold medal
- U16A – Bronze medal
- U16B – Silver medal
- U14A – 5th place
- U14B – Gold medal

Well done to all our St John's D.S.G. girls who represented the province and helped KZN to achieve these excellent results.

Cevana Naidoo (Grade 11) was selected for the KZN Midlands Ladies Squash Team to participate in the Growthpoint National Tournament in Pretoria. The team finished in a creditable 2nd place in the Ladies B Section. Well done to Cevana!



Hockey

During the holidays, a number of our "Yellow sticks" participated in various National and Regional Hockey tournaments in the holidays. The KZN Inland teams achieved some outstanding results.

U18A: Bronze medal
U18A: Gold medal
U16A: Gold medal
U16B: Silver medal
U16 Midlands Team: 8th place
U16B: Silver medal
U14A: 4th place
U14B: 3rd place



Well done to all our St John's D.S.G. players, coaches and managers on their great performances, sportsmanship and commitment.

Special congratulations to two of our 1st team players who have been selected for the South African U18B Hockey team. Well done Caitlin Cotterell and Reese Peters (both Grade 12). We are very proud of you girls.



Fencing

Daniela Cantarelli (Grade 9) certainly had a busy holiday as she also won her age division (U15) in the recent KZN Closed Fencing competition and came home with the gold medal. She was also awarded a bronze medal in the U17 age group. Well done, Daniela!

Swimming

We are especially proud of our Swimming star Milla Drakopoulos (Grade 11) on her outstanding Swimming achievements over the last few months.



Milla has just represented South Africa at the 20th Senior World Aquatics Championships in Fukuoka, Japan. As the youngest member of the SA Squad by three years, this is the second time she has qualified for a senior international event.

Milla is a 50m and 100m backstroke specialist but also competes in the relays. The World Championships also serves as a qualifier for the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris, which is Milla's ultimate goal. Milla achieved consistent times in Japan and has made great progress. Under the able guidance and expertise of her Coach Wayne Ridden, she is set to continue making waves in the Swimming world.

There is no doubt that her God given talent coupled with her hard work, commitment, determination to succeed and competitive nature has earned her this amazing level of success.

In recognition of her continued Swimming success and her selection to represent South Africa at both the Senior and Junior World Championships, Milla was re-awarded her St John's D.S.G. Honours blazer at the end of Term 2.

We wish Milla well as she is now heading to Netanya, Israel for the 9th World Aquatics Junior Championships from 6 - 10 September. Our St John's D.S.G family will be cheering for Milla all the way!

MUSIC NEWS

Music Update

Our Music girls had a very busy second half to Term 2. The Senior Primary Choir enthralled the audience at the Combined Choirs Evening at Cordwalles with their performance of a song composed by Mr Grobler, as well as "Loyal Brave True" from the Disney movie Mulan. The audience enjoyed singing along with the combined choir to hits by the Beatles and The Kiffness.



Our Junior School musicians also gave some outstanding solo performances during Junior Performance Week and parents enjoyed items from the Grade R and 1 Group Piano girls, as well as a variety of instruments from piano and violin to drumkit and flute.

The Senior School girls enjoyed watching a screening of Steven Spielberg's "West Side Story" at the end of Pyjama Day. The movie was a thrilling mix of tragic romance and foot-tapping musical numbers and forms part of the Matric syllabus for Subject Music. Girls enjoyed watching the movie cuddled up in blankets while sipping on hot chocolate.

Once again, Chapel Chill was a hugely successful evening this year. The boys from St Charles College engaged the audience with their varied numbers, and our girls mesmerised with solo items and duet performances. Our marimba bands also kept the audience entertained with an exciting display of musical talent.

Symphony of Voices

It has been a dream of the St John's D.S.G. and Michaelhouse Choir Masters to collaborate and expand the experience of our choristers to sing in four parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass (or as we simply refer to it "SATB") and last week, that dream came true!

It was an extraordinary evening of choral singing within the complimenting acoustics of one of our oldest buildings on campus; the Gym Hall. It was a cold evening, but the hearts were big and music warmed the soul!

Jikele Maweni, also known as "The retreat song", is a beloved traditional South African song, made famous by Miriam Makeba in the 1950s. Both the girls and boys had an unforgettable experience putting this song together, hearing each other as part of a large choral palette, and the audience were moved to give a standing ovation after the performance.

The symphonic orchestra and jazz band from Michaelhouse, under the guidance of Mr Joshua Turnbull, opened the event and lifted the roof (and the spirit) from the get-go. The two choirs, conducted by Mr Jaco Dippenaar and Mr Johan Grobler respectively, entertained with a variety of songs, from religious hymns and spirituals to various folk songs and even a humorous quasi opera about the fate of the twelve gifts at Christmas.

This collaboration continues the wonderful relationship the two schools have, and we hope that this was the start of a greater choral journey, for our singers. Vivat cantus choralis! Viva la vida!

