

Monthly Report to Parents

December 2018



December 2018, Volume 30

Merry Christmas!



Christmas Show Draws a Crowd

The stands were crowded this year by proud grandparents, parents, and friends to watch the annual Christmas Show. The event took place on December 12. Despite the lack of snow, the Christmas spirit was clearly in the air.

The first performance of the evening was by Luisa Lee, a member of the third grade. She played a stunningly beautiful Christmas piece on the keyboard and made it look easy. Then, teachers led their respective classes in several holiday songs. As is her custom, Mrs. Yates wove in a dance. It featured the Lower Schoolers in festive holiday garb dancing and twirling in couples.

While Mrs. Yates orchestrates the event, all of the Lower School teachers play a hands-on role. Accordingly, we thank Mrs. Linelle Yates, Mrs. Jennifer Wallace, Mrs. Kristi Rhoades, Mrs. Emily Livingston, Mrs. Debbie Kimbrough, Mrs. Paige Ferguson, Mrs. Christy Thompson, Mrs. Bernie LaBruce, and Mrs. Kay Harris. Nice work, everyone!



Poinsettia Sales a Success

As is the custom, members of the junior class are charged with planning the senior prom. Doing so requires money.

So, junior Spirit Gamble took charge and headed up this year's poinsettia sale. She and the juniors sold a total 338 plants. Gross revenue was \$6,160. Net revenue was \$2,285—nice work, juniors!

You will likely still see some of the poinsettias about town. Frank's Restaurant purchased many, as did East Coast Honda. The poinsettias at Prince George Winyah looked awfully familiar this past Sunday!

Thank you to each buyer. In addition to receiving a beautiful seasonal flower, you have helped both the juniors and the seniors in a worthy cause.



First and Fourth Grade Christmas Party

Students and parents alike attended a Christmas party held at BisQit on December 16. Hosting the party were the Raynors with Tony in first grade and Marin in fourth. BisQit is located in the Hammock shops and operated by the Quigleys, a former Lowcountry Preparatory School family.

Turnout was strong, and BisQit was packed. Regulars of BisQit were treated to more of the same, namely outstanding fare. Servings were offered bite-sized, thereby allowing guests to sample a broad spectrum of savory delights. Guests who arrived resolved to exercise discipline and graze modestly were unfairly tested!



Employee Christmas Party

The Gibsons hosted their annual Christmas party at their residence on December 15. Kathy reported the highest turnout in years.

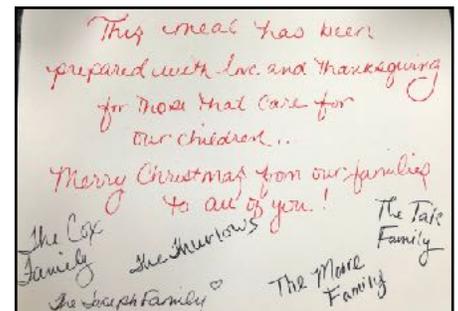
Guests dined upon beef tenderloin, shrimp, fruit, vegetables, and sweets. Beer included conventional and assorted craft. In place of French Champagne and Italian Prosecco this year was Spanish Cava. The name derives from the cellars in which it is made and dates to 1872. Empty bottles suggested the choice was met with approval. Also featured was a health drink including mango, peach, and pineapple.

A prize was offered to that guest who could first discover the 13 Santa hats on display on the first floor. Hard to spot was the tiny cap on the delicate sub-Saharan African statue of a hunting tribesman. It did not escape the jeweler's eye of Pastor Dustin Thompson who collected his prize!



MMiP Prepares Lunch for Teachers

Members of the recently established Marlin Mothers in Prayer (MMiP) provided a working lunch for the faculty and staff at their monthly meeting on December 20, 2018. Soups included chicken noodle, chili, and red lentil and coconut. Two salads were provided, as were various sandwiches. Tea and a variety of desserts rounded out the menu. The abundance of food allowed for take-home bags, as well as for a nicely stocked refrigerator in the teachers' lounge! Thank you, MMiP!



Exam Snacks!

Generous parent volunteers provided first semester exam snacks. The tradition involves the provision of snacks in the Malin Cafe between the first and second of each day's two final examinations. The examinations take place over three days. Participating students are those in Middle School and Upper School. The doors open at 10:00, and students can relax with a snack until the start of the second final examination at 10:30.

Snacks ranged from healthy fruits to tasty treats. Among those families donating snacks were the Appletons, Ballards, Bellunes, Bennetts, Cunninghams, Kosiers, Littles, Martinezes, Oxners, Smiths, Starnes, and Steffens. Many thanks!



Seventh Grade Hits the Beach

Mrs. Rebecca Green took her seventh graders on a science field trip to Huntington State Park. The trip coincided with the classroom study of erosion, deposition, sediment sorting and rounding, longshore transport, and dune structure.

The trip also demonstrated smart use of excellent resources in our immediate vicinity. Huntington State Park is not just a nice beach; it is a veritable outdoor science laboratory.



Partial List of College Acceptances

While most college acceptances are expected to be announced during the second semester, a handful have already come in for members of our senior class. This year's seniors number 19.

Among those colleges and universities that have notified our seniors of acceptances are Albright College, Clemson University, DePaul University, Furman University, Marymount Manhattan, Parsons School of Design, Savannah College of Art and Design, University of Mississippi, University of South Carolina, University of South Carolina Honors College, and Washington College.

Mr. Tim Warner continues to provide guidance to our seniors on colleges and universities. Meanwhile Head of School Gibson and Upper School Director Suber remain in touch with college and university admissions officers.



Board Approves iPad Acquisition

At December's meeting of the Board of Trustees, members were unequivocal in their support for a plan to replace the malfunctioning laptops in fourth and fifth grades with iPads and keyboards. The plan will provide better quality hardware to students who have already amazed their teachers with their initiative in using information technology (IT) in learning.

Major facilitators of the plan were the Raynors with children enrolled in the 1st and 4th grades. Upon receipt of the letter outlining the IT problem and steps to resolve it, they stepped in with a generous offer to assist.

"We've seen a remarkable development in the Lower School this year," said Head of School Gibson. "Parents are always justified in citing shortfalls. They should. This year, however, we see parents such as the Raynors more often stepping up with solutions not shortfalls. This sort of teamwork among teachers, students, parents, and trustees bodes well for our school."



Strong Lower School Team under New Leadership

Building upon the firm foundation left by her predecessor, Ms. Gina Augustino, Lower School Office Manager Kay Harris has over the course of her first semester earned the respect of the Lower School students, teachers, and parents. Results of our anonymous surveys earlier in the semester of parents, students, and employees are consistent in the perception of Mrs. Harris as an effective leader with a constant smile.

"Kay has made a smooth transition from Middle School teacher to Lower School Office Manager. She is a smart leader who understands that taking care of the work is only part of the requirement. The equally important part is taking care of the people. She does an impressive job of that," said Head of School Gibson. "In that regard," he added, "she demonstrates a leadership style similar to Dave Suber's in the Upper School."



Athletic Update

The winter season continues with four basketball teams in action. The majority of the season remains to be played.

At the varsity level, the boys are 2-3. The girls are also 2-3. Coach Roberts leads both of those teams. Meanwhile, the boys B team, led by Coaches Barr, Grant, and Roberts are 0-2. Coach Roberts leads the girls B team, which is 0-1.

The win and loss column is hardly the whole story, however. Coach Roberts has had his teams play up against larger more competitive schools on several occasions. Doing so has caused our players to step up their game and play with more drive. Come out and cheer them on next semester. and you'll see what we mean!



Spirit Award to Rearden

At December's assembly, Sailor Rearden was announced as the winner of the Spirit Award. Sailor is a member of the eighth grade.

The citation to accompany Sailor's award noted Sailor's dedication in staying after school routinely to help with girls B team basketball practices.

Presenting the spirit stick to Sailor was senior Blake Errico. He is no stranger to athletic spirit himself. In addition to running cross-country and playing basketball this year, he will man the goal, once again, this spring. Blake also completed an iron man competition off campus earlier this semester.

Sailor has a lot of spirit. She also has a keen intellect. She concluded the first semester with a score of 99 in four subjects and a 100 in the fifth—not bad, Sailor. Congratulations!

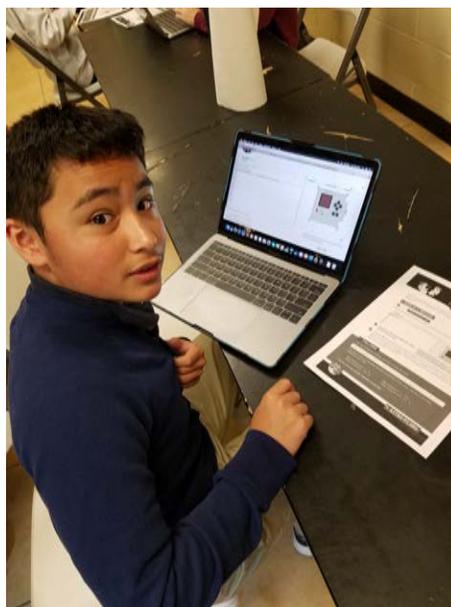


Marketing Video Garners Attention

We routinely monitor statistics describing our online presence in the community. The statistics are detailed. For example, we can see how many times each of our Facebook posts is reviewed.

This month we were amazed to learn that Mrs. Andrea Little's "sneak peek" at Lowcountry Preparatory School garnered 3,000 looks over but a few days! She put together the presentation using iMovie and drew upon our vast yearbook library of digital photographs.

Of note, Ms. Schroeder's eighth grade Physical Science Class posting garnered 2,000 looks. It described the students' Hour of Code for Computer Science Education Week. As part of the project, students wrote code that will be run on the International Space Station!



First Meeting of the Committee on Strategic Planning and Accreditation

Members of the senior staff and representatives of the Leadership Parents met to discuss preparations for both our next strategic plan and our next re-accreditation. The meeting took place on December 19.

Our current plan, Strategic Plan 2020, was published in June 2015 following one year of preparation. Following that pattern, preparation for the publication of Strategic Plan 2025 should begin in June 2019—just six months away. The year of preparation involves surveys and focus groups. Input from all stakeholders will be assertively sought.

Meanwhile, our current accreditation extends through June 2021, and our next external review for re-accreditation is scheduled for March 2021. That may seem quite distant. It is not. In order to exceed AdvancED's 30 standards, we must put in extensive time and effort. We will. In the process, we will improve our school. In fact, improving our school is the goal, not earning re-accreditation. The former will yield the latter.