

Opening Assembly Remarks by Head of Lower School Laurie Gruhn

This past weekend I got on a horse. Literally. I have not done that in many, many years, - and I - almost loved it. Of course, it made me think of the old saying that when you fall down, you need to get right back on that horse. And because it was the weekend before school started, I made a note to myself (while on that horse) to talk about that at this assembly.

That will be my goal this year. To help our youngest see that when you fall down or make a mistake, your teachers and I will expect you to get right back, try again and do your best. That is what it means to be a great student. And make no mistake, we expect great things from all of you.

Also this past weekend, I had an opportunity one night to see my daughter be a magician's assistant in a magic show. No big deal. But this is a person who a) has told me many times that she does not like to be on stage, and, b) does not like to volunteer. Well, she raised her hand. And she went up on stage. And she pulled a dove out of a hat, and it sat on her shoulder, and she loved every minute. You know where I am going with this. When you are afraid of something, shock yourself. Try it anyway, and discover a new joy. Try to avoid fear. Earlier this summer, I had an opportunity to ride a *small* roller coaster; I did not do it, because I was afraid. I still wish I had tried. My wish for you this year is that you do not look back on an opportunity and wished you had tried it and regret not doing so. Go for the dove-in-the-hat moment!

I did not have a camera with me at that magic show, since I was sure she would not take part, so I learned something else that matters. Enjoying a moment and not taking a picture of it makes a huge difference in what you remember. Enjoy those moments as students this year. You will be surprised by those you will always remember.

So...

- 1) Be prepared to make mistakes and not give up.
- 2) Try the thing you think you cannot or will not do. You will surprise yourself – and others.
- 3) While doing something, try to enjoy what you are doing.

I wish you all a wonderful year, filled with resilience and courage, resulting in joyful surprises!