



High School for Girls

T: 033 846 2548/80 | W: [www.epworth.co.za](http://www.epworth.co.za) | E: [marketing@epworth.co.za](mailto:marketing@epworth.co.za)

Term 3 2020, edition 2

## From the Head of School's Desk



Over the past few years, the subject of Epworth's competitive house names and their place in post-Apartheid South Africa has been raised in a number of forums by different stakeholder groups.

The four houses, Athlone, Buxton, Rhodes and Somerset, which were introduced by Miss ES Church, one of the early Epworth principals, in 1926, were named after prominent, white males imported from Britain. Any connection to Epworth is not apparent and it seems that Miss Church chose these names because they resonated with her and the era in which she lived.

In 2019, the question of changing Epworth's house names was brought to the attention of the school's Transformation, Diversity and Inclusivity (TDI) Task Team, which comprises representatives of the Board, Trust,

management, the staff and pupil body and the Epworthians. As a school that values inclusivity and belonging, embraces diversity and has the courage to live counter-culturally, the TDI Task Team felt that the house names were not in keeping with this ethos and with Epworth's fundamental values.

Following a thoughtful period of debate and reflection, it was agreed to survey current pupils (Grades 5 to 12), staff, Epworthians, Board and Trust members concerning the re-naming of our competitive houses. A survey was conducted in January of this year and the results were in favour of changing the house names. Forty-four percent of the survey respondents agreed to the name change, 39 percent disagreed, and 18 percent were undecided.

The Board and the school management have decided to endorse the survey results and, guided by the Naming Committee and the TDI Task Team and Journey Manager, who is still to be appointed, they will plan a process for generating new house names that reflect the true spirit of contemporary Epworth. In the interim, we will remove the current house names and each house will be known by its colour: red, green, yellow and blue.

While many members of the Epworth community will embrace the decision to change the house names, we respectfully acknowledge that others, especially some of our Epworthians, may feel aggrieved and disappointed by it. The school assures those for whom the house names hold a special memory, that its intention is not to "edit" or attempt to rewrite history. These original house names will still have a place in the annals of Epworth.

As we move forward, we are excited about the opportunity this "name change" project provides for us to nurture Afrocentrism and become more relevant and inclusive of our diverse pupil body. We must continue to create an educational environment in which all our pupils feel respected and empowered.

I trust you will support us as we proceed with this initiative, knowing that we have the best interests of the school at heart and remain committed to our motto of faith, compassion and courage, which has been a powerful guiding light throughout our history.

**Ms Laura Bekker**



## Epworth appoints new leadership

Epworth has named a collective whole school leadership team, along with a new Principal of the High School, to replace current Head of School, Ms Laura Bekker, who will be retiring at the end of the year.

Mrs Tracey Munro, current High School Deputy Head (Academics) has been appointed Principal of the High School. Mrs Munro, who joined Epworth in 1998 as a mathematics and physical sciences teacher, holds a BSc and HDE from the University of the Witwatersrand and a MSc from the University of Notre Dame (USA). Her extensive academic and leadership experience, coupled with the popularity she enjoys among the pupils, will stand her in good stead. She will be joined by the existing Principal of the Preparatory School, Mr Reynard White, and the school's Business Manager, Mr Emwee Zeelie, to form the new team that will assume leadership of the school from 2021.

Each member of the newly formed School Executive will continue to retain responsibility for their respective roles, but together they will manage decisions and responsibilities of a whole school nature. They will continue to uphold Epworth's 122-year heritage and will commit to ensuring Epworth's sustainable future.



## Prestigious environmental award for Epworth

Epworth is the proud recipient of a Platinum 2 Decade Award from the Wildlife and Environmental Society of South Africa (WESSA) for its dedication to, and involvement in, environmental activities for 2019. This award celebrates Epworth's 17th year as an Eco School and is testament to its sustained commitment to everything environmental.





## Support for "Thursdays in Black"



During the month of August, pupils and staff joined the global "Thursdays in Black" campaign, which stands against gender-based violence and in solidarity with women who have fallen victim to this savagery. The pupils felt so passionately about this movement that they asked if they could continue wearing black on Thursdays for the rest of the term.

### The "Thursdays in Black" pledge

I commit to: Thursdays in Black...In solidarity...In protest...In mourning...For awareness...and In hope.

## Whole school joins in on run/walk challenge



What started out as a virtual run/walk to replace the annual Prep School sports day, turned into a whole school one-hour Saturday challenge that encouraged everyone to venture outdoors, get some exercise, and win points for their school house. Somerset accumulated the most points and an impressive 1559.34 km was covered by all participants.



Happy Secretary's Day



Women's Month Tea



## Happy Spring Day, Ms Bekker



The advent of spring provided a wonderful opportunity for the Grade 12s to honour Ms Bekker.



They visited her home on campus and surprised her with a beautiful bunch of spring flowers.



## Honouring an Epworth legend

The school paid tribute to former Epworth sports coach, Mrs Freda Waygood, on her 94th birthday.

Although Mrs Waygood retired in 2019 after 32 years at Epworth, she still holds a special place in our hearts. Sports coach, Ms Faye Cooper, presented her with flowers and a cake on behalf of the whole school.



## Exploring the school of tomorrow



Mrs Tracey Munro featured as a panelist on a Dr Craig Blewitt webinar, "Behind the Scenes: Reimagining Education", which explored thoughts around the school of tomorrow and what it will look like.

"It was very tempting to decline the invitation to participate in the webinar; it was short notice and I am very camera shy. Despite my reservations, it was the perfect opportunity to role model seizing opportunities and to share the great way that the Epworth academic staff have adapted to online teaching during our learn-at-home programme and with blended learning now that we are back at school. It was a privilege to be hosted by Craig and to share the webinar presentation space with Stephen Ireland from Thomas More College." said Mrs Munro. Please click [here](#) to view a podcast of the webinar.



## Out-of-the-box thinking for practical exams

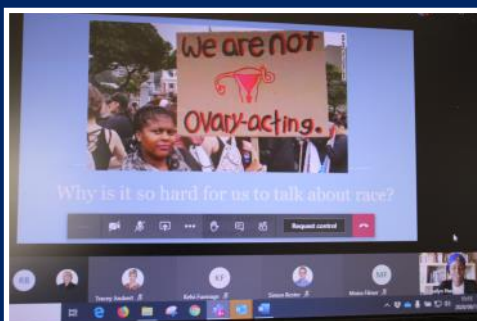


Without access to the laboratories due to the reassignment of venues for Covid-19 protocol reasons, the Life Sciences teachers were forced to think out of their box for the practical exams. They came up with an in-the-box solution! They loaded the required apparatus into transparent boxes four days prior to a prac exam and placed them on trolleys. On the day of the exam, each pupil claimed a box, completed their exam and placed everything back into their box. Great thinking by the teachers!

## Unpacking race and bias



Lovelyn Nwadeyi, an expert in social justice, talked to the pupils at an assembly about why it is so hard for us to talk about race. She provided some valuable strategies for incorporating social justice practices and conversations into our daily lives.



## Grade 8 reading challenge



Librarian, Mrs Elise Morton, initiated a Grade 8 reading challenge that is designed to encourage reading across a wide genre of books. Those who read the most books will receive prizes at the end of the year. The pupils were treated to muffins and hot chocolate at a book club meeting towards the end of the term.





## Grade 8 instrumental programme returns to the classroom

Although the Grade 8s continued with an online instrumental programme during the lockdown, this term they were finally able to resume their activities in the classroom, masks and all! This innovative programme sees all the Grade 8s learning voice, clarinet or keyboard skills.



## Boarders treated to entertaining events

Boarding came up with some creative events for the Grade 8s and 12s as they were unable to enjoy their regular sit-down, formal boarder dinners in the WJ Williams Centre due to it being utilised as an art room.



Grade 12 cocktail party in the Performing Arts Centre quad



Grade 8 braai and bingo evening in MPC1



## Flashmob fun



To generate material for the finale of the Experidance virtual performance, the dance girls staged a flashmob at teatime and encouraged all the girls to participate.

## Grade 10 Vogue Programme reaches out to communities



As part of the Vogue Programme, the Grade 10s supported the Thandanani Children's Foundation "meals in a jar" project, which benefits vulnerable families. The whole school collected one-litre bottles and jars which the Grade 9's filled with rice, soup mix, lentils, stock cubes and soup powder, providing meals for families of four.



With it being women's month, the pupils also chose to support the Jes Foord Handbag Project that collects new and used handbags containing toiletries and care items, which are given to rape victims after the initial reporting process. The Epworth community donated handbags and the Grade 10s filled them with goodies ranging from tissues and underwear to deodorant and toothpaste. They packed over 60 bags that will be distributed by the Jes Foord Foundation to Thuthuzela Centres, Rape Crisis Centres and NPA Courts.



## Jes Foord visits Epworth



The Grade 10s had an opportunity to listen to rape survivor, Jes Foord, from the Jes Foord Foundation, a non-profit organisation that addresses the prevalence of rape in our society by educating, creating awareness and changing attitudes. They also handed over the packed handbags, including an extra 200 packs of sanitary pads sourced by



the school's Interact Committee, and a set of letters and cards they created especially for the bags.

## Interact contributes to community initiatives

Earlier this year, our 2020 Interact team collected funds for the Full Stop campaign. However, due to Covid-19, we were forced to re-look at all our community projects and decided to support the following three initiatives:

- ◆ Full Stop campaign: assisted Georgetown High School girls with sanitary pads
- ◆ Jes Foord Handbag project
- ◆ The GenerationWe dignity pad drive

The Interact committee is indebted to SPAR head office and Greendale SuperSpar for their support and for working alongside Epworth in these community initiatives.



## Confirmation celebrates Christian journey



For eight of our Grade 11 pupils, Term 3 ended in an especially meaningful way as they, and their close family and friends, gathered in the Chapel for their Confirmation service. Despite having to follow all Covid-19 protocols, it was a time of deep connection, sharing and celebration as we witnessed their bold declaration of faith in Jesus. These words from Colossians 1 formed part of our prayer for them (and for us all): "We pray that you'll have the strength to stick it out over the long haul—not the grim strength of gritting your teeth, but the glory-strength God gives. It is the strength that endures the unendurable and spills over into joy, thanking the Father who makes us strong enough to take part in everything bright and beautiful that he has for us."





## Achievements

### Canoe polo and artistic swimming



Chloe Dundas-Starr received her U21 and senior KZN colours for canoe polo and she was also selected to the National Artistic Open Squad for 2020/2021. Members will be selected from this squad to train for next year's Olympic Games.

### Music



Talented sisters, Alida (piano) and Marika (recorder) Esterhuizen were selected for the Best of the South African Society of Music Teachers' (SASMT) Eisteddfod virtual concerts this year. Alida also received a merit certificate for solo piano at the 2020 Bethlehem Eisteddfod.

### Debating



Faye Crawford, Sibongakonke Malinga and Kathleen Munro have been selected for the KZN Provincial Debating squad. They have been participating in a debating programme and will continue with online training. It is still uncertain as to whether or not a national tournament will take place this year. Former Epworth pupils Shaniaé Maharaj and Sunusha Moodley are coaches for the squad.

The EPiC Business Directory is a school initiative to support members of the Epworth community who own or partner in businesses. We encourage you to peruse the different categories and patronise the services/products that our talented community has to offer.

If you are a member of the Epworth community and would like to advertise your business in this directory, please click on the EPiC logo to access the registration form.

