



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR



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Dates to Remember

February 2017

- **20 - 24:** *Secondary Week B*
- **20 - 24:** *Book Week*
- **25:** *PTA Bazaar*
- **28:** *Board Meeting*

Choice

I used to work in a city where the school where I worked was pretty much the only game in town for parents looking for an alternative to government schools.

That was a pity. It was a pity for parents (who had no real choice) and it was a pity for the school because different groups of parents wanted us to be different kinds of school – traditional or progressive, conservative or liberal, “American” or “British”, international or local. There were even endless battles over whether or not we should have a school uniform. (In the end we did have a uniform but we didn’t take it seriously which, of course, made everyone unhappy.)

I must say that things are much better here. There are half a dozen good independent schools in Windhoek and each adheres to a particular educational or cultural tradition. Parents have a choice between several different options and most should be able to find one that meets their needs and reflects their priorities.

Thus, WIS can be proudly non-selective and inclusive with an explicit commitment to internationalism and multiculturalism. Moreover, with enrolments higher than at any time in the past quarter of a century, it seems there are many parents in the city who share our values.

**With best wishes,
Peter MacKenzie**

The First Lady visits WIS

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.--
Arundhati Roy



A world of possibilities revealed themselves in the WIS auditorium on Wednesday afternoon when the First Lady of Namibia, Monica Geingos, met with the (un)Sung Herstories after school activity group to discuss self advocacy and the advocacy of others. The two-hour dialogue was catalyzed by student questions for the First Lady such as, "What do you wish for Namibia's future?" and "Could you share an obstacle you faced and how you overcame or worked through it?" The First Lady was gracious, forthcoming and personable as she fielded the students' questions.

(Un)Sung Herstories is dedicated to honoring the lives of Namibian women. The year-long after school activity includes 11 students in Years 7 through 9. The students practise critical thinking skills that question the often amplified male-centered voice and the silenced women's voice. Because we know that our stories matter, as well, we believe we can uplift other women and thus uplift ourselves and others in the process of researching our own herstories, singing the praises of women and magnify our own stories for a better balanced representation of the diversity of women's lives in our world.

When asked, "What are the most important lessons you've learned in life--work and or personal," the First Lady shared how managing expectations and setting boundaries are key. She spoke to the young ladies about the balance between setting standards, exploring self, and being honest with oneself and others about what you will and will not do. Another question posed by Genevieve Hinda, Year 7, was that if she had the opportunity to go back and change one of her decisions or actions, would she? The First Lady was quick to respond in the negative. She revealed that even seemingly negative decisions or actions teach a lesson and had she not made those mistakes, she would not be the same person.

Madame Geingos' confidence stimulated the atmosphere with an inspired energy for all present--a new world, breathing, indeed.

This new world is possible and our students' minds expanding, ready to take in even more.

Calling upon each student by name, the First Lady communicated thoughtful answers to the students' difficult questions about the future of Namibia and the recent U.S. Elections. Mevina Nicol-Wilson, Year 7, reflected, "The First Lady really gave us tips on how we should react on types of situations that we face as a teen or girl. She made us feel welcome to speak and make us feel comfortable." She expressed her passionate non-profit work for One Economy as well as her

business endeavours. The students gained a better understanding of her advocacy work with UNAIDS and how critically analysing sources of information is a monumental task for youth. Fiona Farrell, Year 9, said she came away with Madame Geingos' impressionable remarks that, "all people should be an advocate in

some way. You don't need to be paid to do it. She said that we should share our knowledge and look out for others to help them become strong enlightened people."

Davan Pokolo, Year 7, inquired, "If you could give advice to your younger self what advice would it be?" and the answer the First Lady gave was to enjoy being a young girl--to stop trying to grow up so fast. She said that age will come and there is no need to rush it so revel in the youthful events of life while you can. Eyana Kandido, Year 7, added to the conversation, "What do you think the greatest development for women has been?" To which, the First Lady responded "Time", further clarifying that over time, women's lives have changed dramatically for the better, yet still acknowledging the work yet to be done to bring equity for all.

"Conflict resolution" was The First Lady's response to Sahara Kamwanyah when she asked about skills we can learn as we grow. How to react and work through a disagreement without being aggressive is something Madame Geingos wishes for our youth. Grace Farrell, Year 8, asked about the challenges of being and advocate with UNAIDS. The First Lady expressed how taking the stories to heart is something that challenges her because some stories hurt due to the pain and suffering people face. Naomi Dukes, Year 7, followed up with the rewards of her work with UNAIDS to which the First Lady responded that hearing from children, learning to listen and making an impact is the most rewarding part of her role there.

We were breathing in the change of how to make positive impacts upon our

Yes, we young ladies are bringing new possibilities of the future.

When Melvina Nicol-Wilson, Year 7, asked the First Lady how she would define being a woman; the response was that she knew nothing other than being a woman, but that being herself, regardless of gender norms or stereotypes is something towards which we should strive. "If you are a soft individual, be soft because YOU are, not because it is what is expected of you as a girl." She added a personal story about being a tomboy and

demonstrating characteristics some may not deem female, but continued to encourage the drive to be oneself no matter the expectation based on gender.

After India Kay, Year 7, prompted, "Is there anything we didn't talk about that you would like to add?" The First Lady turned it back to them, asking if there was anything they hadn't asked that they wanted. This turned our conversations to music and listening to Michael Jackson, reading books such as The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy and how to manage gossip by eliminating people with low self-esteem from our inner circles.



"The first lady is an inspiring Namibian woman who is sophisticated, inquisitive, smart, and humble. I think with her as First Lady, Namibia's future is looking ten times brighter."--Christine Shali, Year 7

"I couldn't believe that I could listen to her talk about her life and what she did when she was younger. It was an honor to have her at our school."--Rizia Gillmore, Year 7

We thank The First Lady, Monica Geingos, for her time, energy and kindness. We want to thank the Office of the First Lady to help the logistical aspects work smoothly. Thank you to Thomas Jackson-Reed and Catherine O'Connor-Smith for our after school activity options. Thank you to Peter MacKenzie, Maggie



Reiff and Beth Smith for being there to support this opportunity. Thank you to Peter D'Alton for the yummy food; to Chrizelda Steenkamp for her assistance.

Melissa Kandido

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

This week I am writing to you from Doha, Qatar where I am participating as a team member for NEASC in a joint CIS/NEASC school accreditation. (I am away from 16-24 February.) WIS is accredited by both CIS and NEASC. Unlike inspection visits typical in many countries, the purpose of bringing in an accreditation team is to ultimately support the school to improve and become better.

During the week of the visit, the team's primary responsibilities are: to provide assessment on the school's conclusions of their self-study; and to evaluate the school according to the Standards for Accreditation in relation to its own Guiding Statements and beliefs. The first few days are spent getting to see the school first hand, gathering evidence through interviewing teachers, board members, students and parents; looking through the school's documentation and of course the best part is visiting classrooms where one can see learning in action. Once the evidence is gathered, each team member writes a report for his/her assigned section. As a team we read and review all of the sections of the report to ensure accuracy and consistency. Part of the report writing also includes making major commendations and recommendations to assist the school with realising its potential.

While serving on an accreditation team requires lots of reading and preparation ahead of the visit, as well as long days and short nights during the visit, the process is definitely worthwhile. Seeing what other schools are doing, as well as having the opportunity to discuss and interact with colleagues from other international schools is a form of professional development that one can't necessarily get from a workshop or online course. In addition, participating as a team member for a school accreditation visit provides me with a fresh view of the Standards for Accreditation, some new ideas, and new connections with other schools.

Regards,
Beth Smith

Helvi Wheeler

Namibian Storyteller and Author visits WIS on Friday, February 24th

Helvi Itenge Wheeler, Namibian author and storyteller, will be meeting with Primary students at WIS to share her love and passion for literacy and culture through storytelling and story writing on Friday, February 24th. We are very excited for her visit. Here is her inspiring and sobering 2015 [TedxWindhoek Talk](#). Helvi Wheeler's books can be **Pre-Ordered**. You can send money - exact amounts only - in an envelope with your child's name, classroom, book title/s to Ms. Catherine at **WIS Reception** until



- Nehoya and the Crocodile - 60
- Jackal and the Hyena - 60

Barbara Wilson

Wednesday, February 22nd. Preorders will be accepted with payment only.

Books will be available for sale and if pre-ordered and pre-paid for pick-up on Friday, February 24th at 11:40 at the PTA Hut. (See the selection below.) (Please send exact amounts only in an envelope with your child's name, classroom and book titles.)

Here is a list of titles and prices:

- Sam Nujoma - 110
- Inamwenyo/ Animals - 70
- Dancing Tortoise - 70
- Mrs Kangaroo Visits Namibia - 70
- Kishikishi - 60



From your child's class! Stay up to date with your child's class! [CLICK HERE](#) to find out how.

How We Express Ourselves

Venue: PLC auditorium
Time: 7:30 am - 8:45 am
Date: Monday 27th February 2017

YEAR 6 EXHIBITION INFORMATION WORKSHOP!

Dear Year 6 parents

You are invited to a PYP Exhibition Coffee morning. The PTA will be providing coffee and refreshments. I will be explaining the process of the Exhibition for our Year 6 students. This will help parents have better understanding, clarity of their role and how they can support our learners throughout the exhibition journey.

Looking forward to seeing you.
 Best
 Avril van Zyl (PYP Coordinator)

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

An interesting date at the end of an interesting week

Today's date: 17-02-2017 an interesting date indeed. It doesn't have a symmetry, but there is a pattern somehow, even if it is not in a mathematical sense.

This week was an exciting and interesting week here at WIS.

On Monday, Chris Payne, who is the Manager for International Recruitment for the University of British Columbia for our region visited WIS and talked to individual students as well as the Year 11 and 12 classes on admission at the University of British Columbia. For our students it sounded that they appreciated the information gained and that his presentation was impressive and inspiring. Two of our Year 13 students have applied at UBC for Engineering.

Connecting this to our programmes here at school, Thursday marked the annual information session for our incoming Year 10 and 12 students, entering the IGCSE and the IB Diploma respectively in August. Both sessions were well attended and some important questions were asked by parents and students that will hopefully guide our students in their decisions for the next step in their senior education. Once again, it became clear how difficult it is to make the right choices and how important it is that parents and students thoroughly discuss and consider their options to make sure their future education can be secured and successful.

On Wednesday, we had the special privilege to host Madam Geingos, First Lady of Namibia for a conversation with girls from our Middle School about the role of women in our society. Our girls had an open and interesting conversation with the First Lady. This was definitely an experience to be remembered by all participants.

On Tuesday, our Senior Student Council handed out roses and chocolates for fellow students who had ordered these for people who are special to them.

On Wednesday afternoon, Mr. MacKenzie and I met with fellow Principals and Directors from private schools in Windhoek. This is a meeting held each term and an opportunity for us to exchange ideas and experiences and to discuss challenges we all face.

And at the end of the week, we look back with gratitude that we are able offer different opportunities to our students to help them with their journey from one stage in their lives to the next.

Regards,
Maggie Reiff

Do we have to wait until a child gets hit by a car?

We have mentioned this a number of times to parents and students already.

Once again, can we urge all members of the community to **USE THE ZEBRA CROSSINGS** when crossing the car park.

This is a rule that should be respected by everyone, since it is there to keep our children safe. Especially tiny children - cannot be seen by cars when they reverse and just start running when they are keen to get



to class. Here at school it is our responsibility to keep our children safe and it is your responsibility as parents and guardians to ensure that your child gets to class safely.

We have to rely on a responsible role model behaviour from all our community members to ensure our children's safety!

We appreciate your cooperation and support in this regard.
Senior Leadership Team

WIS BOOK WEEK &
International Mother Language Day
20 - 24 February 2017

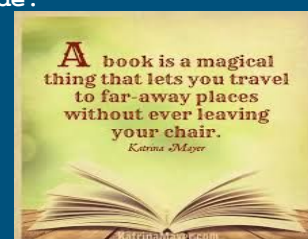
THEME: AROUND THE WORLD IN 5 DAYS

- Guest Namibian Storyteller and Author Helvi Itenge Wheeler comes to visit WIS
- Creating our own WIS 'Mother Tongue Cookbook'
- Creating (un)Sung Herstories traditional book & eBook.
- 'Dressing-Up' like characters from your favourite book on Friday the 24th. Join us and the PTA for a cup of coffee and parade.

AND MUCH MUCH MORE!!! Check D6 and class blogs.

Parents, would you like to come and read a story

(excerpt) to a year group? Email: jstroh@wis.edu.na





clothes

WIS
WINDHOEK INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

WIS BAZAAR

SELL | BUY | PLAY | OLD | NEW | HAND-MADE

Date: 25 February 2017
Time: 11:00 - 17:00
Place: WIS Campus

BOOK A TABLE!
WE HAVE A LIMITED NUMBER OF TABLES AVAILABLE
OR YOU CAN BRING YOUR OWN!

N\$100 vendors fee

BOOKINGS:
PTA Hut on Thursdays 13:00 - 14:00
Contact us on
PTA@wis.edu.na

Face-Paint



AN IMPROVISATIONAL COMEDY SHOW

THE ALPACAS



CASH ME OUSSIDE, HOWBOW
DAH?

Thursday 23
February
7:00 PM
Auditorium
Windhoek
International
School

GET TICKETS FROM THE IMPROV STUDENTS / DR
GUEST

***Only for Grade 9s and Above**

THE GREAT GATSBY



Masquerade Ball

Date: 03.03.2017
Time: 18:00-1:00
Venue: DHPS Aula
Price per ticket: \$50
Dress Code:
Formal (Masks Compulsory)



For Tickets Contact:
The WIS SRC or The DHPS SRC



Food and Masks will be sold at event