

# Monthly Report to Parents

## November 2017



November 2017, Volume 21

### A Prayer of Thanks

### Grandparents Day, Veterans Day, Book Fair Draw Crowd!

From the 1789 Book of Common Prayer:

Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.

The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

He healeth those that are broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He covereth the heaven with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth; he maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains.

He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Sion.

For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The Lower School managed to pack the gym on Friday, November 10, 2017 when we celebrated both Grandparents Day and Veterans Day. Mrs. Yates' young singers in grades pre-K through fifth performed several songs and read aloud original poems much to the delight of the audience.

Following the performance, grandparents were invited to the Resource Center, which had been converted into Book Fair Central. Sales were brisk this year as students made their wishes known to their generous grandparents. Among those encouraging sales was Clifford, the Big Red Dog, who was hounded for photo ops.

"I was very pleased with our children's performance this year," said Mrs. Yates. "They knew their lines and they weren't shy about being heard—very well done."

We also thank Lower School Office Manager Gina Augustino, and our Lower School teachers for their nice work.



## Early Decision Acceptances for Gibson, Williams at Georgia

On November 17, 2017, admissions officers at the University of Georgia announced recipients of early decision enrollment offers. Among those bright students were seniors Rayce Gibson and Andy Williams.

Competition for the seats was bracing. For example, the average SAT score for those offered admission was 1390 and the average ACT score 32. The average GPA was 4.1. Rayce and Andy were in good company among other International Baccalaureate (IB) students who earned the ticket.

The University of Georgia's academic program is as competitive as its football program. Kiplinger recently ranked the university as among the nation's top ten values in public higher education. Nice work, Rayce and Andy!



## LS Students Win Region in Battle of Books

SCISA Master Teacher Bernie Labruce had been preparing since August with her students for the Battle of the Books that took place on November 7, 2017. Students Emma Rusnak, Mary Thurlow, Elizabeth Joseph, Jasper Brooks, Maddy Davis, Griffin Ballard, Maisie Davis, and Virginia Adams practiced four times per week at lunch and after school over that period. Their hard work over time paid off when LPS won the event over six other schools with a score of 56 and earned a spot in the state competition.

Battle of the Books is a reading incentive program for students in grades three through twelve. Students read 20 books and form groups of six to test their knowledge of the books they have read.



## Third in the State in Battle of the Books

Just 22 days after the victory at the regional level, Ms LaBruce and volunteer parents gathered our young book-readers together and headed to Sumter for SCISA competition at the state level. Among our students were Virginia Adams, Jasper Brooks, Maddie Davis, Maisie Davis, Emma Rusnak, Elizabeth Joseph, Mary Thurlow, and Griffin Ballard.

Competition among other SCISA regional victors was intense. When the dust settled, Lowcountry Preparatory School found itself in third place. First in the SCISA regionals and third in the state—not bad, young book-readers!

We are grateful to the parents who provided logistical support for the finals. They include Father David Thurlow, Trustee Lindi Brooks, Mrs. Ali Ballard, Mrs. Maureen Davis, Mrs. Allison Davis, Mrs. Cheryl Rusnak, and Trustee Keene Adams—thank you, one and all!



## College Tour Set for Spring

Plans for this year's college tour are underway. The visit is scheduled for March 12-16, 2018 and is open to sophomores and juniors. Mrs. Valerie Hensley, who is leading the effort, selected College Campus Tours, LLC as the host. Five firms competed.

Visits to campus include those to Wake Forest University, Appalachian State University, Virginia Tech, Washington and Lee University, James Madison University, American University, the University of Virginia, and Virginia Commonwealth University. Also included in the tour are various Personal Development Seminars that include such topics as "Writing Scholarship Essays" and "Essential Reasons for a College Education."

"Jamie Prosser did a nice job of arranging last year's college campus visits," said Mrs. Hensley. "We want to ensure that this year's sophomores and juniors have the same opportunity for a useful and enjoyable experience, professionally done."

Parents of juniors and sophomores who are interested in participating in the tour are urged to see Mrs. Hensley in the near term.

## Coding Courses Next Year

Beginning in Academic Year 2018-2019, we plan to offer courses in computer coding in the Middle and Upper School. Teaching the classes will be Mr. Tim Warner who has 22 years of experience with the subject.

In Mr. Warner's experience, coding in isolation is not as effective as applied coding. For example, he foresees coding as the centerpiece of a course involving lego robotics for the younger students. For older students, he foresees coding as the central component of courses involving VEX Robotics, a platform used at the undergraduate level to teach mechanical engineering. He is also interested in incorporating 3D printing into the curriculum.

"Students need a tactile, kinesthetic learning environment in order to make learning how to code practical and relevant," explained Mr. Warner. "Therefore, adding opportunities to brainstorm, design, build, troubleshoot and create a product that the student has "programmed" to perform tasks, you have a true STEM environment."



## Musiol and Davis Perform on the Mats

Sixth-grader Jenny Musiol and fifth-grader Madeleine Davis joined their teammates on the Beach Team Tumblers in the Teddy Bear Tumble. The competition took place November 18-19, 2017.

Jenny, a level-six gymnast, performed in the floor routine where she earned a 9.2 out of 10. Meanwhile, Madeleine earned first place in the vault, bars, and the beam, which qualified her as the first place all-around gymnast.

Jenny and Madeleine are equally sharp in the classroom. Jenny's overall academic average right now is a 99, and she is destined for the All-A Honor Roll. Madeleine's current overall average is a 94. Nice work on the mats and in the classroom,



## Zhang Makes Name for Himself with Riptides

Eighth-grader Tony Zhang joined the Riptides, the Grand Strand’s popular swimming club, shortly after arriving from China in August where he was a competitive swimmer. He quickly made a name for himself.

In a recent meet in Hillsborough, NC, Tony swam eight out of ten possible events and made state cuts in the 400 individual medley, 100 butterfly, 50 freestyle, 100 breaststroke, and the 200 backstroke. Competing in the 50 freestyle for the very first time, he broke the Riptides’ record!

Tony and his teammates are practicing for more competitive swimming in December.



## Basketball Underway

The winter season of basketball is underway with two teams each for boys and girls. Coach Nelson will lead the varsity boys, while Coach Swift will lead the B-Team. In girls basketball, Coach Single will lead both the varsity girls and the B-Team. Students in grades fourth through seventh are eligible to play on the B-Team. This marks an expansion of the basketball program compared to last year.

Thanks to the generosity of a donor, the gym floor has been nicely polished, and the wood removed previously due to termite damage has been expertly replaced. In addition, the generous donor covered the cost of upgraded lighting.

Both girls and boys at all levels have been practicing hard since the start of the season. So has the competition. Go, Marlins!



## AD Implements “Team App”

Athletic Director Gwyn Single is implementing “Team App” in time for this year’s basketball season. As veteran parents are well aware, both practices and games are occasionally re-scheduled with little notice. In such cases, making changes on our school’s website has just not been fast enough, thereby frustrating parents. Welcome “Team App,” available for both iPhone and Android!

Team App provides schedules for practices and games. Changes can be made on the fly. Parents and players are encouraged to download the free app.

“Yes, this answers the mail in terms of parental demand for timely notification of changes to schedules. We’re in a high-tech world. Let’s embrace it,” said AD Single.

### LPS MARLINS WINTER SPORTS NOW HAS ITS OWN APP



Download our awesome new app now and stay up to date with all the latest information!

Install the LPS Marlins Winter Sports App on your smartphone or tablet now!

**Follow these steps:**

1. Download Team App from the Apple or Google Play app store.
2. Sign up to Team App. You will be sent an email to confirm your registration.
3. Log into the App and search for "LPS Marlins Winter Sports".
4. Choose your applicable access group(s).
5. If you don't have a smartphone go to [lpsmarlinswintersports.teamapp.com](http://lpsmarlinswintersports.teamapp.com) to sign up and view this App online.

**Need help?**  
 Contact: Gwyn Single  
 Email: [gsingle@lowcountryprep.org](mailto:gsingle@lowcountryprep.org)  
 Phone: 803-608-3746



## Who Is That?



Any guesses? No, it is not Mr. Suber in one of his infamous Halloween costumes. Do you believe that is Mrs. Kristi Rhoades, our kindergarten teacher?

Yes, it is! She was a character actor in the recent Mythical and Medieval Festival in Myrtle Beach on November 11, 2017. The festival raises money to take care of children who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected and reside in local shelters.

“I am thankful to be part of such a beautiful event and support a cause that brings smiles to the children’s faces and happiness to their hearts,” said Mrs. Rhoades.

Her participation in the charitable event is consistent with lessons from her kindergarten classroom, namely gratitude for what we have and taking care of others.

## Big Haul for Food Drive

Pre-K Teacher Jennifer Wallace needed an SUV to transport the large volume of food donated by families this year! The food was collected for distribution on Thanksgiving for those in need and provided to Pawleys Island Presbyterian Church.

“In my three years here, this is the largest amount of food we have ever collected,” remarked Mrs. Wallace Taylor, our first grade teacher. “Our families have done a wonderful job.”

Major contributors to the cause this year were pre-K, led by Mrs. Jennifer Wallace, and Mrs. Taylor’s first graders.

Each year in November, the school implements a food drive and donates the food to a charitable cause.



## New Playgrounds

Both Lower School playgrounds are scheduled for replacement over the next few months. Replacement is possible through the generosity of three Lower School families who jointly made a restricted donation to the Annual Fund. Their donation covers the cost of the equipment, its installation, and its maintenance two years into the future.

Removal of the first playground began earlier this month. Tentative plans call for the replacement of one playground by the end of December and the second by the end of January.

The manufacturer of the new playgrounds is GreatOutdoors PlaySystems with locations in Georgia and the Carolinas. During his visit to campus, the company representative made clear that safety is a primary consideration in the design of the playgrounds. He also underscored that with proper maintenance, the playgrounds are designed to last.



## Red Cross Blood Drive

Red Cross workers visited campus on November 30, 2017. They briefed students in the Lower School, then students in the Middle and Upper School on the purpose of blood drives and how they serve to help those in need. They urged us to adopt a goal of 40 units of donated blood at the blood drive scheduled to take place on campus on Wednesday, December 6, 2017.

Regarding eligibility, students who are 16 years of age and older are eligible. However, weight restrictions apply—some of our students are too light we have learned! Parents are also eligible to donate blood and we invite them to join us. Forty units of blood from forty donors is certainly a reasonable goal—let’s exceed it!

We salute Mrs. Kristi Rhoades who took the initiative to bring the drive to campus. She sees participation in blood drives as an important form of community service. She is right!



## Enrollment Ticks up to 175

With the school’s rolling admissions policy, qualified prospective students are allowed to enroll throughout the academic year. Over the past month, five such students did so, thereby bringing our total enrollment to 175.

“Reputation is a lagging indicator,” said Head of School Gibson III. “Our Lower Schoolers are testing almost three grades above level in math and reading, while our Upper Schoolers enjoy the substantial advantage of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. Word seems finally to have gotten out. The improving economy helps, as well.”

Presently, kindergarten would be hard pressed to add another student. In the Middle and Upper School, ninth and eleventh grades are getting tight.

Our objective, as specified in Strategic Plan 2020, is to “enroll the school to capacity: approximately 16 students per grade in K5-12, and 8 students per grade in K3 and K4.”



## Board Renews Head of School’s Contract

Board Chair Harry Oxner announced the Board of Trustees has voted unanimously to extend Head of School Gibson III’s contract for another three years. This marks his second three-year extension and keeps him in place through May 2021.

“This was a straightforward decision for the Board,” claimed Oxner. “During his tenure, Scott has recruited a high-quality team that has made substantial improvements to the school’s program, particularly to include the addition of the IB Program. Our students in first through eighth grades are testing on average almost three grades above level. College acceptances were the best they’ve ever been last year with acceptances to such institutions as Brown University, the US Naval Academy, Washington and Lee University, and New York University, among others. Our survey results continue to indicate high levels of satisfaction among both parents and employees. Enrollment has risen each of the past four years—I’d say we have the right leader for this school.”

“Building a great team takes years,” said Gibson. “We’ve done that, and we’ve hit our stride. We’ve got more work to do to make our school event better—we look forward to doing it!”