April 24, 2020

Dear Members of the Ransom Everglades Community,

I could never have imagined that the weeks would fly by as quickly as they have while working remotely, but it is another Friday and another communication from me. I hope that this message finds you and your family well and continuing to thrive as we discover the path to the next normal. There is comfort in hearing that you are staying connected to one another, and the RE community seems every bit as strong and together as it has always been.

I am excited to announce the launch of the Paul Ransom Digital Podium, a series of remote roundtable discussions led by inspiring speakers on a range of pertinent and pressing issues. We currently have three lined up: two for the entire RE community and one for seniors and faculty. More are on the way.

We will open this virtual series at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, with "COVID-19: Lessons from the Pandemic for All of Us." Our presenters, Allan Feingold, Medical Director of Occupational and Environmental Medicine at South Miami Hospital, and Steven G. Ullmann, Chair of the Department of Health Management and Policy at the University of Miami, will take a hard look at the global and national response to the virus, and what it means to you and me. RE parent Stephan Baker, who is also a physician, will join me to moderate.

On Wednesday, May 6, two of Miami’s most prominent restaurateurs will discuss the impact of the pandemic on the restaurant industry and the possible long-term implications. Two longtime friends – and friends of our school – Stephen Sawitz ‘75, the owner of Joe’s Stone Crab, and RE parent Shareef Malnik, owner of The Forge, will share the digital podium with humor and grace.

On Wednesday, April 29, we will invite the Class of 2020 to a closed-door virtual meeting on the dangers of hazing. This important information session was proposed by the parents of Antonio Tsialas ‘19, who died last fall after a hazing incident during his freshman year of college. John Tsialas and Flavia Tomasello will join our seniors along with family attorney and RE parent David Bianchi, who has handled hazing cases for more than three decades and was instrumental in drafting hazing laws in Florida.

We will share log-in information for each event in a separate announcement, and also update the myCOMPASS calendar with the "join" links.

I want to let you know that the response to the request for support of our weekend food initiative for Tucker Elementary in Coconut Grove has been extraordinary. We have received slightly more than $34,000 in donations to date; this will help provide several weekends of groceries for 200 Grove families. You can find more information about this in my April 17 email.

Lastly, the next prompt for For the REcord is: Silver Linings. As I have previously mentioned, we are collecting and preserving elements of our community experience during this historic
pandemic. What have you heard, observed or learned during this time that has caused you to look at yourself, your responsibilities, your friends, your family, your pastimes and your responsibilities in a different light? Please share your responses here.

We are also compiling ways in which members of the RE community are making a difference. You may have seen yesterday’s story in the Miami Herald about our itinerant musician, Zach Buttrick ’20, who has been performing impromptu concerts for neighbors and strangers. If you have news about other noble deeds or good works of RE students, parents or alumni, please contribute them here.

The photos below of our cannon, perhaps, offer a fitting conclusion to this message. The Class of 2020 – with its "perfect vision" – is always at the forefront of our hearts. Stay safe everyone!

Penny

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