



Headmaster / Skoolhoof: David Schenck

Dear Parents and Friends of Parel Vallei

Rain, glorious rain! How wonderful it is to have had a normal start to winter with several cold fronts already having made landfall in the Cape. Initial reports indicate that the major dams are now starting to fill up and ground water levels have risen. Fantastic news BUT we are not out of the woods yet. In fact, I do not think we should ever consider Cape Town as “out of the woods” again, as global weather patterns are changing and we do not know what the future holds. The best time to save water is when we have it!

Parel Vallei continues to play its part in saving water in the Western Cape. Several ablution facilities will be upgraded during the June/July break with provisions being made for connections to non-potable water sources to flush toilets. The upgrading of these facilities is going to be linked to a move in the school to make the children take more responsibility for what they have. It is sad for me to have to report that a very small number of children do not respect communal property and inconvenience others through their misbehaviour. I am referring to isolated incidents of vandalism and graffiti that cost the school time and money, and has NO PLACE at Parel Vallei. Please speak to your child/children whenever you get the chance and encourage them to speak out if they encounter such behaviour. I want to stamp it out. I have visited many schools this year and found several with bathrooms in pristine condition – we can do it too!

We are now at the end of the mid-year exam session and you will be in a position to view the mid-year report. Please take time to discuss the results with your child and do not hesitate to contact the school if you need help. Parel Vallei strives for excellence in all we do but sometimes that converts into pressure that can inhibit performance. That pressure can come from the parent, teacher or the child, themselves. It is vital that we monitor that pressure and realise that we cannot all be at the top of the class. It is more important to set realistic goals and build self-esteem than to criticise through comparison.

Last term’s newsletter was released after I had left for Holland. Wow! what a trip.

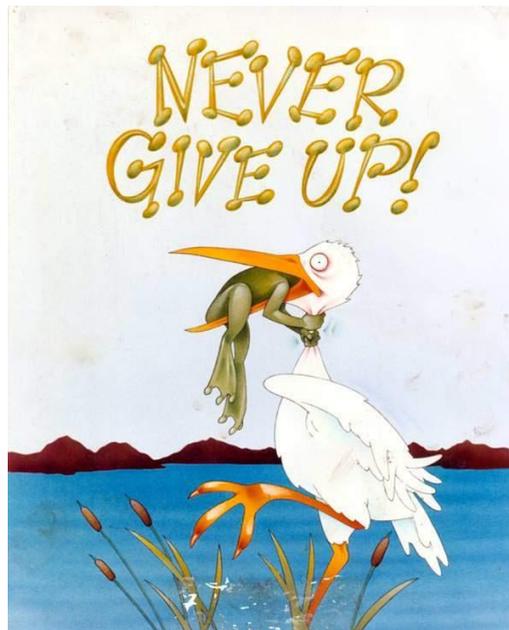


I took this photo at the American WWII memorial in the village of Margraten outside Maastricht. There are 8300 graves of American soldiers; chilling stuff.

The tour was absolutely fantastic. Our children were true ambassadors for PV and South Africa. I even ate smoked Eel. Delicious!



The June/July holiday is not only the middle of the academic year but it is also the middle of the winter sports season and I would like to pause here for a moment and reflect. It would be true to say that we are becoming more and more competitive at a higher level and with that comes stronger competition and mixed results. Some we win, some we learn from BUT we must NEVER GIVE UP!



It is ALWAYS too early to quit! It was amazing to watch the tennis players at the French Open recently and to see who gave up and who fought to the end. Some of the matches turned on a single point. Kevin Anderson had match points in the third and fourth sets only to end up losing in the end because Schwartzman NEVER gave up! Credit is not in whether we win or lose but it is in how we play the game. If you constantly play/work to the best of your ability, you **will** one day triumph over life's adversities. Do not moan or lay blame elsewhere (even if you feel you have a case) but rather grow strong from your experiences. Steel cannot hold an edge unless it has been tempered in a hot furnace and then it has to be beaten into shape with a hammer. We are the steel and life is the furnace and often the hammer. If you back down when the going gets hot, then you will struggle to hold an "edge".



Parents, in the last newsletter I spoke of the helicopter and lawnmower parents. Do not protect your child from those experiences that, although not always fair, help give your child backbone and confidence. What happens one day when you are gone? Your child must learn to make decisions and face adversity and never give up. That is where you come in.

“Come on, kid! No one said life was fair. Get up and get going!”

“No, I am not taking NO for an answer. And NO! I am not interested that Ingrid’s parents allow her to miss school. Have you ever considered that they might be wrong? Yes, I know I am the worst parent ever but get up; school is waiting.”

Does it sound familiar? Stand your ground. Your child will benefit.

I have also noticed a growing trend of parents blaming teachers and believing every word their child utters. Now, do not get me wrong. We all love our children and we want to believe them BUT they know this and they use it to good effect. Sometimes we want to disown them (I once heard a mom say, “Now I know why some mothers eat their young”☺) but somehow we always believe them and blame the other person.

Don’t! They will learn the wrong lessons. First, establish the truth; then support them appropriately. If they are right then fight with them and show them how to handle the situation. If they are wrong, teach them to own up and stand by them while they face the music. We need responsible, independent adults as the future of our country rests in their hands. Respect for the teaching profession has dwindled alarmingly over the last 2 decades and I aim to re-establish that at Parel Vallei. I ask you, as Parents and Supporters, to support your children as I have described above, working alongside the school. Together, it is our job to raise the best possible people we can. Enjoy the winter break with your families. We are off to the freezing Eastern Cape mountains and then down to Kenton-on-Sea. My E. Cape pilgrimage keeps me sane.



This mountain is on the farm where we will spend a week with friends

Stay safe and keep warm. It is log fire, soup and red wine time.

Fondest PV greetings

David

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a flourish that loops back to the start of the 'D'.