

VG NEWS The Verbal

including, for the very first time:

1 April 2011, Volume 9 # 2

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.

SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES

TOP NOTCH AWARDS

- Mbali Hlangani** – Scoring the first goal for the U16 Hockey.
- Alicia du Toit** – Persevering in netball despite her injury.
- Sandile Mvula** – Helpfulness in a grade meeting for closing the curtain when the light was shining on the speaker.
- Ms McCrindle** – Rescuing the Amnesty International Booklet.
- Akhona Fungile** – Going out of her way to help someone with Photostating.
- Lorentia Swartland** – Learner's License
- Meredith Assumption** – Learner's License
- Zizipho Nonkula** – Found a bank card in town and traced the owner using Facebook.
- Babalwa Venani** – Learner's License
- Vuyisanani Majija** – Getting an A in her Physical Science test.

HOSTEL AWARDS



These boarders received certificates in recognition of the difference they make at our hostels. We are proud of Zenande Ncetani, Dominik Petermann, Nicole Oyentunji, Noluthando Hoho and Inga Mcingwane.

MERIT STARS

Ms Potberg

Gr 12 Faith Du Plessis	280
Gr 12 Siyamthanda Tokwe	280
Gr 12 Nelisa Mnyamana	310

FOUNDERS' WEEKEND 2011: CONCERT IN THE PARK, and much more!

Concert in the Park turned into a "Concert in the Ark" on Thursday evening as the much needed rain sent the orchestra, bands and choirs scurrying for the shelter of the hall. The weather gods were kinder on Friday, and the concert played to a large crowd. Audience members enjoyed the informal atmosphere, their picnic

baskets and the music, especially after being served sundowners on the GADRA lawns.

Most appreciative were numerous young children who capered happily in front of the musicians for the duration for the concert.



The music was a blend of traditional and modern. The ensemble pieces at the end were particularly spectacular, including the VG orchestra, junior choir, marimba band, and the Graeme College steel band and gospel choir. Our Music department is known for its attention to detail and for its excellent performances, and the Concerts in the (P)ark were no exceptions.



Sisipho Nyamela singing "Summertime". Behind her is conductor, Ms McConnachie.

The VG girls and staff worked hard in preparation for Founder's Weekend, doing service in the form of planting the Matric tree and creative jobs such as painting recycling bins. The overall result was that of a school of neatness and that reflected the pride of VG's history that is central to Founder's.

Even though the Star Relay had to be postponed because of the weather, nothing could dampen the spirit of VG. Our Founders' Assembly re-affirmed the roots and core values of our school, with 2001 Deputy School Captain, Jane Riddin, and the School Captain of 1961, Prof Finlayson, inspiring all of us. Mrs Bernadine Trollip, Eleanor Brown House catering assistant and shop steward of PAWUSA, received a long service award from

THINKING OF...

- Phumza Calana whose father passed away.
- Mrs Gqaboti, Eleanor Brown House staff member, whose daughter passed away.
- Mr Chamberlain's family. Mr Chamberlain was the VG caretaker for many years (during the time of Mr Long and Mr Barnard). He passed away recently, but is remembered with respect by hostel, grounds and teaching staff of the school.

VGHS in recognition of her 25 years of commitment to the school. Mrs Trollip always has the interests of the hostel and the workers at heart and has been an incredible pillar of support to Mrs Schoeman.



Inter-house singing was of an exceptional standard, with the judge having a tough time coming up with the winning house: Dorset first, Graeme came second, and Ruthville third.

On Saturday morning our current 1st hockey team played a match against a team made up of old girls. The match was a tight one and was fought in true VG spirit. The result was a one all draw.

This was followed by the flag raising and

a memorial service for those that have passed on., with many plaques being unveiled. **Reverend Probert** from the local Presbyterian Church gave a sermon and prayers were said in remembrance. Many tears were shed when the choir sang *The Rose* and *The Blessing*.



Professor Finlayson from the class of 1961 and 2011 School Captain, Luvuyo Hlatshaneni, lay wreaths during the memorial service.



Our Centenary Quad was packed with Gr 12s and Old Girls enjoying the tea served ever so graciously by **Ms Farquhar and the Functions Committee**.



Delia Makabeni and Busi Ngqameni showing around a 1961 Old Girl who had travelled all the way from Florida, USA, to be here with us.

Well done and thank you to everyone involved in Founders' Weekend (and that is everyone!). It was a fantastic celebration of "VG-ness". From the spectacular Concerts in the Ark and Park, to the beautiful inter-house singing, to the RCL's touching slideshow, to the tea, sundowners, picnic and hockey (and everything else I have left out) – it was a wonderful weekend.

Thank you to **Ms Hayes** for being at the helm of Founders, to **Karen Kouari** and her Old Girls' Union Committee, to our parents who worked so hard: **Dr Dames, Mrs Chithambo, Mrs Elliott, Ms Strauss, Mrs Jackson-Moss and Dr Hodge**.

In addition, the girls and staff worked hard to prepare for the weekend, and the reunion old girls not only enjoyed themselves, but also brought a spark of energy and enthusiasm with them from which we all benefitted.

By the end of the weekend it was clear that while much has changed at VG over the years, much has stayed the same, like the VG spirit.

Viva VG!



Akhona Mana assisting with the tree planting



Teneal Potts adding colour to the school.

PARENTS' MEETINGS

Just before Leave-Out Mrs Schoeman and Mrs Mitchell, the Hostel Manager, travelled to East London and Mthatha to meet our parents and discuss their daughters' progress with them.

Mrs Schoeman says, 'Once again, I was bowled over by the response of our parents. Each of the meetings was attended by more than 50% of the parents of the area. A special thank you to Mrs Nkinti and Mrs Qaba for the work they put into the Mthatha parents' meeting and the choir concert'.

Most memorable moment, apart from the gut-wrenching singing of our choir? When the East London group started sneezing as the best little girl quietly played with a pepper pot...

CHOIR CONCERT IN MTHATHA

Delia Makabeni

On Friday, 25th of February, the choir held a music concert in Mthatha to make sure that VG stays on the map as THE arts school in the Eastern Cape, and as part of its fundraising programme for the upcoming tour of Europe. The concert was arranged to coincide with Leave-Out, so hostel girls, parents and friends of the school filled the hall and showed great support by purchasing of the choir's recently recorded CD. The concert was a great success, both socially and in terms of entertainment as the choir managed to get even the grandparents reminiscing about their early days, not to mention the countless encores the evening saw. (*Some forced encores as the parents simply barricaded the exit!*). The choir concert was much appreciated by the Mthatha audience and the accompanying staff who got to experience the spirit and generosity of Mthatha.



The African songs were greatly enjoyed by the Mthatha crowd.



Ms Ntombela, Ms Haarhoff and Mrs Schoeman get into the rhythm at the choir concert in Mthatha.

FIRST AID

Mrs Babu

Mrs Babu and a number of learners took part in the First Aid Level 3 course at St John's Ambulance Foundation. The course consisted of 2 days of learning, doing theory and practical work, with the test written on day 3. All participants put in their maximum during the entire course and at the end achieved distinctions for the test. Congratulations to the following First Aid Level 3 achievers: **Nelly Ntapu, Cleo Bennett, Chloe Bennett, Khanya Lande, Lee-Ann Koffie, Nombase Magqengwana & Mrs Babu**.

Thank you to the supervisors and instructors of St John's Ambulance Foundation for all their hard work...

...and especially to **Mrs Babu!**

BATHURST SHOW

Do not miss the VG stall at the Bathurst Show! Your chance to see Ms Haywood and our Portfolio Heads in action (and to buy a choir CD!).

THE SERVICE CLUBS

Mrs Todd

These clubs spend an hour every week providing services that are needed in and around the school.

We are proud of the posters they have created to encourage positive behaviour such as saving water. They also painted recycling bins, helped with the distribution of school magazines, did more than their bit to make our grounds look spick and span for Founders. And they found time for donating blood, too!

INTERACT

Onyeka Osode

Interact is indeed one of the most important aspects of VGHS and the community at large. It is what we do daily: interacting with one another.

The Interact Society, however, takes interaction to another level. We have four very active groups that make a difference, weekly. The Arts & Crafts group has been doing bead work, making angels, hearths, stars and other items as gifts for the children in the hospital, just to tell them there are people thinking of them. Visits to St Mary's have been just as life changing, giving us the opportunity to be Maths and spelling teachers. Hospital visits often bring tears to the eyes of the girls as they see unimaginable sadness. These visits remind us how grateful we should be for the numerous opportunities we have. The visits to the VP after care centre have been quite an experience. This group has received praise from a number of parents who say their children do not want to go home straight after school as they are waiting for their 'big sisters'! We play games with them and read to them.

We as the Interact Society believe in service, and that is exactly what we do.

OUR STAFF

We say good bye to **Mr Smith**, the substitute teacher in the place of Ms Cherie. Mr Smith is a born teacher, and the kind of teacher that any school should hang onto. We have enjoyed having him around and will miss him.

Mr Sam and Mr S Twalo have joined the grounds staff. Mr Twalo is the man in charge of our fields and lawns, and is fighting a brave battle against the moles. Judging from the many positive comments at Founders regarding the good condition of our hockey field, Mr Twalo's appointment is hugely beneficial.

Just before Founders we welcomed **Nikki Zeleny** and **Heather Baker**, two student teachers from America. They board at Beaufort House, and, like Mr Smith, have slotted in very well.

A number of teaching students of Rhodes University have just finished their first stint of prac teaching at VG. **Ms McConnachie** is in charge of the student teacher programme at VG, and seems to do it so effortlessly!

My leaving VG has resulted in a number of staff changes: **Ms Badenhorst** has been appointed to take over the majority of Mr Schmidt's classes and one of Mrs Retief's. **Mr Schmidt** will, of course, be acting principal, while **Mrs Retief** has been appointed as acting deputy principal. **Mrs Czeredrecki-Schmidt** takes over the Publicity Portfolio on the Management Team and **Ms Hayes** is becoming Head of Academics. **Ms Hastie** will be Grade Head of the Gr 9s, and **Ms Farquhar** our Gr 8 Head. Our staff never ceases to amaze and impress me with their ability to rise to any challenge.

...and **Mr Still** is simply relieved that he does not have to do a new timetable!

ACADEMIC ACTION

NOKIA MATHEMATICS PROJECT

Congratulations to the Grade 10 Maths girls on receiving a certificate for making a success of the Nokia Mobile Learning for Mathematics project in South Africa.

WORLD MATHS DAY

The 1st Of March was World Maths Day. To celebrate, VG, together with 5.3 million other people from 218 countries, played in an online competition. The following girls achieved the most correct answers: **Urielle Kayumba, Chindeka Vangai, Zizipho Siwendu, Meagan Koffie, Nyasha Mapara, Elam Dyonase, Lutho Pepe, Siphosihle Hewana.**

HARMONY SOUTH AFRICAN MATHEMATICS OLYMPIAD

On 16 March, some learners participated in the first round of the Harmony South African Mathematics Olympiad. In the senior division **Lilian Mollel, Nolene Dixon, Babalwa Qaba, Tapiwa Chindeka & Asemahle Mdingi** all qualified to take part in the second round.

The Grade 8 & 9 competitors were fortunate to be given coaching by Mr Andrew Stevens, an ex-member of the SGB and past parent of the school. Eight learners qualified for the second round and they are: **Kyra Davies, Sarah Kirk, Cleo Quiens, Simbulele Serame, Lithalethu Hashe, Anelisiwe Msomi & Sihle Njwambe.**

HISTORY

HISTORY CLASS DARES MPs AT PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

On Tuesday the 15th March four of our girls – **Nanamhla Ceza, Naledi Ntondini, Hlubikazi**

Zibi & Sinesipho Kwatsha - travelled to Bhisho to participate in a parliamentary Commonwealth Dialogue.

This event was held in the Raymond Mhlaba Chamber and was organized by the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature as part of a programme of observance for Commonwealth Day.

The Theme was "Women as agents for change" and our ladies got an opportunity to deliver speeches in front of the members of parliament and question any uncertainties with regard to the legislation of the Eastern Cape. It was definitely worth missing school for this opportunity!

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

AFRICAN WOMEN'S SOCIETY

Tolani Adesina & Delia Makabeni

The highlight of the term was a discussion afternoon with **Professor Jimi Adesina** of Rhodes who gave a thought-provoking talk on the "Representations of African women in popular narratives: Beyond myths and distortions".

He touched on African Women of all races and ethnicities who changed stereotypical perceptions of our beautiful continent forever. Our guest speaker also spoke of the multifocal civilizations which once and still do exist all around the African continent.

CHRISTIANS IN ACTION

Nolene Dixon

The CIA Term Evening was our biggest term evening yet with about 150 learners attending, including boys and girls from Kingwood and Graeme. The evening started off with energetic games followed by a prayer session. We then went into worship led by the GAP and a message by Arthur Frost from Father's Heart.

Next term we are hoping to go even bigger with the event and hope to see even more people there.

CHESS

Vuyisanani Majija

The Chess Club has been approached by the Rhodes University Chess Club to strengthen the skills of our girls. They come every session to overlook and teach our girls new techniques.

Our girls have been improving their skills and are now at a professional level in terms of rules of the game. Thank you to the Rhodes chess club for sparing their time and helping our girls. Their effort is much appreciated.

YOUTH COMMUNICATORS AWARD

Nolene Dixon

Ayanda Twani won the Youth Communicators Award District Competition. Seven schools took part in this competition which was held on the 19th of March in the VG Library. **Ayanda**, along with a learner from Port Alfred High School, will take part in the Regional Competition which will be held in Grahamstown at a later date.



Ayanda Twani

DEBATING

Nolene Dixon

Naledi Ntondini was recognised as the best speaker in the debate against DSG which was held on the 18th of March as part of the Rhodes League Debates. VG won two out of their three debates.



Naledi Ntondini

Y4Y

Lillian Mollel and Tamani Chithambo

This year VG has been an active participant in the Youth for Youth empowering programme that takes place every Thursday at Radio Grahamstown.

Seven of our girls interact with different schools, expressing their views on different topics such as gender injustice, human rights and the premier's speech. This term we also had an opportunity to interview VG on events such as Founders and the Concert in the Park. Without the girls' enthusiasm and dedication, we would not be able to give this service.

THE VERBAL

A shortened version, proudly coming to you as an insert in this VG News. Well done to Mrs Todd and an excited and exciting team on the first 2011 issue they put together. May you continue to grow from strength to strength, and be a regular part of VG News.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Marryam Tariq

All members of the group were required to read through the South African Bill of Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The rights were discussed and a debate was held on the motion, 'This house believes that immigrants should not be allowed to own agricultural land in South Africa'. All the members participated passionately. To celebrate Human Rights Day, the Amnesty team presented an informative powerpoint presentation on human rights violations to the school.

SPORT MATTERS

EASTERN PROVINCE AQUATICS

Well done to Amiee Ferreira on achieving a first place in the Eastern Province Aquatics "B" Age Group Gala, 50m Breaststroke.

ATHLETICS

Asisipho Moyake

The following athletes qualified for the E.P champs, **Kirby Daniels** who came 1st in the 100m with the time of 13.25 sec, and **Awongwa Tinta** in high jump with the height of 1.34m. **Ricayla Denston**, 800m, U15, 4th. **Sisanda Nogalawe**, long jump, U15, 4th and 400m, 3rd. **Elam Dyonase**, discus, U15, 4th. **Mihlali Ngqunge**, U19 javelin, 4th. **Sibusisiwe Zondani**, discus, U19, 4th.

Congratulations to the following athletes who represented the school at the Cacadu District Champs at Nico Malan High School in Humansdorp: **Ricayla Denston** (800m), **Sibusisiwe Zondani** (Discus), **Mihlali Ngqunge** (Javelin), **Kirby Daniels** (came 2nd in High jump: Silver Medal) & **Sisanda**

Nogalawa (came 3rd in 400m: Bronze Medal)

Congratulations to **Kirby Daniels** and **Awongwa Tinta** who will represent the Cacadu District at the EP Champs in East London.



Sisanda Nogalawe, Kirby Daniels, Awongwa Tinta

HOCKEY

Mbali Hlangani

The U16A hockey team went to Uitenhage to participate in the Hockey Festival. Despite not having played together as a team we put up a very strong and hard fight against the opposition. The results were as follows:

VG vs Westering lost 3-1

VG vs Kingsridge lost 3-0

VG vs Cambridge lost 1-0

VG vs Brandwag lost 4-0

VG vs Riebeeck Invitational won 3-1

The girls came back with bruises on their bodies but that did not discourage them. We would like to thank **Mrs van der Waal** and **Miss van der Linde** for accompanying us and taking care of us during the weekend.

NETBALL SUMMER LEAGUE REPORT

Ms Farquhar

Round 1 was held on Sunday 20 February at the VG Courts. The girls arrived in their droves to play or support, all very psyched to get stuck in and play. Five teams have entered the league this year. The format of the league is a Round Robin where every team plays one another. A win would give a team two points and a draw one point. At the top of the log is Stella Stars, followed with the Grenades, Undefeated 011, Power Puffs and lastly the Super Novas.

Round 2 was a reversal of fortunes, Grenades took the lead with a straight win. Stella Stars were not happy that they did not keep their lead. Undefeated 011 found themselves in third position again, but they are not a team to take lightly as they became more serious about their game. Super Novas and Power Puffs were not pushing the envelope at all.

Round 3 – the Semis and the Finals – cross-over games were played to determine the contenders for the finals. A figurative and literal curved ball was given and thrown to the top four teams. The semis were played using a mini netball. This provided much hilarity as well as realisation that much of their hand eye co-ordination left much to be desired.

Spectators and players were surprised in the semis when the Grenades were knocked out, leaving Undefeated 011 to play against the Stella Stars.

It was with great relief for the teams when they were given a normal sized 5 ball to play the finals. The victors in the end were the Stella Stars with a 9-3 win.

NETBALL UMPIRING 2011

Ms Farquhar

After reporting on the success of those who entered the Level 1 Umpiring course in the previous VG News, we are pleased to announce that

the following girls have written the theory exam for Level 1 Umpiring: **Sicelokazi Pango, Siyathemba Yeko, Siphokazi Dude, Sisipho Namba, Andisiwe Eddie** and **Naledi Boltina**.

The u/16 Coach, Ms **Nkomo**, achieved 88% for her Level 2 Umpiring exam.

SWIMMING

Marné Mostert

This term we welcomed Mrs Van der Waal as our coach AND we raised enough money for starting blocks with our Swim-a-thon. We participated in the Inter-Districts gala at Graeme College where our girls swam their hearts out in a number of races. Aimee Ferreira travelled to Port Elizabeth for the provincial trials and came first in her heat in the freestyle.

The highlight of the season was the inter-house gala (see below).

INTER-HOUSE GALA

This fun event, well-organized by Ms McCrindle, Ms Hartley and Mr Smith, not only saw Meredith Assumption actually participating (and having much fun in the process), but also saw Dorset winning the inter-house competition. Ruthville, I am sad to say, just did not make it.

Well done to our Victrices: **Sarah Kirk (U14), Lisa Goodes and Maxine Knowles** (sharing U16) and Aimee Ferreira (U19).



Aimee Ferreira dominated the open category at the gala. She is seen here swimming the 50m backstroke in a winning time of 0:40:28.



Meagan Koffie competed with great concentration in the U14 potato and spoon race.

BALLET



Melissa Smith's ballet group received their certificates recently. Thank you to **Melissa**, front left hand side, and well done to **Ayabulela Ngcebetha** next to her, with **Zenande Mbiyoza, Alicia du Toit and Anelisa Mamani** at the back.

TENNIS

On 19 March, VG's first team tennis girls travelled to Graaff-Reinet to participate in the annual Quadrangular between Kingswood, DSG, Union High School and VGHS. The girls spent the night in the Union High Hostel before a busy day of tennis on Sunday. Every girl played a doubles and a singles match against her opposite number from every school. Lots of strong tennis was played, with Union High School winning the overall event, and VG coming 4th.



Hannah Godlonton in action



Sarah Long at the Quadrangular.

SQUASH

Marné Mostert

Our squash ladies have been working hard to regain our fitness and ball skills. We played a Round Robin to determine our rankings.

Natasha Nel, Stephanie Whitehorn, Amy Jackson-Moss, Jenny Upfold, Leigh Potgieter and Nicole Wilson travelled to Port Elizabeth for EP trials and came home with promising results.

Last week we started our league matches. Our second team played DSG's third team and after a tight battle lost 1-15. Our first team travelled to Port Alfred and did exceptionally well by winning 5-14.

We look forward to many exciting games from our squash ladies!

OUR WIDER EDUCATION PROGRAMME

PRESIDENT'S AWARD SILVER HIKE

Onyeka Osode

Four of our Silver participants took a step further towards getting their Silver Award by embarking on an adventurous journey on the Alexandria Trails. During the hike we learnt a lot of life skills such as making a fire, how to cook while in the wild and many more.

We hiked a total of 36km, dodging the numerous spiders, remaining silent when we passed snakes and crawling over the highest sand dunes in South Africa. The new friendships that were made will always remain within our hearts, as we learned a

lot about different backgrounds and understanding one another. This hike has definitely motivated all of us to strive for gold.

We would like to say a big thank you to Nadine and Martin, our President's Award guides and Mr Mitchell and the committee for making it all possible.

GRAHAMSTOWN YOUTH COMMITTEE

Siba Quma

The President's Award Grahamstown Youth Committee held their meeting at Victoria Girls' High School on the 28th of March 2011.

We were joined by Janine Hansen, the operations director of TPA, Luyanda Matiwana the project coordinator, Martin Scholtz the CEO of TPA, and Bernice Hlagala, the head of Youth Development in the Presidency.

We discussed upcoming events like the sports day, our hospice collection, roadshows, 67 minutes of service and our current project our very own pamphlet. Ms Hlagala said she is very impressed with the work the Youth Committee is doing and she will try by all means to attend our events to see what the youth of Grahamstown is doing to making a difference.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD SERVICE GROUP

Siba Quma

The VG President's Award service group completed their service hours by being part of a knitting project at Raphael Center. The girls knitted squares which were joined to make blankets for the kids. The Raphael staff also asked the girls to teach the clients how to knit so they can have skills.

The girls who cannot knit did an 'adopt' a grandparent project. They went to Brookshaw old age home and made the senior citizens feel special.

GRADE 8 CAMP

Come rain or shine, our Gr 8s know how to have fun. Thanks to **Ms Farquhar, Ms Hastie, Mr Mkhize and Mrs Todd**, (and the rain!) the Gr 8s had a memorable time at Fairewood.



What is a bit of rain between friends?

PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE CLINIC

Grade 11 & 12 Study and Career Assessment Testing is being offered by the Psychological Care Clinic.

The cost of the testing is understandably a crucial consideration. The DAT L is currently administered at a rate of R355 per pupil. The DAT data is combined with the SAVII, JPQ and learner questionnaire for a Study and Career Assessment Report at a rate of R450 per pupil. **The total process costs R805 per pupil.** Parents would be able to claim this back from their Medical Aid Schemes according to Mr Donnelly, a Grahamstown Clinical Psychologist.

For more information, please contact the practice at 046 622 8197.

BLOOD DONATING

Tamani Chithambo

On the 15th of March the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) gave the girls and staff an opportunity to save lives by donating blood. Among the donors were both regular and new donors, and at the end of the day more than 50 units of blood had been donated. Everyone who donated proudly lived up to the SANBS motto: "Don't be a zero, be a hero".

As for the ones who got turned away, they could proudly say that they had had every intention of saving a life.



Dominique Peterson comfortably donating blood



Kerry Gough braving the first step in the blood donating process

KOVISIE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Mrs Retief

The following girls will be attending the Kovsie Leadership Summit from 7 – 9 April in Bloemfontein: **Siyanda Makunga, Onyeka Osode, Sibabalwe Quma, Lorenthia Swartland, Amanda Tsipa & Babalwa Venani.**

We wish them all of the best and trust that they will learn many valuable lessons.

PTPA FORUM

Risk taking behaviour amongst teenagers

Mrs Potberg

The talk on risk-taking behaviour was held on 15 March 2011, presented by Zininzi Bomoyi, an Intern Psychology student at Rhodes Student Counselling Centre.

Aspects of this topic included Signs of troubled teens, Substance abuse, toxic dating (unhealthy, abusive relationships which leads to teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections) and what parents can do to assist their children. Risk-taking behaviour results from teens' brain development as they are not fully mature to control themselves. Poverty, as well as television shows, also plays a major role in teens' risky behaviour. **Parents can assist their children by building their self esteem by doing the following:**

- Be attentive and trustworthy
- Make yourself available as a parent when your children want to engage and inform you about things happening in their lives
- Be open and approachable
- Build them and do not compare them to others
- Acknowledge them by giving compliments

The above-mentioned will in turn aid children to build positive identities, which result in better decision making.

Thank you to Ms Potberg for arranging the evening and the speaker, and for the parents and staff who contributed to a lively discussion.

OUR HOSTELS

HOSTELS

Mrs Mitchell

At the start of the year the Grade 10s planned a "Box Fresh" talent show for the Grade 8s to welcome them to their new home. The Grade 8s also got a chance to showcase their talents.

Great fun was had on the 13th March as Mather Pike boarders played and impromptu hockey game with the old girls.

Eleanor Brown girls have been getting fit and healthy this term as Miss Togara holds an aerobics class on Saturdays. Mather Pike started the trend with their daily aerobics sessions.

All boarders enjoyed their movie night at Graeme College and the many other movie nights we had at the hostel with popcorn, of course!

All hostels have been brushing up on their netball skills at the weekends, with the boarders getting plenty of fresh air and exercise in the process.

Thanks to all staff who are so incredibly dedicated and give up so much of themselves.

Thank you from us to Mrs Mitchell who, in a short space of time, is leaving her mark on our hostels.

MATHER PIKE HOUSE

Nicole Oyentunji

"A center of excellence for young women of Africa". As we stepped into our new home the words above greeted us. Not understanding and maybe not caring, we ignored the sign, an act of ignorance we had yet to learn from.

From the very moment we stepped inside we found a new mother to adore, and a new big sister to fall head over heels in love with.

Weekends are filled with fun as our mother, Ms Ntosh, bakes with us, and plays exciting outdoor games with us, never lacking energy! Everyone enjoys getting to know one another and the self-exploring that is involved. Meal times, neatness and behaviour rules all makes sense now. We are being moulded into punctual, neat and respectful ladies!

This is truly a centre of excellence to which we came as individuals and now we live as a family. Thank you to Ms Ntombela and Ms Marcia for the hard work, love, dedication and consideration.

BEAUFORT HOUSE

Mrs Dampies

The hostel was filled with many exciting activities this term. The evenings were filled with town walks, movie nights, socials and school functions. We also spend days at the swimming pool and had picnics and games on the fields. Our term will end with a weekend away at Willows in Port Elizabeth.

Thank you to all the staff and the girls for making this a great term.

And thank you to Mrs Dampies for always going the extra mile. She and Mrs Michaels and their Student Supervisors make a mean, but caring, team!

GRAB AN OPPORTUNITY!

ADMISSIONS 2012

Application forms are available from the school office and on the VG website:

www.vghs.co.za. Closing date early in June, so do not delay!

...AND FINALLY...

A WORD FROM OUR SCHOOL CAPTAIN

Luvuyo Hlatshaneni

There has been a lot of happening this term in every aspect of the school, academically, culturally and sport. The biggest highlight has been the Founder's weekend. Everyone was involved in some way or the other in all the activities that took place. I must say it was a joyful weekend especially having to interact with the Old Girls who came for their respective reunions.

May we all make the most of every day and seize all our opportunities in everything we do.

...THE LAST WORD FROM ME

The ninth year of VG News, initially once a week, then two-weekly and finally twice a term. Countless hours of frustration as text boxes moved, disappeared and time ran out. And now my time has run out at VG, it's late at night and I am procrastinating as I simply do not know where to start. What does one say?

To me VG is about opportunities; it is about service and being kind to oneself, to others and to the environment. It is about hard work. About learning. And because of these reasons, VG is an exciting and stimulating place IF one realizes that there is always so much more to discover. I agree fully with one of the Grade 12s who recently reflected on being the leadership team, when she said, 'I have definitely grown, but I feel there is still so much to do and to look forward to learning'.

I can truthfully say that I have grown at VG, and that I am excited for what lies ahead of me.

For many years, VG has been an integral part of my family. Our children grew up through my years at VG. They chased one another up and down the passages and left notes in my office as they grew older. Without them the Stepping Stones garden would probably not have been a garden, even though the twins hate gardening with a passion. Niel supported me in so many ways, even though he never learned to do flower-arranging. He carried me with his ear, with cards and flowers, in good times and when the going got tough (I never, ever thought I would say my husband is a good listener!). VG always allowed me to put my family first, from the very first time I walked into Trevor Long's office, with a three month old Mickey, coming to help VG out temporarily.

Now my 'temporary' stint as staff member at VG is over.

I am proud of what VG is, but especially of what it stands for.

I am very proud of what VG taught me, and of what I learned from all the people who touched my life during my years at VG.

I am excited at the promising direction VG has taken. VG is indeed in good hands.

And I am excited at what Ntsika holds for us.

Mooi loop!

Madeline Schoeman

The trunk of the Banyan Tree shoots up from its roots and spreads into long branches. The branches grow aerial roots that stretch into the ground where new roots develop... which become trunks... and so the process continues. This growth pattern enables the Banyan Tree to spread over large areas, as much as 300 metres in width, creating individual 'rooms' under its leafy canopy.

A tree is a place for learning, and a place for stories. It is a place of stories.

Every moment of every day you write your own life story.

Ensure that your roots are deep and strong by knowing yourself, knowing your roots, and by being proud of who you are. With strong roots you will withstand many storms and will not easily be blown off course.

Stand tall, because you are an African leader.

Stand out, because you should. Grow your branches and spread your knowledge, so that new trees can grow from you.

Be your life story, with pride.