

# VG NEWS

3 August 2011, Volume 9 # 5

Our Vision: At VGHS we support and respect one another in a safe and happy environment. Our broad spectrum of activities and facilities enriches all, as we strive for excellence.

## PORTFOLIO HEADS



2012 Portfolio Heads

From right: A Jackson-Moss, B Qaba, A Atombo, T Solomon, C Lister

Congratulations to **Amy, Ajowa, Babalwa, Cassie** and **Tayla** for being elected the Portfolio Heads for 2012. We wish them all the best and are sure that they will lead the school from strength to strength.

We are currently in the process of organising the Leadership Team for 2012 and wish all the Grade 11s well as they embark on this exciting new journey.

## OUR STAFF

### STUDENT TEACHERS

Welcome to the student teachers who have joined us this term from Rhodes University: **Alana Frampton** (Maths and Life Science); **Lindsay Jackson** (Natural Science and Life Science); **Sarah Lowe** (History and Arts and Culture); **Kate Nottingham** (Physical Science and Mathematics); **Martina Gilli** (English and Drama); and **Jessie Stidworthy** (English and Drama).

We also welcome **Kate Ritchie** who has joined us from the University of Georgia, as a music student teacher.

We wish all our student teachers the best during their stay at VG and hope that they gain significantly from their time spent in our school.

## ACADEMIC ACTION

### SCHOOLS FESTIVAL

Tamani Chithambo

From the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> of July ten VGHS matrics participated in the Standard Bank National Schools' Festival and were able to interact with learners from schools all across South Africa. The highlights of the festival were the keynote address by comedian **Siv Ngesi** and a lecture by entrepreneur and actress **Nobulali Dangazele**, who, among other things, taught us that we should use our opportunities to learn and use our knowledge to lead others. Like Nobulali said: "Whatever you don't know is in a book, and if it isn't then you have to write that book!"

The workshops offered at the festival included acting, dance and journalism. Most of these encouraged out-of-the box thinking and physical activities. We also got to experience the best of the National Arts' Festival by watching some of the shows that had been performed during it and earmarked for the Schools' Festival. Waking up at half past six each morning for the week was worth the inspiring messages and skills that we gained throughout the festival!



The VGHS matrics pose against a backdrop of Standard Bank National Schools' Festival posters at the 1820 Settlers Monument

### MATHS OLYMPIAD

Only two learners from Grahamstown have qualified for the third round of the Harmony Maths Olympiad. One of them is **Julie Dixon** (the other is her brother!)

## COMING UP

10/07 Netball vs Kuyasa  
Combined (A) U14, 16, 19A  
17:00 Xhosa Best Speakers

11/07 13:00 Smarties  
16:00 Netball U19B and  
Hockey 2<sup>nd</sup> vs Chesterhouse  
Touring Team  
18:30-20:30 Gr 12 Drama Prac  
Rehearsal.

12/05 15:00 Grade 12 Music Concert

13/05 VG Boarders' Dance

Congratulations to them both.

### GRADE 9 SUBJECT CHOICE

Grade 9 learners and parents are reminded of the subject choice meeting at the end of term. The importance of this meeting for those wishing to continue their schooling at VG cannot be overestimated. The subjects chosen for Grade 10 will affect future decisions in terms of further study and career choice. Please consider the information on the separate sheet, and use the time that remains to become as informed as possible about career and study options.

### GRAHAMSTOWN REGIONAL SCIENCE EXPO

Ms Cherry

On 22 July 2011, VGHS participated in the Regional Science Expo. The projects were of a very high standard and the judging process rigorous. The following VG girls received recognition for their super projects:

**Bronze Award:** **Nita Harry** and **Lauren Tyson**; **Silver Award:** **Melissa Smith**; **Gold Awards:** **Jessica Clarke**, **Thandiswa Nqowana** (6<sup>th</sup> overall), **Amy Jackson-Moss** (4<sup>th</sup> overall), **Katherine James** (3<sup>rd</sup> overall) and the **WESSA trophy for best environmental project**, **Vivienne Dames** (1<sup>st</sup> overall) and the **ESKOM best female learner project**

The top five projects also received a bursary for their first year of a BSc at Rhodes University!

The following girls will be travelling to Pretoria, during October, to represent the Eastern Cape (along with the other regional winners from PE and EL) at the National Science Expo:

**Melissa Smith**  
**Jessica Clarke**  
**Thandiswa Nqowana**

**Amy Jackson-Moss**  
**Katherine James**  
**Vivienne Dames**



Amy, Vivienne and Katherine

## CULTURAL AFFAIRS

### AN EVENING OF THEATRE

On Thursday 28 July nineteen Grade 10 and three Grade 11 Drama pupils went to watch "Taste" at the Rhodes University Drama Department. "Taste" is part of the best of Fest programme which has been showing at the Rhodes Theatre. "Taste" was directed by Debbie Robertson and written in collaboration with her cast. Former VG pupil **Bianca Binneman** was one of the highly talented cast members who preformed in this production.

The suspense of the twisting plot and the talented cast held the entire audience captive for the full hour. The pupils enjoyed seeing a professional, polished piece of theatre, that kept every one guessing up until the final scene.

### ENGLISH OLYMPIAD

Congratulations to **Jessica Wentworth** and **Amy von Witt** who were placed in the top 100 of the National English Olympiad. Both were awarded Gold in the competition and VG learners were awarded a further six Silvers and seven Bronzes.



Winners in the English Olympiad

### INTER-HOUSE DEBATING

*Delia Makabeni*

We recently held our Inter-house Debating competition, holding two rounds where the houses competed against each other for the title of "Debating Champions". The first round motion was: This House Believes That (THBT) The Main Responsibility For Education In South Africa Lies with Government, and the

final round was between Graeme House and Thursford House with the motion: This House Would Abolish All Compulsory Sport In Schools.

Two Rhodes adjudicators listened to the teams as they reasoned with and persuaded everyone why they were right. Due to their convincing arguments and good preparation Graeme House won the competition, having argued on the opposition side.



The victorious Graeme House Team

### POETRY

**Amy von Witt** not only won a Gold Award for the English Olympiad, but she is also now a published poet! She has a poem in a collection of works entitled "Poems for Haiti" This anthology is to commemorate and to commiserate with the victims of the Haiti earthquake that took place on January 12 2010. Her poem is below:

#### Nightquake

*It came to me in a dream  
 Crashing, tumbling, crumbling  
 I woke up mumbling  
 Jolted awake by the shake of the quake*

*I wondered what it must mean  
 It felt like the earth was trying to scream  
 I knew something was going to happen  
 But I didn't know where, how or when*

*I forced myself back into restless sleep  
 In the morning I still hadn't forgotten  
 When I heard the news I froze in shock  
 It was real, it had happened*

*Instead of hitting here it hit Haiti  
 The unease paralleled my paranoia  
 Psychic powers had once again proved true  
 Although it felt like I'd dreamed the disaster into being*

*That day I walked around in a daze  
 Waiting to wake up from the nightmare  
 To snap out of it  
 But there's no escaping reality*

*How is it that at one instant  
 Completely unrelated situations can overlap  
 While I felt the earth shake, break and crack  
 beneath me  
 The Haitians felt their lives come crashing  
 down?*

### PRESIDENT'S AWARD

*Sibabalwe Quma*

On the 13<sup>th</sup> July the President's Award hosted a dialogue session with **President Jacob Zuma** at Kingswood College. There were 70 participants from all over the Eastern Cape. Seven VG girls attended: **Sibabalwe Quma, Onyeka Osode, Marryam Tariq, Sarah Kirk, Jody Tyson, Chantelle May** and **Sibongile Koliti**. The theme was "Problems the youth of today are facing" and the participants had to discuss in their groups what problems the youth of today are facing. The participants had to discuss in their groups what problems they are facing and what they can do about it and finally what the government can do.

They then had to formulate a question which they would pose to the President. Questions that came up were all related to Education, Health, Infrastructure and NGO's. **President Jacob Zuma** answered all the questions and the participants were satisfied. He left as with the wise words of "Make a decision." Make a decision to change things and stop blaming people. A few participants also shared their experiences and **Onyeka Osode** was one of them. Then finally **Sibabalwe Quma** did the vote of thanks. It was a great experience.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> July the Grahamstown President's Award Participants did their 67 *Minutes of Service* by cleaning three of Grahamstown's streets: High Street, New Street and African Street. The participants were encouraged to make Mandela Day every day by **Sibabalwe Quma** in the welcoming session. The clean-up ended up at Kingwoods with refreshments and closing comments.

Congratulations to **Marryam Tariq** for receiving her Silver Award and **Sibabalwe Quma** who has now received her Gold Award.

### VGHS CHOIR TOUR 2011

During the June holiday, the long awaited choir tour finally saw twenty-two VG girls, four parents, two choir staff members, **Jillian Haaroff** and **Sibusiso Mkhize**, as well as the tour manager, **Madeleine Schoeman**, soar through the sky to discover the world. This was the choir's second visit abroad and this time they made sure to blow Europe away with a genuine taste of South African flavour, and true VG flair.

Austria and Germany were indeed fascinated with the choir, and expressed their deep love and appreciation for South African music thanks to the talented choir's performances.

The tour itinerary was packed with all sorts of marvellous things we don't see everyday here at home. To mention but a few, the group saw the Salt mines in Mozart's hometown, Salzburg; the Hundertwasser Museum in Beethoven's hometown, Vienna; The BMW Museum and Dachau Concentration Camp in Germany. The group also witnessed great talent at the Cantus MM International Choir Festival which was held in Saltsburg.

Breathtaking views and magnificent churches were the order of the day under the sunny skies of Austria and Germany.

Travelling is an eye-opening experience and the VG group was privileged enough to share this experience with each other, as well as share part of themselves through song and dance with the rest of the world. South Africa was well represented by the tour group and will be cherished for a long time in the hearts of fond friends made from around the globe.



On Tour in Europe

## SPORT MATTERS

### HOCKEY

*Hannah Godlonton*

On Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup> July four of our hockey teams played against Victoria Park. The first team won 3-1 with the supporters cheering them on all the way:

U16B lost 1-2  
U16A lost 0-1  
2nds lost 0-1

### HOCKEY UMPIRING

*Miss van der Linde*

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> June I left for Stellenbosch for the u/14 A/B Inter-provincial Tournament (IPT) as an umpire for the Eastern Cape. The aim for these tournaments is to improve on our umpiring. On average we umpire three to four games a day. These tournaments are helpful as we are guided by our umpire manager. He gave us tips to improve certain things and at times when we do absolutely badly they really give us a hard time. At the end of every day we had umpire meetings to discuss the problems and mistakes from the games of that particular day.

Feedback was not always positive but we definitely had to pull up our socks for the next day of hockey. At the end of this tour I was graded to a Prof 3 level.

Near the end of the holidays I went on another tour to Bloemfontein with the u/18 C EP side. I was not graded on this tour as it was a festival and not an Inter-provincial tournament. Yet I was not upset, as experience at different levels is always worth every moment.

Having umpired for about eight years now I thought I knew everything, but I was proved wrong. I learnt that I have been umpiring in the positions all this time. I now

know what I have been doing wrong and I have a better view of the game.

I would like to thank VG for allowing me to go on the tours as well as EP for giving me the opportunity to improve on my umpiring.

### INTER-HOUSE HOCKEY

*Miss van der Linde*

On the first day of Term 3 we had Inter-House Hockey. The standard of hockey was great. Each team was only allowed to play two team players at a time, giving other girls the chance to show off their skill. The results were:

1<sup>st</sup> Dorset  
2<sup>nd</sup> Graeme  
3<sup>rd</sup> Ruthville  
4<sup>th</sup> Thursford

Thanks to all the staff and learners for supporting the hockey

### INTER PROVINCIAL HOCKEY TOURS JULY 2011

This hockey season saw VGHS with five learners, and one teacher, making Eastern Province hockey sides. These girls had to attend various rounds of trials to be selected, and then travel to Port Elizabeth to attend team practices prior to their respective tournaments. U14

**Khanyisa Gwata** was included in the u14 team that travelled to Stellenbosch, **Prudence van der Linde**, one of the inter teachers at VGHS, accompanied the team as the squad's official umpire. This team performed very well at the tournament and was placed third overall.

#### U16C

**Nazi Buso** was part of the u16 team that were in Bloemfontein for their tournament. She said it was a long journey to get there as the bus stopped to collect many players en-route.

#### U18 C

**Cleo Bennett** was selected for the EP u18 C squad who also journeyed to Bloemfontein during the July school holidays to take part in the Southern Free State Schools Hockey Festival. This was for both boys and girls to participate in and it involved twenty teams from South Africa and neighbouring African countries. She was also accompanied by **Prudence van der Linde**, who was also this squad's official umpire. With so many teams the competition was very stiff and the teams played 7 matches in a round robin fashion. The EP team unfortunately lost 1-0 to Namibia in the finals and were placed second in the tournament.

#### U18 B

**Chloe Bennett** and **Cassie Lister** were both selected for the EP u18B squad that took part in the u18 Girls National Hockey Tournament in Pietermaritzburg. This tournament had twelve provincial sides battling it out for the top position. The EP came second in its pool and made it through to the semi-finals where they lost to Southern Free State. This resulted in

them being placed fourth overall.



VG Eastern Province Hockey reps

### NETBALL

On Wednesday 27 July two teams played against PJ Olivier and the scores were as follows:

U14 won 11 – 15  
U19 won 20 – 11

And on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> we played against Kingwood

U14 A lost 13-9  
B lost 7-5  
C drew 11-11  
U16 A lost 15-7  
B drew 5-5  
U19 A lost 21-18  
B lost 13-19

Well done to everyone who played and thank you to the supporters.



VG on the attack



... and then defending

## OUR WIDER EDUCATION PROGRAMME

### AFRIKAANS BESTE SPREKERSKOMPETISIE

*Mrs Retief*

On the 25<sup>th</sup> July the annual Afrikaans Beste Sprekerskompetisie took place. Participants delivered their speeches with great confidence. All are thanked for their efforts.

The winner for the Senior section was **Blessings Chinganga** who spoke of "Fokus" and the runner up was **Lorenthia Swartland's** talk about "Pret dinge om te doen op die laaste dag van skool."

The winner for the Junior section was Mivuyo Matai who delivered a speech entitled "Lees is 'n fees"

Baie dankie en mooi so!

### HIKING CLUB WEEKEND TRIP 9<sup>TH</sup> – 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER

There will be a weekend Hiking Club Trip in September going to either the Baviaans Kloof or Tsitsikamma areas, both of which are wild, rugged and beautiful. It will involve camping, hiking and lots of fun. There will be space for 10–12 learners and the cost will be between R200 and R250 for the weekend. Details and signup sheets will be posted outside **Mrs Hanton's** Classroom after leave out. As places will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis please make sure you beg or borrow the money for the trip during your Leave Out weekend.

### CHESS

*Vuyisanani Majija*

On the 26<sup>th</sup> July the VG Chess Club bravely took on the staff. The staff won 5 / 4. Congratulations to Odwa, Viwe and Vuyisanani who were the only three girls to win a match against a staff member. A huge thank you to the staff who participated, and to **Mr Schmidt**, who has assured us that his absence was not due to cowardice but to circumstance, and has promised Vuyisanani a game before the end of the year.



VG Chess Club members make the VG staff (sans Mr Schmidt) sweat

### REGIONAL MATHS & SCIENCE FESTIVAL

On Monday 1<sup>st</sup> of August, thirteen Grade 9s attended a morning programme at Nombelelo hosted by *Scifest*. The programme included science experiment demonstrations (during which the VG girls were enthusiastic volunteers), a scientific theatre piece, a satellite building workshop and a talk by Dr Don Thomas, former NASA astronaut.

A further 26 girls from Grade 8 to grade 12 attended Dr Thomas's afternoon lecture as well as the opening ceremony of the Maths and Science week celebrations.

We learned that it only takes 8.5 minutes to get into space; but that this journey consumes 2 million litres of fuel (luckily it's largely clean hydrogen and oxygen). We saw a picture of PE from space, discovered that 'up' is a relative concept, and that we can see the international space station orbiting over Grahamstown about once a month (for details google 'ISS sightings').

Various members of the Maths staff, and the Maths student teachers also attended Casio training workshops as well as an inspiring workshop on open-ended investigations by Marc Schafer at Rhodes.

### IN CONCLUSION

#### A WORD FROM OUR SCHOOL CAPTAIN ...

*Luvuyo Hlatshaneni*

This term is filled with many activities and everyone has been filled with great energy and spirit. A number of sporting events have been taking place such as games against PJ and Victoria Park, and the Derby Day against Kingswood, to mention just a few. There's been good support from the whole school. The matrics are almost at the end of their school career with the 40 Days and Matric Banquet coming up later this term and with Prelims just around the corner. To the matrics: all of you girls have been super this whole year; give it your all for this last push and study hard for upcoming exams and you

know what they say, 'Champions keep playing until they get it right'. I hope everyone has a blessed long weekend.

#### ...AND A WORD FROM ME...

This term has already been filled with a wide range of activities, and we expect more to come as Term 3 unfolds after the Leave Out weekend.

I am so proud of the girls' achievements this year and certainly this term has not disappointed in that regard. The rest of the newsletter enumerates some of these achievements, so there is little reason for me to recount them again ... except that sometimes we do need to remind ourselves just how good we can be: Four of the top six positions at Science Expo (and if we claim the James twins who are coming here for Grade 8, that's five of the top six); five Eastern Province reps for Hockey; top positions in the Maths and English Olympiads; brilliant performances in on the hockey fields and netball courts; top President's Award awards; and our choir returning from a very successful overseas tour.

Sometimes the day to day business of the school can become overwhelming, but we need to stop at times and reflect on the amazing opportunities that our girls are being offered and on how well they do when they decide to get involved.

I hope that everybody enjoys the long weekend and returns for the rest of Term 3, ready to seize their opportunities. Best of luck to the matrics who will be going into Prelim exams and to the Grade 11s who assume the mantle of leadership.

Kind regards



The VG Touring Choir - 2011