

# THE ORYX

*The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School*

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### Open Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> June

Thank you to all the parents and staff who attended the meeting on Wednesday evening. It was an important meeting and, I believe, a constructive one.

For those who were unable to attend, the Board made a presentation to explain where the school is today, how we got here, and what the challenges are as we look forward. Quite purposefully, numerous references were made to this event being the start of a "conversation" and during the evening many of those present made thoughtful and very welcome contributions.

The conversation that started last night will be continued and greatly expanded from August when all school constituencies will be invited to help generate our next five-year Strategic Plan. We know where we are today but what will the school look like in 2025? What *should* it look like? And how will we get there?

We look forward to hearing as many voices and opinions as possible.

### The Board of Directors

Also on Wednesday, the voting members of the Board met to agree on the appointment of three new members. Each will bring specific and valuable skills and experience.

The Board now numbers ten. All are parents of children in the school. Here is the full Board of Directors.

Yaw BRANTUO		Ghana
James DAMON		South Africa
Keri DZIUBAN	Vice-Chair	USA
Theresia FARRELL		Namibia
Jacqueline FERREIRA		Namibia
Palesa HEKANDJO		South Africa
Flora ISMAIL	Chair	Tanzania
Gaenor MICHAELS		Namibia
Magda NEL	Treasurer	Namibia
Lisa O'DONOGHUE-LINDY		Ireland

### Summer Winter Holiday

Even after four years in Namibia, I can't get used to thinking of July as "winter"! But whatever season you think it is, we are all heading off for a well-earned break. The last day for students will be Wednesday and this is the final Oryx of the year.

I'd like to wish everyone a relaxing vacation and safe travels.

*Peter MacKenzie*



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## Dates to Remember

### June 2019

- **10:** Internal Exams Start
- **19:** End of term 4
- **20 - 21:** Staff Work Days

### August 2019

- **12:** Start of Term 1
- **25:** Heroes Day - Public Holiday



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## Reading Programme at WIS

### Starting August 2019

*You may have tangible wealth untold; caskets of jewels and coffers of gold. Richer than I you can never be. I had a mother who read to me.*

**Strickland Gillian**

Many of you will already have heard via your children that WIS will be starting a Reading Programme as of August 2019. We will schedule times each week where the whole school will read. As you will see in Ms. Beth's article in this week's Oryx, there are distinct advantages to reading and we want to establish a reading culture among our children. As is outlined in this article: [8 Benefits of Reading](#), reading has many great advantages and it should be enjoyable.



When we create a culture of reading, our kids can learn to enjoy reading and at the same time benefit from all the other advantages reading has. A lot of research shows that reading is beneficial.

For the upcoming holidays, make this a topic of discussion in your family. And get books to read - bring a book back from your holiday that you will want to read when you come back to school.

## PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

The end of the school year is always filled with mixed emotions - excitement for the holidays and looking ahead to a new school year, while at the same time sadness in saying goodbye to classmates, friends, teachers and teaching assistants who are moving away or going to another school here in Namibia. The following Primary School staff members are leaving WIS: Ms Viviana (4V), Mr Naftal (Portuguese), Ms Ronel (Learning Support), and Ms Vicky (EY1). While we are sad to be saying goodbye, we wish them all the best in the new chapters of their lives and thank them for their contributions to WIS. ***Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay for a while, leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never, ever the same. (Flavia Weedn)***

Many parents ask how they can help their children at home. The best thing you can do to support your child's learning during the upcoming winter (summer) holiday is to encourage reading, whether it be reading to your child, having your child read to you or your child reads independently. The following information is from Scholastic:

Here are a few reminders:

- The second semester progress reports will be sent via email by the end of the day Wednesday, June 26. When reading the report please keep the definition of the descriptors in mind, along with the strengths and goals.
- If your child is leaving WIS and you would like to donate the WIS t-shirts and hats for us to use as extras, please bring them to the office.
- Class Lists for the 2019 - 2020 school year will be posted on Friday, August 9.
- The last day of school is Wednesday, June 19. **Dismissal is at 11:30.**

**Research on Summer Reading**

Children who **DO NOT READ** in the summer can **lose two to three months** of reading skills.

Kids who **DO READ** tend to **gain a month** of reading proficiency.

SCHOLASTIC

**reminder**

Thank you to all of you for your support this academic year. For those of you who are leaving WIS, best wishes to you and your children with transitioning to a new school and/or new country, and returning to your home country. If you are traveling during the holidays, may your journeys be safe, smooth and fun. To all who are returning to WIS for the new academic year I look forward to welcoming you back to school on Monday, August 12.



**Regards,  
Beth Smith**

## Primary School Student Council

To be a student council representative you have to be a good example and use the Learner Profile attributes.

The kinds of action we have taken includes;

- School spirit week - dress up as your parents, pj day, wacky hair day, super hero and house team Friday.
- We supported the "Earth Day" drive - collecting clothes.
- We have had a Caring week - where we encourage everybody to be mindful of how they treat each other.
- We implemented the Mascot pitch for our school - which we will find out about next Wednesday.



Thank you goes out to Zara Kunyaki Grade 1J, Chloe Kunyaki Grade 1B, Zena Alghafra Grade 2P, He Ren (Nini) Grade 2D, Jessica Damon Grade 3C, Nelao Robiati Grade 3V, Nombango Tjombonde Grade 4V, Lozé Majiedt Grade 4A, Abigail Segamwenge Grade 5L and Leonardo Hangula Grade 5K for your dedication and commitment.

Avril Van Zyl

## Zero Tech Holiday

All the best with that! We are planning our family holiday. For us, there is going to be opportunities to play with lots of cousins 'off devices'. Grown-ups included. As a family, we do not ban technology. We promote balance. There is a time for everything. There will be toys, books, sand, mud, walks, arguments, swimming, photos, soccer, movies, and technology. Everything in moderation. Last holiday I brought all the cousins together and I asked them how much time they thought they should spend on devices. I asked them why they thought I was having the discussion with them. We played it by their rules and rules had to be respected. Whether you are traveling or not, a family media agreement might come in handy. However, every family has its own values. I wish you and your family a pleasant tech balanced holiday

**Danai Maramba**



## SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

### Time to say goodbye - time to reflect on the year that was

This will be the last edition of the Oryx for this academic year and we have to say goodbye to some staff members and some students. But, we can also reflect on this past year - and look ahead to a new year.

At the end of this academic year, the following staff members will be leaving WIS to move somewhere else in the world:

- Ms. Kelsey Daignault will be starting a new job at the GEMS World Academy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, teaching Individuals and Societies as well as Language and Literature in the MYP programme.
- Mr. Riegardt Smit and Mrs. Corinne Smit will be moving to the American International School of Egypt in Cairo. Mrs. Smit will be teaching IBDP Biology and Mr. Smit will be teaching Robotics and Web Authoring.
- Ms. Ester Mutumbay will be moving to Faith Christian School, Mesa, Arizona, USA. She will be working as a Secondary Learning Support teacher for Mathematics, Science and English.
- Mr. Naftal Chivure will take a sabbatical year, after 12 years of teaching.



To all the students who will be leaving us and starting a journey somewhere else in the world we wish you:

- Joy and happiness
- Success and a fulfilled life
- All the best for your future.

May the next part of your journey be great, but may WIS also stay in your hearts for the rest of your life's journey. As you move on in your education, be thankful for the opportunities you are granted and make the most of every chance you get to be the best you can possibly be.



This was a busy year in the Secondary School and there is much to be proud of. We have consolidated the Middle School by adopting the Australian curriculum, and working on our planning and mapping out the alignment across the Middle School. Our schedule now incorporates several initiatives - a reading programme for the whole school, SDL (Student Directed and Self Directed Learning), a much more balanced schedule with passing time between lessons and some other

great things. We are looking into the next year with anticipation and excitement, celebrating learning opportunities while we experience all the opportunities our children and we can embark on.

We wish all our families a peaceful and restful break and hope to see you back at WIS on the 12th of August - with enthusiasm and ready to take on the new year.

**Correction from last week's Oryx:** In my farewell note to the Class of 2019 in last week's Oryx, I mentioned that Ashraf lead the Senior Student Council. He participated in the Senior Student Council. However, the President and Vice-President of the Senior Student Council were Gabrielle de Freitas Bacalhau and Thyra Eysselinck.

**Regards,**  
**Maggie Reiff**

## Sports News

### Inter House

On Friday class friendships and peer allegiances were temporarily put on hold for the T4 Inter House Sport sports event.

All Grade 6 - 9 Learners competed in either Fast 5's Netball, 7-a-side Netball or Softball.

There were four competitions running parallel and the house team points were combined following the outcome of the matches.

The standard of performance demonstrated shows that we have a high calibre of talented learners and highly competitive and motivated sports performers throughout the school. The competitions were all mixed so boys and girls competed together which ensured a high standard of competition for all throughout the event.



### Netball Fixture vs DHPS

In a senior friendly match WIS beat DHPS in Netball. The girls have worked well throughout the season and are developing into a strong competitive team.

### U14 Basketball

As we further develop our sports teams, we have highly competitive Basketball teams in the U16 and U14 division. Keep up the hard work boys.



### African Cup Inline Hockey

Twenty-six years ago a Hockey enthusiast decided to found an Inline Hockey club in Namibia. Two decades later Namibia has five well established clubs and over 1000 players regularly competing in the sport. Namibia regularly ranks in the top 10 countries in the Annual World Inline Championships.

Last weekend saw the 3rd edition of the African Cup hosted in Swakopmund. Several of our current and ex-students participated and thrilled the capacity crowd with some genuinely world class action.



**Sensei Stompie is Back!**



A couple of weeks ago our secondary community of learners participated in a taster session of Judo. We are fortunate to have the service of a highly experienced 5th Dan Black Belt instructor. All the primary learners will receive two taster sessions this week during their Physical Education lessons. Judo will be one of the offerings on the AA schedule next Semester.

**Thomas Jackson-Read**

## When ICT and Literature collides

In the ICT class Grade 7s had to use Google Forms to publish a “Choose-Your-Own-Adventure” type of story. The results varied from hilarious to scary and dramatic. The students then voted for the most entertaining ones, which are now available for your perusal.

Click on the link below to read these interactive stories and choose your own storyline!

[Peya](#)

[Jovahn](#)

[Natalie](#)

[Taboka](#)

[Arbaz](#)

[Zahra](#)

**Riegardt Smit**

## DENMARK EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

A group of six students from Grade 11 went on a Cultural exchange programme to Struer Statsgymnasium International school in Denmark from April 25<sup>th</sup> – May 5<sup>th</sup>. The goal of the trip was to learn about a new, foreign culture and experience the traditions of Denmark all while fostering lifelong friendships. This was an opportunity for us to learn and understand the real meaning of global acceptance by experiencing Danish culture and their people.



The trip was full of pleasant surprises and lovely encounters. The people were charming, open-minded and friendly. Our trip started in Copenhagen for two days. We stayed in central Copenhagen in a hostel called Urban House. Nearby were the grandiose theme park Tivoli, the famous shopping street of Strøget and the Copenhagen Central Station. We were separated into groups and left to our own accord in the shopping street where we had lots of fun! I went with Ilay and Dora and it was great to be able to hang out and explore the city together. There were shops of all kinds; from high fashion sneaker stores to electronics and souvenir shops across the countless, bustling streets where you could stroll through and stop to try some of the local cuisine. Along the way, we enjoyed hot-dogs composed of a selection of typical Danish ingredients such as remoulade, syltede agurker and ristede løg (fried onions). The day after, we went on a boat-tour over the canal of Nyhavn which is known for its radiant array of colourful houses. During the tour, we were able to witness the creative modern Danish architecture. From the Royal Palace to the Opera House, the Danes are very proud of their architecture. We also saw well-known landmarks such as the Little Mermaid, rundetårnet and the Church of Our Saviour spire.

We arrived at Struer International School on April 29<sup>th</sup>. We were greeted there straight from the station by the students and the Director (who personally gave us a presentation of their education systems) then to a conducted tour of the well designed school by the students. The School has many study programmes of which IB is a small part. The Danish Education system believes in the interest and talent of each child and fosters it; may it be engineering/ medical to hairdressing or cooking, and caters to it within the school programme. It's very interesting to see another culture's educational system. We even had a cooking classes during which Ilay burnt himself trying to make chicken frikadellers. In Struer we went to museums like the Bang and Olufsen museum of sound.



We also had the chance to go to Legoland which wasn't as fun as Tivoli but was amazing nonetheless. We also went to an amazing exhibition called "Where is home" giving different perspectives of the meaning of home considering the world as a global village. Of course we had to mention our historical meeting with the founder of WIS: Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen. He has settled in Denmark and was as excited to see us as we were eager to meet him. We learnt about our school's history and struggles at the time it was just opened.



Ryan and Ilay stayed at the boarding house. Ilay, at first reserved towards the idea, quickly changed his mind. He became friends with the kids at the boarding house and says now that he had so much fun. Ryan was Ryan. I stayed with Dora on an island called Venø. It was a little piece of paradise. My hosts, Viktoria and Aleksandra, made sure we had something to do in the evenings. We went on walks on the beach, we explored the coast of Denmark and we tasted the world's' cleanest oysters at their farm. Nacim and Dave also stayed with host parents who went out of their way to teach them Danish culture and customs.

Our teachers Mrs. Mathew and Mrs. Corinne gave us the independence to make our own choices and made sure that we were all safe. The program is a great way to be part of a global community. It grants you independence through first-hand experience and shows you things you've never seen before. We thank WIS and Struer Statsgymnasium for making us part of this program and we wish that it will continue next year.

**Cedric Li Hin Kam - Grade 11**

## Cambridge Upper Secondary

### Science Competition

The Cambridge Upper Secondary Science Competition is a new team competition for 14-16-year-old students at Cambridge schools. It is designed to be a fun, motivating and educationally important part of extra-curricular science.

Cambridge launched this competition for the first time this year. The competition is based on the way scientists work collaboratively together in the real world as Science is a shared activity, often meaning that scientists in different places come together to work on a single problem which involves true collaboration, not simply cooperation. This kind of teamwork also involves reflection on how to operate most effectively as a team. The





Cambridge Upper Secondary Science Competition rewards not just the science investigated but also the way in which the team works together as true collaborators and reflects on their work.

Our school entered three teams from Grade 9 for this competition and proud to announce that all the teams were awarded certificates for their investigation. David, Olivia and Grace investigated the fairy circles in Namibia and their topic was "Are their specific properties of the soil inside fairy circles which support the numerous theories put forward by different scientists from around the world?". This project missed the Gold certificate by 1% and won a silver award. The other two projects were "The effect of Caffeine on athletic ability" by Emilio, Lukene and Mathis and "The use of Moringa seeds to purify water" by Mrinalini and Arushi which were both awarded a Bronze award.

Congratulations to all the three teams who had to do their project in their own time in the afternoons. They were dedicated and showed enthusiasm towards their projects and worked independently as teams. We are truly proud of their achievement. As this was the first year of the competition. Hopefully next year with the experience gained we can not only achieve gold awards but also become regional winners in the competition.

### **SCIENCE GARDEN**



Thank You to the **PTA** for donating money for the artificial turf and thank you to **Mrs. Urte Dorgeloh** for initiating this project. I am sure the Science students will enjoy the garden space.

**Mariamamma Mathew**

## Inquiry-focused History teaching across WIS

### Applying the past to the present

#### Case #1 - Secondary School

Last month two different Secondary school WIS History classes (Grades 8 and 9) travelled off-campus on two separate mornings to visit a provocative exhibit entitled '[Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race](#)' -

The exhibit stimulated an array of deep questions not only about the Second World War and the Holocaust, but also about humankind's potential for unkindness and cruelty and (nearby other cases of) self-less giving and altruism. Student reflections on the exhibit typified the critical thinking that learners demonstrate. At WIS inquiry fits at the centre of the way History is taught and from this pedagogical approach emerges profound thoughts hidden in nascent areas of their cognitive processes. For example, the WIS teacher's question '*What did you think of the exhibit?*' evoked a collection of amazing on-line responses (and here are two!) that show how learners apply History lessons from the past to today's world:

- I completely disagree with the Nazi regime's science of race. I believe that all people and nations are equal and nobody should be discriminated because of his race. I believe that handicapped and disabled people should be helped. I would never suggest eugenics as a policy, but especially not now, in the 21st century. I think that in order to help the people, a government needs to help everyone, not just the "fittest".
- I find it very stupid and heartless to kill someone because they were born different and I do not believe it could work in the 21st century as society is more open.



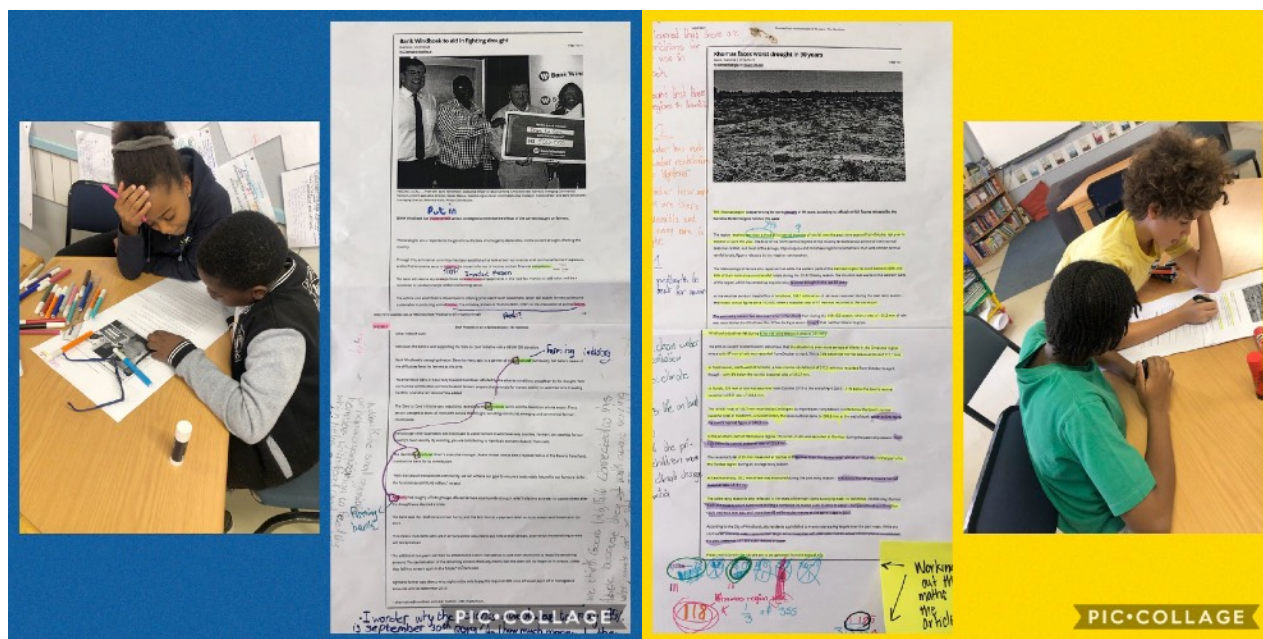
**Rick Fitzpatrick & Kelsey Daignault**

### Literacy, Agency and Inquiry in Grade 5L class

#### Case #2 - Primary School

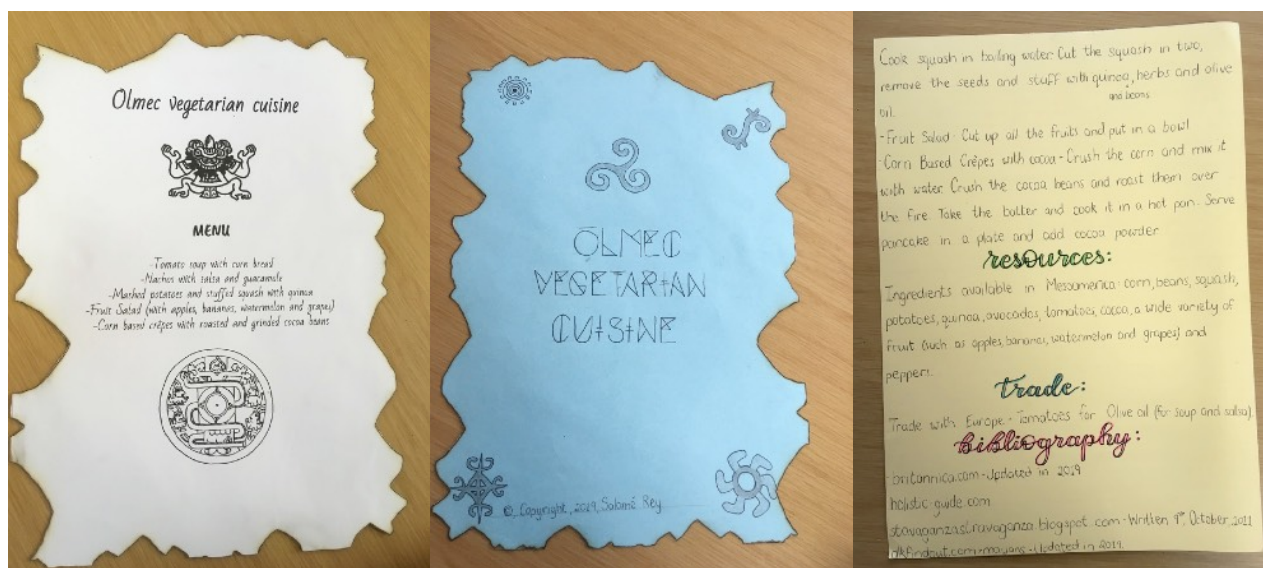
Students in 5L spent the last five weeks inquiring into the transdisciplinary theme Sharing the Planet with the Central Idea focused on *A changing environment challenges the way resources are allocated and utilised*. Our integrated literacy focus is based on reading and writing news articles. In one engagement students were given three different articles from *The Namibian* to choose from and they selected a partner who would inspire them to be 'their best learner'. (Interestingly, and much to my pleasure, these were the most effective partnerships all year.) Together they read the article several different times approaching each reading with a specific set of criteria. The first time they read they were asked to identify the situation, the purpose, the intended audience and the mode (i.e. letter to the editor, opinion article, informative, etc). The second time they reviewed it, they read to understand what the article was about - identify the main idea. The third time they perused it they were asked to determine what they might need to do next to better understand the article or to take their learning further. With each reading, students were given the freedom to choose how they wanted to document their thinking. In the end, students generated high-quality ideas for communicating their learning to their class member. Their ideas included retelling and/or summarising the article, rewriting the article for a younger

audience, completing a 5L- modified [Harvard Project Zero Visible Thinking Routine '3-2-1 Bridge'](#) (learned, wondering, action to be taken), and the Harvard University-team developed [Visible Thinking Routine 'Connect-Extend-Challenge'](#). (Learn more at: <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/projects/visible-thinking>)



Lyndsay Bain

**Case #3 - Inquiry Process in Grade 6 Social Studies**



Asking good questions helps us take charge of our own learning. Learning to ask good questions is a process, as “yes” or “no” types of questions do not get us very far in discovering why events happened or why people feel as they do. Once we master this process, however, we become better thinkers and researchers and can find out more about subjects that interest us. Asking good questions is also important if we want to understand and affect the world around us. In: inquiry-journal-sampler-world-history-ms.

Over the past weeks, Grade 6 learners had to design a **Neolithic Menu**. This research project had its main focus on understanding “How communities and Individuals develop strategies for living in sustainable cultures and

environments while responding to global opportunities and tensions” and the content topic under study was the World Prehistory and Early Namibia.

This project was planned to allow students through real-world examples to explore the four assessment criteria for Social Studies: **Knowing and understanding** (*using terminology in context, demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts through descriptions, explanations and examples*); **Investigating** (*using research methods to collect and record relevant information*); **Communicating** (*communicating information and ideas using an appropriate style for the audience and purpose, structure information and ideas in a way that is appropriate to the specified format*) and **Thinking Critically** (*discussing concepts, issues, models, visual representation and theories, synthesise information to make valid arguments, analyse and evaluate a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, examining values and limitations and interpret different perspectives and their implications*). In: MYP I&S Assessment criteria

It was an excellent exercise for our learners to be risk -takers and creative and simultaneously to learn how to apply the learning concepts/content in context and to understand how humankind evolved.

I would like to add that learners had fun during this experience and *learning happens when it is meaningful and meaningful is everything you do without noticing*.



Teresa Araújo

## From the PTA

As we come to the end of the 2018/2019 school year, the PTA is grateful to be a part of the WIS Community. Here are a few of the highlights from this past year:

Developing a greater sense of community and a welcoming environment for new families transitioning to life in Namibia and to WIS. This happened through being at the welcome meeting for new families in August, holding coffee mornings every Thursday. This aligns with a new students' first day of school, and serves as an outreach to new families on an individual basis helping them to connect to the larger WIS community.

Serving as the sole provider of official WIS logo merchandise to both students and teachers. This includes taking regular inventory and purchasing of all WIS branded apparel and products that are proudly worn around the school and in the community.


Providing financially and through the volunteering of personal time for various initiatives around the school. This involves being present to serve refreshments and sell merchandise at International Day as well as at various meetings, sports events, assemblies, concerts, and teacher trainings. It also involves providing financial support for projects as requested including the Tech training in February, landscaping around the school and the IBDP Diploma Celebration.

Creating spaces for fun and belonging. Through the PTA Family Braai and Earth Day Celebrations as well as Festive Coffee Mornings, the PTA strives to bring the WIS community together in a non-academic setting in order to build lasting relationships and enjoy what we all bring to this special place.

As previously mentioned, the PTA is working to revise its Constitution and determine how a Parent-Teacher-Association can further support the needs of our WIS community. It would be wonderful to see more faces and hear more ideas as we head into 2019 / 2020. Please contact [pta@wis.edu.na](mailto:pta@wis.edu.na) with any questions.

**Michelle Jackson-Read**

This is an anecdotal story for anyone who wishes to understand an uncharted journey of a boy and his family. It's personal and emotional, at times revealing forthright assessments of inadequacies and indifference. No verbal punches are pulled. This is as unfiltered as it gets.




**About The Author**  
Kathleen Britz is the mother of three children, now adults. She was born and raised in Cape Town, lives in Namibia and teaches at an International school in Windhoek. Her eldest son Colin Michael has Down Syndrome and is the heart and ache of her home and life. This book is for Colin Michael's 30th birthday. It is written in collaboration with his brother Patrick and sister Kate.

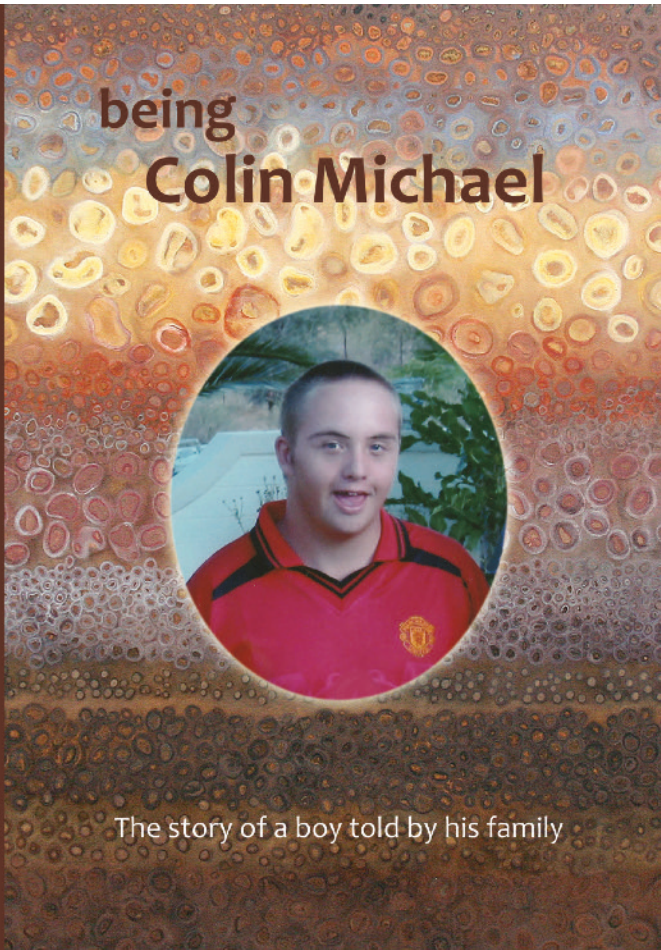
**What do I hope to achieve by writing this book?**  
I hope that this will be a shortcut in getting to know CM. Anyone who meets and takes the time to connect with him should see he is entitled to a life that is not diminished by the difficulties he faces. Disadvantaged, discriminated against and excluded from many opportunities because of them, is irrefutable. CM contributes to our lives unconditionally, without prejudice or malice whatsoever. He is guileless, uncorrupted, unselfish, quirky, loyal and very good natured.

**Who do you think your readers will be?**  
Friends and family and those who know any one of us. Colleagues, counsellors, teachers, educationalists, schools, psychologists, therapists, medical practitioners, government services, special needs networks around the globe, parents and carers.

**What do you hope they will learn?**  
Empathy. We all have a responsibility to work together towards being open-minded, creating or facilitating an inclusive, equal opportunities society which is not elitist.

Cover painting: detail from *Push Moraine* by Margje Britz, Colin Michael's aunt.





**being  
Colin Michael**

The story of a boy told by his family

Available from Kathleen Britz at N\$150 per copy at school or email to order copies at [exclusivewinesandlinesnamibia@gmail.com](mailto:exclusivewinesandlinesnamibia@gmail.com) or [kbritz@wis.edu.na](mailto:kbritz@wis.edu.na)