



# Reach for the Stars

## The St. Matthew's Newsletter



Issue: 5

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Welcome to the final edition of Reach for the Stars for 2009. This was our inaugural year and we would like to extend a special thanks to all our readers. We have loved sharing St. Matthew's news with you and look forward to continuing the tradition next year. Enjoy this fifth and final update, good luck on exams and have a safe holiday.

### Lead Article

#### St. Matthew's Housing Project

By: N.O. Ntanjana

A description can be something more than words. The new housing development at St. Matthew's requires more than my writing to describe how beautiful it is and how much it will help the school. This month, I have seen people with great potential turn chaos into a very nice place.

The housing development across the street from Cullen Hostel has long been called Elyuolweni. At the beginning of this term, the houses were a mess and the area was full of trash. Someone's idea, many people's efforts and someone's investment has brought a part of St. Matthew's alive again. Let me tell you about that area before the renovations:

- It had broken windows, doors and roofs
- The walls were not painted and even falling down in some places
- The houses had been vandalized and were being used by animals as homes
- The surrounding grounds were overgrown with thorn bushes and the place was a mess



I hope that everyone has been able to see the improvements but if you haven't, let me tell you!

- The outsides of the houses look great with repaired walls, roofs, and new paint
- There is water running to each house and the bathrooms are redone
- The grounds are now fenced and cleared, making the development look like a community
- New trees have been planted for the future and electricity is currently being run to all the houses

These houses were redone for two purposes. First, to help house students during the hostel renovations scheduled for 2010. Second, for current and future use by teachers so they can be more involved with us as students. As for me, I really appreciate everything that has been done not only in Elyuolweni, but for the whole school. Thanks to the Calabar Foundation, Ben, Mr. Ade, and the construction team.



## The English Fever

By: Mr. Adabla (St. Matthew's English teacher)

Have you ever wondered why non-native English speakers have trouble with the language? Let us face it: English is so complicated that it is often ironic trying to teach the rules of the language. Through my study of the language, I have hilariously come to realize that there is no egg in an eggplant nor pine or apple in the pineapple. I went further in my research and deduced that English muffins were not invented in England or French Fries in France.

Sometimes, we take English for granted but if we examine its paradoxes, we will find out that quicksand will take you down rather slowly. Have you noticed that boxing rings are squares and a Guinea Pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig?

If writers write, how come fingers don't fing? Yet this is the English we yearn to study. If the English man is so faithful to his language, why do people recite a play yet play at a recital? Why do people park on a driveway and drive on parkways? Frankly speaking, if the plural of tooth is teeth, shouldn't the plural of booth be beeth? If the teacher taught, why didn't the preacher praught? If vegetarians eat vegetables, what the heck does a humanitarian eat? You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language where a house can burn up as it burns down and a language in which you fill in a form by filling it out. How is a bell only heard when it goes off?

I have come to realize that English reflects the creativity of the human race, which of course is not a race at all. That is why the stars are visible when they are out but when the lights are out, they cannot be seen. I use this medium to wish all learners of the mighty English language good luck in using it to communicate and further themselves. I encourage you to be as creative as possible in the study of the English language.

*The Newsletter Club want to wish all students good luck on exams and a safe holiday. See you next year!!!*

## St. Matthew's Matric Farewell

By: Nambita Ngobe

While many South Africans celebrate Heritage day on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September, the grade 12 learners at St. Matthew's used this opportunity to have their farewell. This annual function took place in Taberner Hall with many teachers and parents honouring the event with their presence.

The hall looked beautiful decorated in pink and white. The ladies looked stunning with maroon being the colour of the day. The grade 12s were given permission to bring a date from outside and this was a nice gesture by the school. The keynote address was a powerful speech based on the quote "Your attitude determines your altitude". On top of all this, there was some delicious food for the learners.

I would like to encourage everyone who is not planning to attend their matric farewell to re-think this decision. This event is a once in a lifetime experience and was unforgettable in 2009!



## Basketball Festival

By: Dumokazi Makeleni

CONGRATULATIONS! On Saturday October 17<sup>th</sup>, the St. Matthew's basketball team travelled to Grahamstown for the St. Andrew's Basketball Festival. The teams began training with Joe 5 weeks before the match and were keen to have the chance to play. Teams travelled from all over the Eastern Cape to attend the Festival and a thank you goes to Tim Barnard from St. Andrew's for inviting St. Matthew's and hosting the event.

Despite playing against accomplished teams who have been practicing together for years, the girls managed to win two games and the boys won one. More importantly, they represented the school with great attitudes and discipline the whole weekend. For some of the players, it was their first trip to Grahamstown and they were thankful for the chance to go.

Special thanks go to Joe for coaching both teams and for putting in so much time for the team. We hope that when he leaves, the practices can continue, the players keep improving and the basketball team will compete in more matches. We are proud of the players that represented the school. Keep up the good work.



# **My stay at St Matthew's**

By: Joe Vettiger

Arriving at St. Matthew's over three months ago, I had no idea what to expect. I had never seen a photo of the school or even seen on a map where I was headed. To be honest I was a very lazy person in some ways. I didn't really work hard in school and just made sure I was not falling below the average student. That doesn't mean that I wasn't a good student, but I could have performed a lot better.

In other ways I was the complete opposite of lazy. For one of my major school projects I decided to train for the Berlin Marathon (a 42 km race). This meant that for six months I had to be disciplined with regular training, healthy eating and a very controlled lifestyle. I stayed dedicated through the training and was able to finish the race. This experience showed me that I am capable of doing a lot more than I had thought I was. I just needed something to be dedicated to in order to work hard.

During my stay in the Eastern Cape I have had experiences that have changed me as a person in a lot of ways. More important though is that I have learned about life. I learned that it is important to be disciplined and respectful. Respectful towards your family, friends and the people around you. Respectful towards your school and the education they offer you and respectful towards nature. Much like myself when I was in school, I see many students just coasting through their studies with no real direction. I would encourage you to learn from my mistakes and set a goal for yourself. When you are working towards a specific purpose, it is much easier to be dedicated and see it through to the end.

When I was still at school, I didn't appreciate the education that was given me. Education is the most important thing you can do. Why? It is the foundation on which you can build your future. Education is not simply the facts that you learn in the classroom. It is the constant observations you make about the world around you and how each person recognizes how to function productively with others. Every hour that a person is awake, he/she learns something. I would encourage you to remember this no matter what situation you are faced with.

This is something I had not realised when I was still in school. That is why I want to send you this message to realise that it is not too late to change your perspective about life. Be curious about life and the world around you. Do not limit yourself by accepting the average. The world is a fascinating place to be a part of if only we can continue learning. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of St. Matthew's and hopefully we can all learn from each other for the rest of the year.



# The World Around Us

By: Ben Pauluhn

Over the past two weeks, some members of the St. Matthew's President's Award program have been dedicating their afternoons to beautifying the Geography room. They have been painting a map of Africa with each country and its flag represented. While this is a worthwhile project that uplifts the school and teaches the girls how to paint, there is a deeper message that we must take from this mural.

Where did our African borders come from? Why is there sometimes hate for people just because they are from a different country? Let us remember something, all country borders were drawn by people. It has only been in recent history that there even was a South Africa, Kenya or Botswana. Therefore, does it make sense to negatively judge someone just because they are from a different piece of land than we are?

I encourage all students to think about their attitude toward others and where our hearts lie. We should show kindness and respect to each other no matter where our original home is. By helping and supporting each other, everyone can be proud of where they come from yet live prosperously and peacefully with anyone in the world. If you have the chance, go by the Geography room and see the great work your fellow students have done.



# Hard Work is the Way to Success

By: Nasiphi Nkoloti

The journey towards self-acceptance and self-love must begin with self-examination. Until you take this journey of reflection, it is almost impossible to grow in life. Although this may be a struggle, it can be a way to focus on the work you want to do and it will likely reveal some inner resources you didn't know you have.

Life is a great ride that needs people who know what they want and people who know where they are going. It is not about just living for the sake of surviving but living for the sake of positively changing your world. It is not a matter of faking enjoyment of life, rather understanding your life and relating to other people.

A successful life needs passion. Having passion for what you want is the best thing. Do not be discouraged by the difficulties of life, they are there to make you strong and see whether you are truly committed to what you are doing. Leaders call this training. You will never know what you can achieve until you try. When you really want something, work for it, fight for your dreams, goals and ambitions.

All the role models we see did not just get there. Successful parents, teachers and other leaders fought for their dreams and ambitions and got to where they are through hard work. Tell yourself that you are your own leader and that you know where you want to go. In my opinion, success is 99% hard work and 1% intelligence. If you commit yourself to your goals and are passionate about your work, you will be happy with the results. May you work as hard as you can and God bless.

## Exam Time: Get Rid of the Fear in You

By: Dumokazi Makeleni

It is now time for exams. In order for us to succeed, we must get rid of the fear in us. This is not a time to learn new things but to apply the ones we already know. If we are fearful of what is to come, it can enslave our mind, body and spirit. I want us to walk through fear and overcome uncertainty and danger. I want us to think critically because this is not a time to play. Fear must be placed aside, clearing room for us to succeed.

I was inspired by someone who said "courage is not the absence of fear but the ability to resist fear: the ability to bear pain." We too can resist fear by approaching our studies with confidence and applying what we already know. Be brave and tell yourself you can do it because the doors of success

are wide open. For the grade 12s, do not fear the future. Now is the time to determine whether you step to the next level. I suggest we all stick to our books and let everything else go. Good luck, especially to the grade 12s.

## Love Life Games

By: Zikhona Madasi

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, St. Matthew's was one of the schools invited to participate in the Love Life Games in Keiskammahoek. The learners that were chosen participated in all sport codes offered. Some of the students who did not go to the games were involved in a debate that was also held in Keiskammahoek.

Everyone who represented the school made us proud. As their colleagues, we saw how they carried themselves both on and off the field and were very excited to be from the same school. We

have so much talent here at St. Matthew's and we must continue working to develop it more and more. Big ups to those who participated and keep up the great work.

**\*\*As promised, here are some pictures from the President's Award hike with St. Andrew's on September 19<sup>th</sup>.**

