



Principal's Corner

**Dear Theodorians
Being Defined by Opportunity**



Recently, we staged a final school assembly for our Grade 12 students, during which parents and staff were present to mark the occasion. Prizes and awards were handed out and I wished the students all the best for the final examinations. I also thanked them for their conduct in

what was a very difficult year.

I have been encouraged to share my speech to the Grade 12 students with the broader Theodor community and hence an extract is below:

“Let us look back on the year. Frankly, it has been a very tough year with COVID-19. On a macro scale, there has been heightened anxiety, tragic loss of life, economic uncertainty and a seismic shift in the way we navigate life.

On a micro scale, and here I focus more on you as a group of teenagers, it has been, I would imagine, a bit of a disappointment. For most of the year, no major sport or cultural events, no matric dance, valedictory, no major prize giving, flip day, and the list goes on, of the typical school highlights that would be a culmination of your school career.

You may well be disappointed, frustrated, let down, irritated, angry, anxious and you have every right to be so.

This is all background to my missive. I have a very different dispatch to you rather than the doom and gloom that has often shadowed the year.

Apollo 13, moon mission that went horribly wrong. The world held its breath as the astronauts struggled to get back home. Many of you will have seen the movie. There is one scene that resonated for me. The scene and the

action thereafter, reflected why I sincerely believe that you have been a splendid group of students :

In Apollo 13, Flight Director Gene Kranz overhears two NASA directors discussing the low survival chances for the crippled spacecraft. “I know what the problems are Henry,” one of them says. “This could be the worst disaster NASA has ever experienced.”

“With all due respect, Sir,” Kranz intervenes, “I believe this is going to be our finest hour, ... failure is not an option.” NASA then, through incredible teamwork, lateral thinking, determination and depth of character in their astronauts, bring the capsule and crew safely home and the gripped world breathed a sigh of relief.

When adversity, in our case COVID-19, strikes, we all take the opportunity to create our own ‘counterfact’ – an alternative scenario our brains create to help us make sense of it to ourselves. Your counterfact will determine whether you view events as fortunate, or unfortunate.

As a group of matrics, in my opinion, you will not be defined by COVID-19, but rather because of it.

In the beginning we had to work on a few of you - staying in bed in pyjamas in the morning was way better than getting up to have a Zoom lesson on a cold Monday morning. These start up issues were to be expected, after all, we were all struggling with hard lockdown and the uncertainty of it all.

What were your counteracts? You showed:

- *An extra-ordinary level of resilience – you kept going in spite of challenges and uncertainty.*
- *You did not panic – on the whole you calmly accepted the reality and simply dealt with it; keeping a cool head under pressure is to be applauded.*
- *You rapidly adapted to new remote teaching approaches – Zoom and other platforms are second nature to you now.*

- *You showed accountability – in taking ownership for being structured and self-disciplined in your work.*
- *You showed a depth of character and a maturity that for me was remarkable. If I had to continue my aviation space theme, you have what was so profoundly captured in a book and movie entitled: “The Right Stuff” ... You have the Right Stuff.*
- *You readily collaborated – teamwork and communication were so well done.*
- *You cared for others, this despite your own feelings of vulnerability and anxiety.*

The unprecedented year you have experienced has provided you with advantages, largely not always available to those before you, in that you have honed a set of skills to a high level of competency. These experiences and skill sets will make you not just successful in the future, but significant. Take pride in what you have achieved; a matric certificate during an unparalleled year.

As you look forward to departing our school gates to start a new year and a new chapter in your life, I know that the future is always fresh and exciting and it has a pull on us that, at times, the past simply can never muster.

Yet, it may well be that our greatest wealth as human beings can be discovered simply by looking behind us – looking behind us to 2020, the year you took on COVID-19 as an opportunity and refused to let it define you, but rather you defined yourself.”

Once again, I wish our Grade 12 students all the best for their examinations.

Kind regards
John Alexander
Executive Principal

Sukkot

We shook the Lulaf and celebrated Sukkot.



Prefect Body 2021

Term 4 is always an exciting term, we say farewell to the old Prefect body and vote for our new leaders.



Matric Class of 2020

Our Matrics have had to endure many disappointments this year: They missed out on a Matric Dance, a Valedictory function, Flip Day, Mr & Miss Theodor not to mention the unattained sports goals that many of our young sportsmen and women had for 2020 to name only a few. The challenges of Covid-19 and Lockdown have brought about many changes to the structure of our school year. Change is often received with resistance, but this group has managed to remain positive in this time, kept working and can feel proud of what they have accomplished here at school. They have reached the last stretch and we wish them well for their Final Examinations.

Matric Drama Practicals:



In their final History lesson, the matrics opened the letters that they wrote to themselves in 2016.



Our matrics were rewarded for their hard work at their Prize Giving.

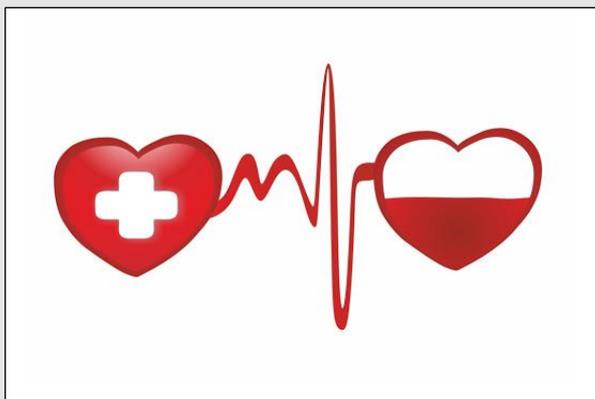


Blood Drive

Please support us in this endeavour.

**Theodor Herzl
SANBS Bus on field
Tuesday 20.10.2020
07:00 to 15:00**

sanbs.org.za
Toll free: 0800 11 9031



Dear Theodorians, Parents & Friends of Theodor,

Along with a New Normal and a New Term, we have a few new additions to our school campus: The Pre-Primary School boasts a new canopy at the entrance of their school and also some new road signs.

Out with the OLD



In with the NEW



At the Primary School we have the Lees Labarinth which was erected in honour of Mr Kevin Lees when we bid him farewell at the end of Term 3.



I'm very excited to share another "something new": This will be the first year that the Editorial team will compile a digital interactive Yearbook! The Yearbook will appear on our *Website*, *Engage* and our *Facebook* page, where you will be able to *View*, *Download* and *Share*. In order to keep it at a reasonable downloadable size, we will design three separate books, a Pre-Primary, Primary and High School Yearbook. You will be able to view all three books or simply download the book that you are interested in. Each book will be divided into three phases: Phase 1: *School as we knew it*, Phase 2: *Lockdown / Remote teaching* and Phase 3: *The New Normal*.

New and fun features include page flips, voice messages from our Principals, Grade 7 and Grade 12 pupils accessed by a simple *click on the pic* and advertisements with digital inserts (please book your advertorial space before the 16th of November). We trust that you will all enjoy browsing through the Theodor 2020 Yearbook.

Due to popular demand, you will still receive a printed Yearbook 2020, which I am sure will not disappoint either.

Mariska