



NATHAN HOUSE Newsletter Term 2 2019

Sola Virtus Nobilitat - Virtue alone ennobles

It was a busy term with a lot of excitement. Let's look through some of the highlights before we get into some good reading.

Closed Friday Braai

Remember the first Friday back at school...? Well, the cold and wet could not keep the boys from their braai!



New Toy in the Common Room

The boys have thoroughly enjoyed the new addition to the common room. The housemaster even challenged a few of the boys, and it must be said, we have some talented boys in Nathan's.



Wise words from the Deputy

The second term is an exhilarating one. The winter atmosphere is filled with the excitement of rugby and hockey season. On Saturdays, from Barns' downwards, the school comes to life. Crisp, cold early mornings greet players, coaches and supporters alike. This is the season when the College culture gets into the DNA of the boys, and some parents too. It is a time edged by the anticipation and pressure of exams, and flu season. What a time of year it is—so full of life's lessons.

The Nathan's boys have enjoyed a formative term. Having settled in after the first term, they have experienced personal and collective ups and downs. Some of the tougher moments have been fought through with strong friends or mentors at their sides, others have been personal battles conquered quietly. A wise man once said, "One who experiences misfortune also learns wisdom." These moments redefine and refine character. The celebrations and victories are always shared together. This is the essence of a community charged with vitality; a community that creates intense memories that shape the lives of those who abide in it. As long as the boys hold their heads high and keep their hearts full they will come out on top, and they certainly have in the second term.

One memory that sticks in my mind was during a Thursday duty night. Half of the form two lads had a drama practical the following day and the Nathan's boys were given permission to practice their plays during prep. Though the boys were wearing their uniform boarder reds and the occasional humorous costume fashioned from improvisation, the night was painted with the many colourful personalities that fill this house. Some boys were taking charge confidently, others groups were problem solving together, other chaps had forgotten their lines and were banished to go and learn their lines because they were "letting the team down". Still others were not so excited about the prospect of a drama practical and were keen to get through with the basics done well, at least. It was an evening when boys from all creeds and cultures were working together, combining their various and unique approaches, collaborating, constructing, creating. It was fascinating to observe and it was a great moment complete with learning experiences that placed the boys in a position to work together productively, in spite of their differences. Again, these are great life lessons. Needless to say, all went well the next day. As we know, all things must come to an end, as the second term has.

The third term starts with four tough fixtures against the likes of Affies, Glenwood, PBHS and KES. For many boys, this will be the make or break of their season. Winter sport ends after these fixtures and we then progress into Athletics and Soccer season. The academic nature of the term will be characterised by projects and common tests. Encourage your sons to work hard at these commitments as they have a large bearing on their term marks.

We wish the boys all the best for their exam results. May their marks be a true reflection of their work ethic and effort. Enjoy the beauty and closeness of the winter holiday; the warming fires, fleece jackets, woollen beanies, hearty meals and hot chocolate shared together at night. What a lovely time of year to be together as a family!

Until we meet again, "Phambili, Phezulu", "Onward and Upward"!

Mr Smit
Deputy Housemaster



From the Housemaster

This term I have decided to write briefly on a number of topics that I believe are of relevance to the boys at the moment, and will be useful for all of us involved in Nathan's for the remainder of the year.

Time

It might seem strange that I have chosen to write on a topic like time—how does this have any relevance to our boys? It isn't really that strange if you consider that we are already half-way through the year. Someone once said, "Time is man's most precious commodity." I look back with fondness to my time in the College BE, and in particular, Nathan House, but these are all but memories now and life has changed dramatically since then. I know that there is much to look forward to beyond the protected walls of Nathan's, but if you gaze too long and too hard into the future, you will deny yourself the pleasures of the present. King Solomon wrote in the book of Ecclesiastes that there is a time for everything. A wise man knows the right time to do something. Sometimes our actions are foolish, not because of the act, but rather because of the timing of the act. So I encourage the young men of Nathan's to embrace every little moment you have to spend with your brothers in the unique environment in Nathan House which will not be replicated in the years to come. It is wise to realise the true value of something while it is within your grasp, but foolish to neglect it, only to realise its value once it's too late. The first two terms have come and gone, and the next two terms will be similarly fleeting. It will only be good and right to make the most of our time while the time is within our grasp, because, as Bob Dylan wrote, the times they are a-changing.

Time is man's most precious commodity.

Academics

As I briefly mentioned in one of my weekly e-mails sent earlier in the term, the first term marks are not always the most accurate reflection on a form 2 boy's academics. A great deal of work that was done in primary school gets done during the first term in Form 2, to ensure a proper foundation is in place, particularly in subjects like Maths and English. Therefore, it is really only in the second term that the boys are faced with new content, that often takes some time to fully understand. The mid-year exams is always a tough hurdle to overcome for our Form 2 boys as it is the first time they experience exams at high school, which will be a different experience in comparison to junior school. For some boys making the adjustment is easier than for others. By now the boys would have received their marks, which may well have come as a bit of a wake-up call for some, while others are looking forward to a great holiday. We do all that we can to ensure a platform is set for the boys to excel academically. A very necessary life lesson that many are having to learn is simply to take responsibility for one's own academic progress. We will be reviewing the results of all Nathan House boys and the mentors will follow-up on any boys who have struggled. It has also been quite useful in the past the get all the boys to sign a pledge which is aimed at them doing all that lies in their power to improve and make the most of the resources available at College.

Behaviour

This is always a major focus in Nathan House, as behaviour is really just the fruit of one's character. As you already know, shaping and moulding character is something we take seriously. We are not that naïve to think that there will not be boys who will push the boundaries, but sometimes it goes further than that. We also understand that there are many factors that are simultaneously influencing many of the decisions that they make, not the least of which being the physiological changes they are experiencing in their bodies and the

need to be accepted by their peers. We can sympathise with them as we have all been there, but that will obviously not disqualify anyone from facing the consequences of one's actions. Most of the things we deal with are relatively minor. There have unfortunately been a number of incidents this term that have provoked a more serious response from us. Thankfully, the boys are learning from their mistakes in the main. None of us are perfect and somewhere along the line we have all been in a position requiring the influence of an older, wiser person who would guide us through the torrents of life, allowing us to mature, grow and develop. I therefore cannot overemphasize the important role that parents play in their son's life to help him navigate his way through adolescence. As the boys in Nathan House become more familiar with their surroundings we will continue to encourage them to embrace our College Culture and be the better man.

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Well-being

This topic obviously covers a number of areas. The two areas that I briefly want to mention are that of physical and psychological well-being. The second term has been a very demanding one on almost every front. On top of that, the winter season has snuck up on us. It was clearly evident, especially towards the end of the term, that many of the boys were struggling with sickness. This is not an unusual occurrence, and the san had to be as efficient as ever to help the many sick boys. Thank you for understanding and respecting the san's role with regards to the boys' physical well-being. They really do have the boys' best interested at heart, which means they will try to treat any symptoms to enable boys to stay at school, but will never keep the serious cases from going home and resting properly. As you know, the sick boys are seen by the school doctor on a daily basis. It is a very professional setup and as housemaster it gives me the peace of mind to know the boys are well taken care of. From a psychological point of view our biggest concern is bullying, especially if its of a peer-on-peer nature. We take a very strong stance against any such anti-social behaviour. This is where the boarder master mentors are of tremendous value as there is an existing relationship with the boys in each mentor group. We also have the luxury of having the school councillor to consult boys when necessary, both the victim and perpetrator. We also have a anonymous reporting page which boys can make use of to report bullying incidents. Other than bullying, there as many different things that boys are having to deal with that take place away from the school environment. Here too they can make use of the services of the councillor, which has been of great help on many occasions.

Well done!

Finally I want to say "well done" to boys and parents alike, for making it this far into the year and in the fashion in which you have done so. I am of the opinion that for a boy to be afforded the opportunity to be a boarder at Maritzburg College is a massive privilege. They don't always realise the sacrifices their parents make on a variety of levels to allow for them to be where they are. I commend you on your commitment to give your boys the best and thank you for supporting us to do the same from our side. I wish you all a well-deserved break. Rest well, spend some quality time with your boys and enjoy every moment in their company. May God bless you and give you peace.

Yours sincerely
Drikus Hoffman

This term was a fruitful one for some of the Nathan House families



Left: Congratulations to Mr Zuma on the birth of his beautiful baby girl, Ayabusa, born 21 May, weighing 3,39kg's.

Right: Mr Zuma wearing his very own nappy at his nappy braai. Well done Mr Zuma!



As many of you know, the Hoffman family was blessed with another baby boy, Daniël, at the start of the term. Life has just become a lot more interesting!

Dads and Lads

A few of our u14 teams with their dads



From Snow's to Pape's to Lamond's, the boys are playing with passion for their school!



Congratulations u14 Inland Hockey boys!



A big congratulations to our Nathan House boys who have been selected to represent Inland at the u14 hockey IPT. All the best boys!

From left: A Sithole, M Thomson, G Aranky, K Dobeyn, A Makhanya, C Smith, D Hockey.

Looking ahead to Term 3

There are number of things to look out for in the third term:

Monday 8 July: Boarders return by 19h00.

Friday 12 July: Sports teams depart for inter-schools exchange at Affies.

Friday 19 July: College host PBHS boys for the inter-schools exchange (compulsory attendance).

Friday 26 July: Sports teams depart for inter-schools exchange at KES.

Saturday 3 August: Reunion Day (compulsory attendance).

Thursday 8 August: Boys go home for the Free Weekend.

Friday 23 August: BE Closed Friday night.

Saturday 24 August: College Family Day

Sunday 15 September: Form 2 Camp Group 1 depart.

Tuesday 17 September: Form 2 Camp Group 1 return, Group 2 depart.

Thursday 19 September: Form 2 Camp Group 2 return.

Friday 20 September: Term 3 Ends.

Thank You!

We look forward to having you back in the third term!

God bless you!