



Matters of Principal

One of the highlights of my job is the opportunity I get to interview prospective young Stanfordsians. I host them in my office trying to initiate relatively informal chat in what I hope is a comfortable non-threatening setting. One of the questions that I have traditionally asked is "Do you read the news" and if so "what's happening in the world?" I honestly believe that knowing what's going on in the world is essential; if not the world, then certainly in our own country! More recently, however, I'm not so sure about this question. I try to read the news every morning, I try and visit a number of different sources, usually scanning through News24, BBC News and then the Guardian. More often than not I come away disturbed by the extent of depressing news, corruption, deviant behaviour, mudslinging between politicians and countless examples of poor leadership, a lack of accountability and very few examples of positive role models. For me, most difficult to digest is that I have no real idea as to the validity and authenticity of the news I'm reading.

Access to information and the ability to spread unsanctioned, poorly researched and unverified news on a multitude of platforms has led to a dramatic increase in fake news and a free space for conspiracy theorists to operate. I was recently sent an article published in the Guardian Newspaper which stated that, according to The Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH) *(the fact that there is an organization with this title is a cause for concern... and it has an acronym!)* 65% of all anti-vaccination misinformation has been spread by just 12 people who have been nicknamed the disinfor-

"When fake news isn't completely fabricated, it typically distorts real-world information by tweaking or contorting it, mixing it with true information, and highlighting its most sensational and emotional elements. It then scales rapidly on social media and spreads faster than our ability to verify or debunk it. Once it spreads, it's hard to put back in the bottle and even harder to clean up, even with a healthy dose of the truth."

— Sinan Aral

mation dozen".

This is just one example of how social media can be manipulated and used in the spread of fake news. It is relatively easy to remove these people from various social media platforms but this would be tantamount to playing a game of whack-a-mole, as you remove one conspiracy theorist another pops up elsewhere.

So what is the solution? The Taiwanese government have introduced a term called "nerd immunity" and maintain that governments should be investing in education so that people have the skills to identify fake news. Finland has been rated as the nation most resistant to fake news. They have a module of media literacy included in their curriculum. Pupils learn critical thinking skills required to navigate the modern information ecosystem. The module includes analysing how easy it is to manipulate stats to tell the story you want them to tell, to distinguish satire from conspiracy theory and to look at how certain images are used in propaganda. An interesting concept and one definitely worth exploring. We all certainly need to develop our digital literacy skills and this is yet another space that we as a school need to grow into.

God Bless

STAFF PROFILES



Mrs Emma Thompson

- 1 What subjects do you teach?
Senior English.
- 2 What year did you start working at the school?
2002 and then again 2014.
- 3 What type of music are you in to? My children are trying to expand my repertoire...so I have no idea what I am listening to!
- 4 Tell us something we don't know about you...
I am much taller than I look...in my head.
- 5 What's your favourite thing to do in downtime?
Reading, roses, running and family.
- 6 Name one thing on your bucket list...
To live in Florence for a year.

- 7 Does pineapple belong on pizza?
Not really.
- 8 Tea  OR Coffee?  Coffeeeeeeeee!
- 9 iOS OR Android?
- 10 Melkart OR Malva Pudding? Both...all puddings plus chocolate.
- 11 Cups in the cupboard: Right side up  OR upside down? 
- 12 Beach  OR Mountains? 
- 13 Dogs  OR Cats?  Dogs...lots.

MEET THE CLASS OF 2021

NKHENSANI KHOSA
- HEAD OF LAKESIDE

1 What are your hopes for Stanford Lake College as you lead the school in the year ahead?

I continue to strive for a more accepting and diverse student body; for pupils to feel like they are always taken seriously and can confidently voice their opinions on pertinent matters and mostly, strive for greater unity.

2 What is your proudest accomplishment?

I would be not being the same person as I was when I walked into this school 4 years ago and knowing that I've grown as an individual. But also, a bit of a shallow one, being able to say I was a prefect in both primary and high school.

3 Share a memorable moment during your time at Stanford Lake College...

It was Grade 10 Zim tour, we were on a game drive and it was just before sunset. My friends and I were singing, making jokes and laughing and we watched the sunset from the horizon and saw antelope and her calf, drinking from the water source as the sun went down. It was just an unforgettable moment.

4 What are your hobbies?

Reading, journaling, socialising, writing letters and listening to music.

5 If you could share a meal with any 4 individuals, living or dead, who would they be?

Rupi Kaur, Lupita Nyong'o, Malcolm X and Ellen Page.

6 What's your favourite movie?

Divergent or Beautiful Creatures.

7 What's the most daring thing you've ever done?

Climbing into a snake's cage, specifically an anaconda's, for my job shadow assignment.

8 If you had to describe yourself as an animal, which one would it be?

A giraffe.

9 Where do you see yourself in five years?

I see myself being a 23-year-old, just getting out of university, taking time off before the search of a steady, well-paying job. To also travel around the world, open up a small business like a coffee shop and doing something adventurous like skydiving. Even if it seems mundane, it can still be inspiring.



TALKING LEADERSHIP WITH ROUND SQUARE

by Josh Fairhead

On the 8th of April Mr Vollgraaff and the four Matric heads of school attended a virtual Round Square conference, through the Zoom platform. The conference was hosted by Chadwick International School in South Korea, themed on sharing a vision of leadership based on our experiences through the COVID-19 pandemic. Well before the conference, each delegate school (30 in total, in 15 different countries) was sent instructions to create a keynote presentation in which we chat about our own experiences during the pandemic that have affected our views of leadership, or taught us anything about our approach to leadership. The 3 best presentations, chosen by Round Square, were presented by their creators to the rest of the delegates, followed by baraza group discussions of the insights we gained from each presentation. Between each keynote we were exposed to K-pop, a genre of music and dance originating in South Korea, through one of the students of Chadwick International providing recorded dancing lessons. Overall, it was an extremely insightful gathering, which meaningfully impacted every delegate in their views on the nature of leadership.



Ramadan
Mubarak

To all of our Muslim families.



BALEGA, "BALEGA"!

By Jarryd Gosling

Last Saturday my Adventure Racing team, "Balega", and I competed in the first of the ARWS Africa Series races in Bronkhorstspuit. A challenging 120km course, with a few complex navigation areas, made for a rough race. Thankfully we managed to secure a 4th place, both overall and in the four person mixed category. I'm looking forward to the next race which will be in Swellendam on the 8th of May.

SNAP SHOT

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SPORTS IN BRIEF

ATHLETICS

Congratulations to Mada Buliani who represented Limpopo at the ASA Twizza U/18 and U/20 Track & Field Championships in Paarl recently. He ran in the 400m race and came fourth in his heat, which unfortunately meant he did not qualify for the semi-finals but does mean that he is among the top 15 school going 400m runners in the country.

He also represented the province in the 4 x 400m relay and this team came in fifth. Well done, Mada.

On Saturday 10th April, Gunther Katzke participated in the Junior XCO World Series hosted by Rock & Rut MTB Club at IJG trails, in Windhoek, Namibia. This gruelling 6 lap race covered 25km of serious mountain terrain, climbing almost 800m of vertical ascents and treacherous downhill descents. This all done at an altitude of 1900 metres above sea level in 30+ degrees heat. The competition was tough, but, with grit and perseverance, Gunther managed to secure a podium in third position and gain some valuable UCI points.

He will be competing in the SA Cup XCO #3, which is also a junior world serious event, in Bloemendal, Cape Town this weekend. Good luck, Gunther!



MOUNTAIN BIKING

FLY FISHING

Congratulations to Lloyd Lombard, Jason Freestone, Kade Thompson and Luke Fairhead who have been selected for the **Senior A** Limpopo fly-fishing team! They will compete in the 2021 South African Fly-Fishing Association Senior A-Nationals event in Kamberg, KZN on 19 to 25 April 2021. They will be joined in their team by local senior fisherman, Albert Smith. Good luck, lads.

SWIMMING

Well done to Jenny Zhang who competed in the National Swimming Championships at the end of March. For her 200 IM event, she first ranked 11th but after she swam the heats, she ranked 8th. When she swam in the finals, she positioned 5th with an improvement of 3 seconds and with this event she also passed the qualifying time. For the 200m free, 200m back and 200m IM she passed all the qualifying times. Well done, Jenny.



Part One - by Mr Haarhoff

From 23 March till 29 March the Grade 9 students embarked on their first expedition of the year - 'In the Footsteps of Legends'. The expedition consists of 3 and a half days of hiking, starting at Sekororo and finishing in Penge. Day 1 started off with a steep and slippery climb to the first break. It didn't get much better from there, as the next section in the bush had to get cut open as the trail was completely overgrown after the recent heavy rain. The Grade 9s were taken to some of the most beautiful and interesting locations South Africa has to offer, including the Christmas Plateau, our camp for day 1. The camp fell silent fairly quickly with all the weary souls enjoying the rest.

Day 2 greeted us with wet and misty weather. Packing up wet tents is always fun! The first 700m of the day took us just over two hours to complete and we ascended almost 300m in that time! After a long rest at the top, we walked around to the Louis Trichardt Memorial Plate for a quick photo before we passed along the sites where people, still to this day, are digging to find the mythical Kruger millions, where Paul Kruger is believed to have buried millions of Kruger Rands before his exile.

By now the mist had lifted and the warm sun greeted us as we descended to our camp - Louis Fontein, aptly named after the fountain that flows out of the mountain at the camp. It was a very gusty evening and we were met with more rain! Day 3 was new to us all as we took on a new route. Due to lack of water availability we decided to hike a new route - with ample fresh water at the bottom - and a beautiful new campsite next to the Olifants River. Big thanks go to Joseph at Dimakatso Tropical Resort in Mankel for the beautiful camp site. The morning sunshine greeted us on the last day of the hike. The group was very excited, not just because it was the last day of hiking, but because of the 'shop' that was waiting in Penge!

The group covered the section to Penge in no time and soon the shop was cleaned out of almost all its stock. As we arrived at the shop we expected to see the dry bags waiting for us and the boats ready at the river. However, this was not the case! We received another curveball, only once cell-phone signal was restored in the village... the vehicle bringing the boats from Hazyview has broken down! This meant that we spent an extra 6 hours in Penge and finally got on the river at about 15:30. We normally start our river section at 13:00 at the latest, so we had some work left to do so that we could make camp before dark - if at all!

part two on the next page...

SNAP SHOT

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Part Two - by Mrs Coetzee

Be prepared. Expect the unexpected. Think outside the box.

As a staff member going on Trek, these are the things you have to be ready to do! We left Tzaneen bright and early on Friday 26th March to join the staff and pupils who had just completed the walking section of the Trek. Little did we know that we would be thrown into full "Trek mode" way of thinking very early on. We were blissfully bumbling along on our way to Penge when we received a call from Mr Petrus Khumalo, our School Driver, telling us that the Mahindra bakkie, towing the boats that we had hired from Hazyview, had broken down.

Always expect the unexpected!

Petrus wasn't too familiar with the area and from his description, we understood that he was between Ohrigstad and Graskop. He wasn't. Eventually, after a detour that lasted about three hours and the world's quickest tour of the Panorama Route, we saw the Mahindra on the horizon! The trailer was quickly hitched to the bus and all the equipment that had been so carefully loaded into the back of the bakkie was now shoved into every corner of the Quantum. After a detour of over 150km, we were on our way to Penge!

At this point, we had been unsuccessful in making contact with Mr Haarhoff and the rest of the group. We all envisaged him having paced a trench out of the roads of Penge – worrying frantically about where we were.

Finally, we reached Penge and saw relief over the faces of the staff and pupils. For us, it felt like we had done an entire expedition already! Only when we saw the disheveled looking staff and pupils, after four days of hiking, did we realise that actually, we were still fresh! Fresh and ready to tackle the water. We were finally in the rafts by 15:30 and had to paddle, paddle, paddle to reach camp before nightfall.

The next three days went by in a flash and the details of the water section can be read in reports written in previous years. I'd like to focus on what made this Trek so special, for me, as a member of staff.

In the moment, there are so many gripes and moans.

"Ma'am, I'm getting blisters on my hands from paddling."

"Ma'am, I'm sunburnt."

"Ma'am, when the boat tipped over in the last rapid, my snacks got wet and now I don't have anything to eat."

In the moment, the pupils love to hate Trek. I guess it is human nature to see the negatives before the positives a lot of the time. As a staff member, you shrug off the little gripes, knowing that at some point, they will be struck with the realisation of exactly what it is that we are experiencing and how unbelievably privileged we are to partake in these adventures. It might not happen during the expedition, but it will certainly happen when they get home and reflect.

It is certain moments that you witness, chuckle to yourself and think, "Yeah, sure, you're really hating every moment of this."

Watching a pupil stop paddling for a few seconds and lean back in the boat, close their eyes, and soak in the morning sun with a deep sigh of contentment.

Overhearing an exchange of conversation or a joke being shared and seeing a group of pupils burst into hysterical laughter. Knowing that you just witnessed a moment that will be remembered and laughed about for years to come.

Witnessing the student at the front of the boat stare up at the mountains and cliff edges, pointing out a Verreaux's Eagle soaring above them to their friend at the back.

Seeing the look of achievement and pride fall over a student's face as they successfully swim themselves out of a rapid. That moment when they look at the water they just conquered and think "I just did that. Me!"

Seeing their utter joy as they bounced over the white waters of "Rollercoaster".

These are the moments that they will take away with them forever. The blisters, the sunburn and the soggy snacks will soon be but a distant memory. This is why we do what we do.