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School Web site: <http://www.dihlabengschool.com>



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Farewell to Margaret

In our June 2019 newsletter we wrote that Margaret Grant would be stepping back from leading the team at DCS, as Principal and Andy Woodage, who has been the Intermediate Phase leader for 3 years and class teacher for the last 5 years, would be taking her place. We have had two farewell events to mark Margaret's final term. One was a party with all the children; over 160 of them and some past pupils too. We sang and danced and celebrated all that is good about the past twenty years during which Margaret has developed and led the school. The children presented her with farewell messages in cards they had made and a beautiful painting of the school done by Sam Tshabalala, a very talented artist and one of our parents. She could be in no doubt of the love and appreciation of all the children and staff and of the very considerable impact she has had on many lives of those who live in Clarens. The second event was a lovely evening reception for staff and other invited adults. There were heartfelt and emotional tributes from people around the world, as well as from those closer to home. We presented Margaret with a gift of a garden bench and a beautiful book of photos and tributes from friends. She is now going to have a well earned rest before the next adventure.



Margaret, accompanied by Mohlodi of course, with her leaving gifts of a garden bench, painting and photo book

Other Staff Changes

We are very sorry to be losing two other members of staff. Nicolene Van Wyk, now Nicolene le Roux, and Gavin Northcote. We wish them both success in their new roles and we are very grateful for the time they spent at DCS.

They both commented on their time at DCS.

Gavin Northcote

Gavin Northcote, who has been with us for nearly three years, mainly teaching Grade 7, is an experienced and very talented teacher.

"I have really enjoyed my 3 years at DCS. To be part of such a friendly, supportive and encouraging team was a real bonus and I am going to miss the daily banter and activity that DCS is all about."

Next year I take on a new administrative role in Regions Beyond which is the name of the family of churches across the globe to which Dihlabeng Church belongs".

Nicolene le Roux

Nicolene has been teaching Grade 1. She came to us three years ago as a newly qualified teacher. She got married in September and has finished the year with us before moving up to Johannesburg.

"DCS helped me to grow into the teacher I am today. I felt appreciated at school, especially by the children. I feel much more ready to face the next chapter. Just as Winnie the Pooh puts it; 'How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard'. I will miss DCS dearly".

Nicolene moves on to Crossroads School in Johannesburg which is a special needs remedial school. She will be the Grade 4 class teacher.



Golf Day Fundraiser

On Friday 6th September DCS held a Golf Day fundraising event at the Clarens Golf and Leisure Estate. This was a new venture for the school and we are very grateful for the hard work and organisational skills of Janine Burls, one of our parents, for instigating and managing this event, with a small team of parents. Teams of 4, including a team of DCS children, competed in various golfing events including, 'American Scramble' and 'Closest to the Pin'. Other DCS students were available around the course providing refreshments. We held a silent auction and raffle for donated prizes including, a mid-week break away, paintings, bottles of wine, blankets, restaurant vouchers etc. Every competitor received a prize and our students were also rewarded with gifts.



The group of DCS students who helped host the Golf Day.

One of the 4 DCS children in the team teeing off.



Janine Burls who managed our Golf Day, with Mathandela Nhlapo, our sports coach.



Andy Woodage enjoying his first ever round of golf!

A generous donation from the UK allowed us to book and pay for the Golf Club facilities. Over 40 local businesses contributed with monetary donations, food and drink for refreshments and prizes to be auctioned or raffled. We raised over R40,000.00 (over £2,000.00) for school funds. The event also raised the profile of the school in the community and helped to strengthen relationships with local businesses. This was a hugely successful and enjoyable day and one that we hope will feature again on the calendar of events at DCS in the future.

ELR Target Event - Fundraiser

Late in the final term, over Friday 15th and 16th November, DCS were asked to support the hospitality for an Extreme Long Range target shooting event, held on a local farm. Competitors were shooting at long range targets of up to 3.2kms, approximately 2 miles. One of the prizes was for 'The Two Mile King'. This was an unusual but very interesting event for which the organisers donated just over R4,000.00, after expenses, to the school. Thank you to Helena Roos, one of our parents for involving the school to our benefit. Thank you also to the DCS staff team who spent quite long hours over the weekend helping at and supporting this event.

Sarah Dunmall



Sarah Dunmall with the group of nine children at DCS who are all sponsored by members at Christchurch, Downend, Bristol

Sarah Dunmall, a 22 year old graduate student from Bristol in the UK, has joined us for Term 4 and will also be returning to DCS after the Christmas break, until May 2020. She is a member of Christchurch, Downend, Bristol with whom the school has a long relationship.

Sarah, who wishes to become a Special Needs teacher, has been working mainly in the Foundation Phase, with the younger children but has also gained some teaching experience with the slightly older children in Grade 4. She describes herself as 'just a big kid really' and has related very well to the children and quickly become an integrated part of the staff team. We look forward to working with her again in 2020.



Sarah Dunmall with members of Grade RR in their 'home corner'



Prize Winners in the 'Design a Psalty Costume' competition

Psalty

The character of 'Psalty', the big blue singing songbook, has taught children Christian songs and bible truths for almost 40 years. Psalty originated in the USA, created by Ernie and Debbie Rettino. It quickly became a worldwide phenomenon and was particularly popular in South Africa. Even if you don't know the character, you will probably know many of the songs from Sunday School or school assemblies; songs like, 'If I were a Butterfly', 'Jesus Name Above all Names', 'Arky, Arky' and the 'Wa Wa Song'. There are ten different 'Psalty' performances, plus extra Christmas and compilation albums. If you would like to know more about 'Psalty' go to, www.psalty.com.



The children at DCS performed 'Psalty 1' and 'Psalty 2'. They did two evening performances, in two halves, on Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th August. Gavin Northcote, our Grade 7 teacher, who is well renowned for his musical talents and love of performing, played the character of 'Psalty', not for the first time! He auditioned and coached the children and was responsible for producing the whole performance. Nicolene van Wyk (now Nicolene le Roux) undertook the task of the choreography and the creation of many of the props. We employed the talents and equipment of 'Fanjan Productions' from our nearby town of Bethlehem, for the sound and lighting.



The main cast of 'Psalty' together with Gavin Northcote



Scenes from Psalty 1 and Psalty 2

All the children from Grades 1 to 7 took part. There were two different casts for Psalty 1 and 2, many solo parts and speaking parts and the rest of the children made up the choir on both sides of the stage. The singing, dancing and speaking was all of a fantastically high standard and the children LOVED it! In the weeks prior to the performance and since, Psalty songs have kept breaking out in lessons and at break times. It was such a wonderful experience for the children to perform with lights, proper microphones and with such expert direction from Gavin and Nicolene, we cannot thank them enough. Of course, as usual, whatever we do at DCS is a team effort and everyone got involved in scenery painting, making props and costumes, and rehearsing the songs. Thank you to everyone and to the marvellous people in the UK who helped to raise funds to cover the costs.



The children sang and danced with confidence and sheer enjoyment



We have put together a video and photos of the performance. If you would like a copy please contact the school in SA at: dihlabengschool@intekom.co.za or New Life Church in the UK. Contact details are on the front page of the newsletter.

Trophy Winners 2019

At our Prize Giving evening on October 31st it was lovely to see all the children from Grade 1 to 7 receive certificates for their achievements throughout the year. As well as personal certificates, book prizes were given to 1 boy and 1 girl in each Grade. Trophies and special awards were given to several children, mainly in Grade 7, as seen in the photo (right) and listed below.

From left to right - **Puleng Motlokoa** - Basson Maths Award, IP Top Achiever, Moshoeshe Sesotho Award. **Ntswaki Mofokeng** - Exemplary Behaviour Award. **Nnyalleng Mokoena** - Performing Arts Award, Afrikaans Award, Principal's Prize 2019. **Siyabonga Nhlapo** - Performing Arts Award. **Ntebaleng Simase** - Perseverance Award. **Ben Kgarara** - Perseverance Award. **Nomakhoba Nhlapo** - Care and Kindness Award.

Other awards presented included, **Letlotlo Ntoko Gd 3** - FP Top Achiever. **Palesa Tsiana Gd 3** - FP Sportswoman Award. **Kabelo Mofokeng Gd 2** - FP Sportsman Award. **Katleho Mokoena Gd 5** - IP Sportsman Award. The Oliver Family Award was presented to our **Community Club** members.

We also announced our Head Boy, Head Girl and Deputies for 2020, they are: Head Boy, Bakoena Soko. Head Girl, Iyapa Bushwane (centre).



Deputy Head Boy (left) Tshiu Mokoena. Deputy Head Girl (right), Nkadimeng Mokoena.



Grade 7 Trophy Winners 2019

Book Prize Winners 2019

Grade 1 Boy - Mojalefa Mokoena, Girl - Reitumetse Nzimande
Grade 2 Boy - Morena Mashinini, Girl - Mpho Ofobi
Grade 3 Boy - Siyabonga Nhlapo, Girl - Lucy Woodage
Grade 4 Boy - Alan Tshabalala, Girl - Milla Pienaar
Grade 5 Boy - Katleho Mokoena, Girl - Retshidisitswe Mofokeng
Grade 6 Boy - Bakoena Soko, Girl - Vanessa Chatikobo
Grade 7 Boy - Siyabonga Nhlapo, Girl - Ntebaleng Simase

Pre-School Prize Giving

Grade R and Grade RR, our Pre-school classes held their Prize Giving separately on Wednesday 13th November, during school time. Each child received a certificate and a small prize.



Nativity 2019 - The Sleepy Shepherd

This year's Nativity play, in the last full week of term, was acted entirely by Grade RR and Grade R, complemented by a choir from the other Foundation Phase children in Grades 1, 2 and 3. The story was about a Sleepy Shepherd, played by Teboho Mahlobo, who just couldn't stay awake. He almost missed the most important event in history, the birth of baby Jesus! The children learnt many words and songs and acted with confidence. They took great delight in shouting, 'WAKE UP SLEEPY SHEPHERD!'

At the beginning of the evening we also held a small Festive Market which raised R1,400.00 for school funds.



The full Nativity cast (above)

Angels (left), the Shepherd and Sheep (right).

The 'Sleepy Shepherd', Teboho Mahlobo standing, centre



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