

VG NEWS

9 December 2011, Volume 9 # 7

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.

2011 PROUDLY SOUTH AFRICAN HOMEGROWN AWARD

Mrs Czeredrecki-Schmidt



Proudly South African Homegrown Trophy
and School of the Year Award

On 29th September 2011, at a gala dinner and exhibition in Johannesburg, VG were the overall winner in the Proudly South African/CFG Schools Governance Award.

The judges of this award looked at different aspects of school management like the school and hostel codes of conduct, the staff management of the school, as well as the leadership opportunities afforded to the grade 12s. As a result of our very good policies and our effective management of school funds we were selected as one of the four finalist schools. Once the finalists had been announced the judges and film crew then made a visit to each of the schools where they interviewed various staff members and were given a tour of the facilities.

At the gala dinner the video of each finalist school or company was shown before the winner and runners-up were announced. It was an amazing moment to see the VG badge come up onto the big screens and then watch the video of the school. I felt very proud to stand up and collect the award on behalf of the school, knowing that VG truly is a school of excellence, passion and integrity. We would also like to congratulate the others schools in the governance category on their achievements – 1st runner-up was St Peter's School from Johannesburg and 2nd runner-up was Glenwood High School from Durban. Proudly South African, Proudly VG!

LEARNERS

2012 PORTFOLIO HEADS



Amy Jackson-Moss, Babalwa Qaba (Headgirl),
Ajowa Atombo (Deputy Headgirl), Tayla Solomon
& Cassie Lister.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

Ms Hayes

Congratulations to the following girls who have received Academic Awards:

Junior Academic Awards:

Grade 8: Megan Koffie, Kyra Davies, Sarah Kirk, Lunako Mthenjana, Denice Smith, Zusiphe Nkala, Tiffani-Amber Cannon

Grade 9: Nicole Oyentunji, Nita Harry, Milisa Rala

Senior Awards:

Half Colours: Blessings Chinganga, Jessica Clarke, Lillian Roberts

Colours: Katherine Hughes, Dominik Peterman, Tapiwa Chindeka, Stephanie Whitehorn, Babalwa Qaba, Cassie Lister, Nanamhla Ceza

Colours Re-Award: Katherine James

Honours: Vivienne Dames, Asemahle Madlingozi

NATIONAL SCIENCE EXPO 2011

Katherine James

On the 6th of October **Vivienne Dames, Katherine James, Jessica Clarke, Melissa Smith** and **Thandiswa Nqowana** departed for the *National Eskom Science*

COMING UP...

06/01 Release of the matric results, until 13:00, but please watch the press for details.

FIRST TERM 2012

Hostels open:
Tue 10 January 2012 @ 10:00

School Commences:
Wed 11 Jan 2012 @ 7:30

10/01 11:00 Orientation Meeting –
Compulsory for new learners &
parents
13:00 New boarders' lunch at
EB

11/01 7:30 Assembly

12/01 Skills Development Training

16/01 Co-curriculars begin

21/01 VG Social (Music School)

Expo. Each took along a project on which they had been working for the past several months. They arrived in Boksburg, Johannesburg at midnight after a sixteen hour bus drive and stayed in the Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference centre. Over the next two days they were interviewed on their projects, having to explain what they did and why they did it.



From left: Katherine, Jessica, Thandiswa, Vivienne.
Front: Melissa

At the special awards ceremony Jessica received a R 35 000 bursary to study at any university in South Africa for her project *Chemistry Behind Pineapple Biofuel*. Katherine received the prize for the Best Application of Microscopy for her project *Testing Alternative versus Conventional Algae*, as well as a cash prize for herself and R1000 for VGHS.

At the final awards ceremony Jessica and Vivienne received gold medals, with Vivienne proceeding into the second round of interviews for international science expo selection with her project *Biodegradation of Toxic Dyes*. Katherine and Melissa both received silver medals. Melissa's project was on *Slope versus Mechanical Advantage* and Thandiswa's

project was on *Testing Natural versus Chemical Fertilisers – Which is better for your plants?*

This year's Nationals were a lot of fun and a truly amazing experience, thanks to those who made it possible.

2012 SCHOLARSHIPS

Congratulations to the following girls on receiving the following scholarships for 2012:

VGHS SCHOLARSHIPS:

- Gr 8: shared by Jacqui & Lauren James
- Gr 8: Milagre Lang
- Gr9: Meagan Koffie
- Gr10: Nicole Oyetunji
- Gr 11: Vivienne Dames
- Gr 12: shared by Amy Jackson Moss & Katherine James

SPORT SCHOLARSHIP:

Cassandra Lister

CULTURAL SCHOLARSHIP:

Amy Jackson-Moss

HOSTEL SCHOLARSHIPS:

- Sanalesiwe Tyibalika
- Nicole Oyetunji
- Nonkuloleko Nojoko
- Thandiswa Nqowana

Congratulations to all the girls who are receiving awards. Well done to all the applicants. The standard of applications was very high.

VALEDICTORY SERVICES

On Wednesday 19th October 2011 we said "Goodbye and Good Luck" to our 2011 Matric girls. The day was spent signing school shirts, singing songs and having class parties.

At the final assembly the outgoing Matrics, combined with the class of 2010, handed over a gift of an electronically operated projector screen for the school hall and thanked the school for helping them to grow as young women.



Back row: Siphokazi, Sichelokazi, Sive, Khanya.
Front Row: Luvuyo (Head Girl), Zikhona, Lindokuhle and Sibulo.



Mellisa Ocks, Awongwa Tinta, Meredith Assumption & Leigh Werner



Matric Class of 2011 leaving the hall.

SPORT, CULTURAL AND SERVICE ASSEMBLY

On 18th October 2011 we held our annual Sport, Cultural and Service Assembly. This is a special assembly linked to the Speech and Prize Giving Evening where girls are recognised for their dedication to the different co-curricular activities offered. At this assembly girls are also awarded colours, receive trophies and certificates for their excellent performances in 2011. Well done to all the girls who did so well in these areas over the course of 2011!



Anelesiwe Msomi, Mbali Hlangani, Hannah Godlonton, Cassie Lister, Aimee Ferreira, Anelisa Msomi



Cassie Lister – VGHS Sportswoman of the Year (Excellence in several sports)

2012 LOCKERS

Girls are reminded to organise their lockers as soon as possible next year. The cost for a locker for the year is R10. While girls can leave their cellphones in their lockers, we have had incidents of theft from lockers and this is not advisable. Instead we strongly urge all girls to purchase cellphone lockers for R20 for the year.

OUR WIDER EDUCATION PROGRAMME

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Marryam Tariq

Current Affairs was replaced by Amnesty International this year. Amnesty International is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for internationally recognised Human Rights to be respected and protected. Amnesty International undertakes research and action focused on preventing and ending abuse of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression and freedom from discrimination.

Our activists formed this society to research and discuss Human Rights Violations going on around the world and how they, as the youth, can help prevent them.

The year started off with several educational activities such as the Amnesty Introduction Programme and a thorough analysis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its importance. Some of the most intensely discussed topics related to those of physical abuse and the different political systems in countries around the world that violated the rights of their Citizens. The group also presented a thought-provoking slideshow in assembly, based on horrible acts done by human beings on one another, to inform other students of political killings and "disappearances".

HOSTELS

BEAUFORT HOUSE

Mrs Michaels

The time finally arrived for the annual Christmas party at Beaufort House. Although tensions had been running high, with the exams still in progress, the girls were all excited on Saturday morning when they went to buy gifts for each other for Christmas. They got their free hours from 09:00 to 16:00 and they were very enthusiastic to be able to go to town.

While the girls were out I started to put up fairy lights and a Christmas tree. We laid the tables to be fit for royalty. On the tables we had flower arrangements beautifully made by Ms Hartley; she really is

talented. All these flowers were from the Beaufort House garden, thanks to **Mr Trevor Mahabeni**, who so often is taking care of our garden as early as 06:30 in the morning. He had a big smile on his face when we told him on the Monday that all the arrangements that were on the tables were from his garden – he really takes pride in his job.

The event was to start at 18:00, but only really took off at 19:00 as the girls were ‘fashionably late’. The mood was set in low light from fairy lights and with the Christmas carols. We started the event by handing out the gifts. Each girl received a mug as a trinket to be added to their Christmas loot, as I am sure they will be spoiled a lot. The event was really nice it was a relaxing end to busy year.

EB ARTICLE FOR 2011

Mpho Moss, Sanelisiwe Tybilika, Khanyisa Gwata, Simnikiwe Sangoni, Iviwe Ntsatha, Zvikomborero Chiduzu, Zusiphe Nkala

2011 – What a great year it has been for Eleanor Brown House! In the first term, we said hello to our “new babies” the grade 8. There was no better way to welcome them but to host the well-known Miss Fresh competition. Our enthusiastic **Simnikiwe Sangoni** won the title. We welcomed our new Superintendent of Hostels, **Mrs Mitchell**, and her family.

Most of our grade 8 boarders were home-sick. Our beloved Matron, **Mrs Strydom**, with her caring heart, had her hands full convincing them that hostel life is actually a home away from home. Our stooges though, made our lives in hostel bearable and enjoyable with the hostel activities and their weird but amazing personalities.

Term 2 started with excitement about the hostel camp. That felt like the LAST BLAST. The whole weekend was fun and a memorable experience we will treasure. Before we knew it, we sadly had to say goodbye to Mrs. Strydom who went into retirement. We welcomed the new Matron, **Miss January**. We thought Miss January was a walk-over with her friendly smile and nice personality. Miss January’s favourite words are “please do not take me for a ride on a bicycle without wheels”; meaning, I know all the tricks in the book. Miss January also introduced us to an “I love you” sign. This actually means I love you enough to keep quiet.

The boarders dance arrived in the 3rd Term. The food was delicious and the boarders were eager to dance the night away with the Graeme College boys. We had lots of activities, including braai’s, quizzes, sports and *dushe*. These were fun and they made us bond as a family and boosted our hostel spirit too.

This year has passed by like a shooting star, but yes, all good things must end. We decided not to count the days but made the days count. We accomplished this by organising a very successful EB’s GOT TALENT with the highlight of Miss EB 2011. After that exciting event, we had our

Christmas Banquet with our very own Mother Christmas played by stooge Miss Charleen. Miss January really went out of her way making the hall look like something from a fairy tale and the food was delicious. We do not forget to thank Mrs Mitchell for her guidance and her support. You helped make this year memorable and unforgettable.

To all our Student Supervisors, Mrs Mitchell and Miss January: thank you for always encouraging us (especially when Miss J said to the stooges, “Make them sweat!” during our daily walks). Indeed, we did sweat especially after two hours of prep.

STAFF

STAFF LEAVING US THIS YEAR ...

It is always difficult at the end of the year to say goodbye to members of staff who will be leaving VG. This year we say goodbye to **Mrs Todd** and **Ms Abel** from the teaching staff, and bid *adieu* to **Ms Siga**, as a member of the hostel staff.

Mrs Todd will be going to teach at DSG from next year. Her contribution to VG this year has been felt in the classroom, the News Room and through her involvement in preparing our matrices for tertiary education. We wish her well as she starts at her new teaching school next year.

Ms Abel will be getting married and heading off for Bristol in the United Kingdom, to start her PhD at Bristol University. Ms Abel has been an amazing teacher and while we are sad that she will be leaving teaching to study again, we are excited for her and wish her all the best in this new chapter in her life.

Ms Siga will be leaving her position as House Mother of Denise Long House at the end of this year. She has been involved in building her own home and is looking forward to not sharing her house with 15 other people. We would like to thank her for her wonderful service to the VG hostels over the last few years.

NEW STAFF FOR 2012

While saying goodbye to staff is never nice, it does mean that we have an opportunity to meet new people in the form of the new staff joining us at the start of next year.

The VG SGB has decided to bolster the Mathematics Department from next year by employing two Maths teachers. The SGB see this as an investment in the VG academic programme and it will lead to smaller classes from Grade 10 – 12 (we already have four classes per grade in Grades 8 and 9).

In light of this, we welcome **Mrs Tracey Dekker**, who joins us from Westville Boys’ High School, and **Ms Elizabeth Connaghan**, who has recently completed

her PGCE at Rhodes University. Both teachers will be teaching primarily Mathematics, with a bit of Natural Science thrown into the mix. Mrs Dekker will also be joining Denise Long House as their House Mother for next year.

Ms Tatum Claypole, who has also just completed her PGCE at Rhodes, will be joining us to fill the gap left by Mrs Todd. Ms Claypole will be teaching English, Drama and Life Orientation next year.

All three of our new teachers are passionate about teaching and we are confident that they will add significant value to VG going forward.

PARENTS

SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY ELECTIONS

Mr Schmidt

The beginning of 2012 sees the end of the term of our current School Governing Body. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of our Governing Body for their steadfast service over the last three years.

In particular, I would like to thank the parent members of the SGB Executive: **Mrs Sue Dixon**, **Mr John Gillam**, **Mr Chris Upfold** and **Mr Bennie Isaacs**. Along with the other parent members of the SGB, these parents gave up a significant amount of their time to serve VGHS over the last few years. The smooth running of the school would not have been possible without their considerable contribution to the governance of VG. On a personal note, I would like to thank Mrs Dixon, for chairing the SGB so effectively over the last three years and for being so willing to give of her time.

The end of the term of office of our current SGB obviously brings with it the need to elect a new Governing Body for the next three year cycle. These elections will take place during the first term of next year (on a date selected by the government) and I would encourage all our parents to consider standing for a place on the Governing Body. Our Governing Body plays a vital role in managing the school finances, discipline and determining the direction the school takes in a range of fields. Any parents with a financial or legal background would be particularly valuable on the SGB.

2012 FEE ALLEVIATION

Parents must please note that if they wish to apply for Fee Alleviation that this needs to be done as soon as possible next year. Even if parents qualified for some Fee Alleviation this year they must understand that applications need to be done annually. All forms are available from Mrs Strauss and she will guide parents who are applying through the process.

Parents who do apply for Fee Alleviation must please note that if they do

not pay fees, then the cost for their daughter to be at VG must be carried by the other parents. It is also important to note that while Fee Alleviation is available on school fees, there is no Fee Alleviation available for hostel.

A big 'Thank you' must go out to those parents who pay their school fees unfailingly. We understand that the current economic climate is hitting families hard, and really appreciate those parents who are prioritising their daughter's education.

MY SCHOOL CARDS

We appeal to as many people (grannies, grampas, aunts, mothers, fathers, brothers and others) to use the Woolworths *My School Cards*, with VGHS as beneficiary. The money we raise this way goes to the VGHS Benevolent Fund.

MEMORABILIA

VG MEMORABILIA

We have introduced new memorabilia to the school that will be on sale from January next year.

School Blanket: R175
VG Umbrella's: R100

It is not compulsory to buy any of these items. Other items that VG will be looking at over the course of 2012 will be school shopping bags and VG supporter jackets.

THE LAST FEW WORDS

A WORD FROM OUR SCHOOL CAPTAIN

Babalwa Qaba

This is the last stretch and a time to look back and think of all the things we have achieved and gone through during this long and eventful year.

Looking back we see our incredible staff doing more than what is required; grade 9s feeling at home and starting to relax; the grade 10s receiving a major wake up call; the grade 11s stepping it up to the call of duty; and finally the matrics reaching the end point of their schooling career.

Thank you, matrics; you left a huge mark and big shoes to fill, but I am sure we as next year's Grade 12s, are up to the challenge.

Now, VG family, I want you to take time in between your *siestas* and hours of relaxing to reflect and map your way forward for 2012 and know that if you already see yourself in something the universe is already attracting it towards

you. I hope each and every one of you has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Mr Schmidt trying to look fearsome in borrowed fake glasses

... AND A WORD FROM MR SCHMIDT

And so we come to the end of another year at VGHS. There is a saying, often incorrectly attributed as a Chinese curse, which goes as follows: "May you live in interesting times." The idea is that the more interesting things are, the more chaotic things tend to be. Or perhaps the more chaotic things are, the more interesting things tend to be. Either way, this year has been very interesting!

2011 has been filled with some rather major changes which our school has weathered very well. I certainly feel that one of the major assets in the VG skill-set is the ability to adapt, and this year we have adapted to changes in teaching and hostel personnel, Mrs Schoeman's departure, changes in Departmental requirements, among many other smaller changes.

With 2011 almost behind us, we start to look forward to 2012 and wonder what kind of year is in store for us? I think that 2012 is going to be filled with activity and may turn out to be even more interesting than 2011, but only in the best ways possible!

To start with we begin work on two interesting projects: The Victoria Girls' Music School and the Templeton Fitness Centre. Templeton Hall – for those of you scratching your heads trying to work out what place I'm talking about, I'm referring to the 'Gym' – will start to take on aspects of the Fitness Centre we hope that it will become over time. **Ms van der Linde** is driving this project on with great gusto and we look forward to some amazing results. Work has already been done on refurbishing the hall floor and stage and equipment will soon be moving in.

GADRA will be moving out of their VGHS premises at the end of next year and we will be converting that space into the VG Music School – a project we hope to take forward in partnership with our little sisters at Victoria Primary. A lack of classroom space has been a concern for a while now, and so this move comes at the perfect time. Our Music Department has been doing some amazing things over the last few years and it is time for them to develop their own facet of the VG brand that encompasses their enthusiasm, energy and ability. The VG Music School also gives us a chance to forge closer ties with VP over time.

These ties will already start to be developed at the beginning of next year when the lady running the VP Tuckshop, **Mrs Paola Schmidt**, starts to run a tuckshop for the primary school and the high school. The Tuckshop will move to Vicky's and we hope to develop this space over time to be more like a mini Graemian Centre and day-girls' common room. My thanks to **Mrs Abrahams** and the VP staff for accommodating this VP/VG Tuckshop idea, by making changes to their timetable and break times. The Vicky's Tuckshop will be open daily until 14:30 and Mrs Schmidt has some amazing ideas that involve pupils and staff being able to order healthy meals for the entire week.

These major projects obviously go hand-in-hand with smaller, but equally meaningful, projects that will happen or may already have happened about the school in preparation for the start of 2012. The school has been a hive of activity after the end of exams: the tennis/netball courts have been resurfaced; the M.G. Richardson Hall has been repainted and blinds have been installed; parts of the office area have been repainted; the Gym floor has been refurbished; and the main hockey field is being scarified and dressed for the start of next year.

All in all, 2012 looks to be a very interesting time, but in a positive way. The VG community will deal with change the way we always do – very well and with a great deal of dignity.

I hope that everyone – pupils, parents and staff – has a wonderful holiday and spends it relaxing with loved ones. May you all return in 2012 feeling invigorated and ready to take on the challenges of the new year, ready to make 2012 your best year yet.

Regards

Warren Schmidt



Kimberly Prince and Daniel at the PJ Fun Run