



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Conversation

In June the Board of Directors started a “conversation” with the whole school community about what the school is, what people want it to be, and – the hard reality – what it can afford to be.

The surveys that were distributed and completed earlier this month were an important part of this conversation. We received 230 replies from parents, students, and staff and the picture they paint of the school is an enormously positive one. There is broad agreement, verging on unanimity in many cases, about what makes the school unique in Windhoek. Everyone values and attaches great importance to what we do, what we are, and who we are.

There is no doubt that WIS is a special school.

What everyone values so highly, however, comes at a price and there was less unanimity in the surveys about how to pay for it.

The conversation continues.

All parents have been invited to attend a presentation on **Wednesday 2nd October** at **6pm** in the auditorium where the details of the surveys will be discussed.

Please also note another date. On **Saturday 26th October** (provisionally 10am to 4pm) the board would like to meet parents once more. An external facilitator, highly experienced in the world of international schools and not least in Africa, will lead the conversation.

Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Assessment Conferences

The sign-up link for the conferences was sent on Monday. Hopefully, you’ve been able to sign up for a conference with your child’s homeroom teacher as well as specialists. Sign-ups will close on Monday morning.

Perhaps the name of this conference should be changed to “Growth Conference” as the purpose is to inform parents of their children’s progress so far and how teachers and parents can partner together to help the children grow in their learning.

Contents

- From the Director p. 1
- Primary News p. 1 - 2
- Secondary News p. 2 - 9
- Other News p. 10 - 13

Dates to Remember

October 2019

- **03 - 05:** AISJ Volleyball
- **04:** End of Term 1
- **07 - 11:** October break
- **14:** Start of Term 2



VISIT US ON:



Facebook



Instagram

WEEKLY PUZZLER

Eden (Grade 4) solved last week's puzzler. Well done!


Intuition leads many to think the probability should be $\frac{1}{2}$. But here is a way of thinking about it: There are 4 ways to have 2 kids, BB, BG, GB, GG.

Once we know that one is a boy there are now only 3 ways that could happen: BB, BG, GB. There is only one way to satisfy the desired outcome, BB. So the probability becomes $\frac{1}{3}$.

That was so much fun, let's stay with probability. In a drawer you have 3 pairs of blue socks, 4 pairs of red socks, and 5 pairs of green socks. In complete darkness, how many socks would you need to pull out to guarantee (100%) that you get a matching pair of the same colour?

Please send solutions, or any fun and interesting puzzlers to pfarrell@wis.edu.na



BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with your child: What is going well in school? What would make school better? Make notes of what you think your child is doing well and what your child needs to work on both academically and socially, as well as emotionally. Prepare questions you'd like to ask the teacher(s) about your child's learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn your cell phone off or put your phone on silent so that you can devote your full attention to the conference.  Focus on where your child is at and what the goals are for your child to make growth this year. Ask questions to help you understand your child's progress thus far. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss goals set with your child and monitor progress towards achieving goals. Continue to encourage your child. Follow through on the suggestions of how you can support your child's learning at home. Communicate with the classroom teacher or the single subject teacher with any concerns, questions or follow-up on points discussed during the conference.

MAP Growth Workshop

Yesterday the Grades 1-5 Homeroom teachers, Learning Support and EAL teachers, Ms. Avril, Mr. Danai, Ms. Reiff, Mr. Parsons, Ms. Angie and I participated in the MAP Growth workshop. Lindsay Stoelting, a consultant for NWEA, had us engaged from the first minute. The topics ranged from the purpose of MAP Growth, the various components of MAP Growth, and how the results can be used to support instruction. It was an excellent professional learning opportunity.

Today's session involved Ms. Avril, Mr. Danai, Ms. Reiff, Mr. Parsons, Ms. Angie, Ms. Lyndsay, Ms. Pamela and me focusing on school-wide reports and an action plan.

Thank you to the parents who attended last night's MAP information evening. I think everyone who attended left with a better understanding of MAP Growth and how we are using the results of these tests to support instruction.

These two days have been time well spent and we are appreciative of the US State Department Office of Overseas Schools for sponsoring Lindsay's work with us.

Regards,
Beth Smith

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Architecture in the ACE Protocol

As you are aware, we are currently in the process of preparing for our first accreditation with NEASC with the ACE Protocol. The ACE Protocol looks at the school in terms of Teaching and Learning. The process of investigating and looking at our school in this regard is exciting and a good opportunity to reflect on our practices.

ACE is meant to be a transformative accreditation: "ACE aims to transform rather than 'improve' schools by reshaping accreditation into an instrument that facilitates systemic change." (ACE Learning Introduction)



I want to elaborate a little on the first part of the protocol:

A - Architecture of Learning

Architecture of Learning “defines **what** learners learn, **why** they learn it, **how** they learn it, how learning is assessed and communicated, to what extent learners are able to choose their own learning, and how the learning community knows that it has achieved the desired impact on the learner.” For this to be possible, there needs to be a shared understanding and language. Learners take an active role in this process in order to become responsible and successful citizens. This is achieved by the efforts and input of the whole learning community. The learning community is everybody involved in the process of education - learners, parents, teachers, administrators. An effective learning environment fosters critical thinking, performance, action and entrepreneurship. In our teaching approach, we try to address these different areas of learning, both in and outside of the classroom. And the same should apply to the interactions in the home.

Architecture has 4 **Learning Principles**:

1. **Learning Goals**
2. **Dimensions of Learning**
3. **Assessment FOR, OF and AS Learning**
4. **Learning Perspectives**

- **Learning Goals** refer to characteristics that make learners become responsible and successful citizens. Their understandings, competencies, knowledge, dispositions and values will guide them to achieve this learning goal.
- **Dimensions of Learning** are the creative, moral, social, experiential and entrepreneurial dimensions of learning.
- **Assessment for, of and as Learning** measures the effect of learning on the learner. This includes all forms of assessment: formative, summative, self-assessment, peer-assessment and other forms of assessment. Assessment informs planning and teaching and also the understanding of the growth of the learner. It consists of qualitative as well as quantitative criteria. The new approach we are following in our Secondary School enables learners to experience all different dimensions of learning and to understand and assess their own growth as learners. The PYP follows the same approach - where learners learn through investigation, inquiry and reflection.
- **Learning Perspectives** is the Learning Principle that ensures that learners have the opportunity to venture into unfamiliar terrain. Please see the short article on page 9, from the Grade 7 class about their unit on *Space Tourism*. This is an excellent, relevant and exciting exercise to engage students in the world around them, make them investigate different possibilities and find out about things that are current and of interest. They make informed decisions about their proposals and consider a range of perspectives. Another very important aspect of this Learning Principle is that learners are encouraged to take risks and when they don't succeed, they are encouraged to try again. Mistakes are seen as opportunities and not failures. When young people learn that it is okay to fail and that we learn from failing, they will be much more confident in their approach to learning and growing.

All these learning approaches give students a voice and a choice in their own learning and encourages them to actively engage in the learning process. They become more confident and independent and will be more creative in their search for solutions. The SDL sessions that were introduced at the beginning of the year in Secondary School are a great way to give students a choice and a voice. Please see Mr. Parsons' article about SDL in this edition of the Oryx.

It is exciting to see how our young learners grow and how they embrace the new learning opportunities. There are still some areas that need to be ironed out, but overall we feel that we are supporting independent thinking and action. This will certainly increase creativity and innovation on the part of the learners, the parents and the teachers - we are all continuously learning and growing.

Regards,
Maggie Reiff

SDL - Self - Directed - Learning @ WIS

“Be your own Teacher”

A few weeks ago I had the privilege to spend a week with the Teaching and Learning Department at the American International School of Johannesburg (AISJ). AISJ brought in a leading educational expert, (especially with implementing/unpacking the Common Core Standards in the USA) Dr. Paul Bloomberg ([Core Collaborative](#)) who spent the week working with different grade levels, departments and administrators on how to best develop units, check for understanding, reflect and develop a positive school culture.

Dr. Paul used a lot of information compiled by another educational specialist named John Hattie. John Hattie is a leading researcher in the field of educational development. He and his team have spent years compiling data on what helps students improve, grow and learn best. They named this [Visible Learning](#): “Visible learning occurs when teachers see learning through the eyes of students and help them become their own teachers.” His team has spent 25 years compiling data from over 95,000 studies involving 300 million students around the world.

One of my big takeaways from the week at AISJ is “I’m not smarter than the data.” I have/had some opinions about what is best for our students, but the data gives us real facts to reflect upon. After an extensive analysis of all the data, Visible Learning has identified roughly 250 influences across all areas of school that affect student development. They have found that [97% of influences](#) have a positive effect. However, they have identified the influences that have THE GREATEST effect. When looking at the research, it has been determined that a Standard Deviation (SD) of 0.4 represents one year of growth in a student for one year of impact. The higher the SD, the greater the impact and the more likely your child will improve and grow as a Learner. So what does the data say? What is the biggest bang for our Namibian Dollar? Where should we focus our time?

Some of you might be surprised at where the [research](#) says we should focus our energy. It is not homework (0.29), it is not reducing class size (0.21) and it is not Teaching Test Taking (0.30). Yes these things do help, but not as much as [Collective Teacher Efficacy](#) (1.57), Self-Reported Grades (1.33), Classroom Discussions (0.82) and Timely Feedback for Students (0.70). Based on this data, classroom discussions have more than twice the effect on growth than homework. A student being able to accurately predict their grade, grows six times more than if we reduced the number of students in the class.

So how is WIS using this information to help our learners?

1. Analysing MAP Testing and identifying a students ability to access content.
2. Aligning our Curriculum - so that teachers/students/parents understand what our learners need to understand and when they need to understand it.
3. Aligning our Unit Planning - concept/inquiry based planning. Students see the connections in what they are doing. Teachers know where they want to go and can clearly articulate student understanding.
4. Aligning our Assessments - all stakeholders know what is happening and what the expectations (rubrics) are.

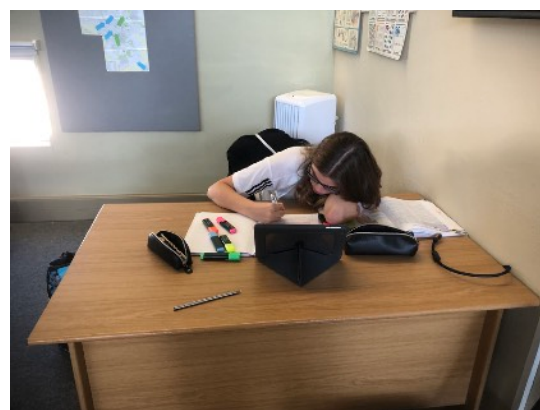


Practices That Yield Desired Effects	
Collective teacher efficacy	1.57
Self-reported grades	1.33
Response to intervention	1.29
Plagiarism programs	0.70
Teacher credibility	0.60
Classroom discussion	0.82
Teacher clarity	0.75
Feedback	0.70
Direct instruction	0.40
Providing formative evaluation	0.46

Practices That Yield Typical Teacher Effects	
Classroom management	0.35
Ability grouping (gifted students)	0.30
Teaching test taking and coaching	0.30
Homework	0.29
Mainstreaming/inclusion	0.27
Reducing class size	0.21

Practices That Yield Developmental Effects	
Co- or team teaching	0.10
Web based learning	0.10
One on one laptops	0.10
Mentoring	0.10
Background music	0.10
Humour	0.04

Practices That Yield Reverse Effects	
Summer vacation effect	-0.02
Lack of sleep	-0.05
Suspension/expelling students	-0.20
Retention (holding students back)	-0.32
Moving between schools	-0.34
Boredom	-0.49



5. Providing Feedback - using Assessment FOR (Formative), Assessment OF (Summative) and Assessment AS Learning (Reflection) to help students be able to predict/understand what level they are at and what they themselves need to do to improve. (They become their own teacher)

Having all stakeholders on common ground (Collective Community Efficacy) and students being able to self predict grades are two of the most important influences. These are only two of the influences we are focusing on.

A new initiative built into the new [Secondary schedule](#) to address these influences is Self-Directed Learning (SDL). Each Friday Grade 6 to 10 students have two blocks to “self” select a subject and a teacher with whom they would like to spend extra time. Grades 11 and 12 have “free” blocks embedded in their schedules for SDL time.

Based on teacher feedback, peer feedback, assessment feedback and their own self reflection, students are mentored by their homeroom/subject teachers to create “the plan of action”. Students are asked to use the What? So What? Now What? reflection framework to understand what they need to improve on, what questions they want to ask, who they will ask and what resources they will need to help themselves. “Students becoming their own teachers” is the essence of Visible Learning by John Hattie.



Signups for SDL go live every Friday for the following week. Week 1: Maths, Sciences, PE, ICT and Business teachers are available, Week 2: Art, Drama, English, Social Studies, MultiMedia, Languages and My Campus-My Planet teachers are available. Spots are limited, so signup fast!

Michael Parsons, Director of Teaching and Learning

Grade 8 Science - Allergies

During the last period of the day on 10th September, the Grade 8 class got the amazing opportunity to interview a paediatrician. Mr. Bau was kind enough to take some time out of his day to answer some of our pressing questions about the unit we were currently doing which is allergies.

He gave us a lot of information about allergies such as how it affects us in the long term, how allergies can be inherited, and the best course of action to take when an individual is having an allergic reaction.

I definitely learned a lot during that time that could potentially save someone's life or help me in the future. He was very kind, respectful and patient with our class and answered every one of our questions to the best of his ability.



It was an incredible opportunity and we're very thankful to Ms. Urte and Mr. Bau for supporting and helping us with this topic and our grade definitely enjoyed it a lot.

Sarah Tibazarwa

Pssst ... heard in the corridors (Grade 10)

If I could, I surely would tell my parents/mother/father/guardian ...

- *Respect my privacy*
- *I love you, I appreciate all you do for me, the sacrifices you've made for me. Even though I don't tell you (don't know why), I value you. Thank you.*
- *That you should try to understand and respect my thoughts and opinions as much as I respect yours.*
- *Things that you accuse me of...please speak to me first before concluding.*
- *Please control your temper, as it has a negative effect on the entire household.*
- *I apologise for not being what you want me to be. Sorry for always disappointing you. I assure you I'm trying but of late I am not at all motivated. Love you.*
- *When I don't do well at school, please don't make me feel like a disgrace to the family. My grades don't define who I am.*
- *I know I will never be a topper in the class but I do try my best and I'll keep striving to be a better version of myself.*
- *Stay the same. Thank you for who you are. I appreciate the independence you have granted me.*
- *Thanks for opposing corporal punishment. Now that I live in a country where some parents beat their children, I really appreciate it! Also thanks for letting me eat chocolate.*
- *Love you mommy.*
- *Sometimes I am afraid of you; to tell you my test results because I don't like being shouted at.*

- *To stop doubting me ... please trust me.*
- *How I feel when I when I disappoint you with my test results. I feel so embarrassed and disturbed when I cannot live up to your expectations. I would also want to communicate more openly with you.*
- *I thank you for taking me along all your travels to different countries and cities.*
- *I wish you were more understanding of how stressful life is at my age. Probably it is not as bad as it is for adults, but there is a lot of pressure on me from my school, you - my family, our society and sometimes I need a break; sympathy from you will be appreciated. Need for discipline is understandable, but sometimes if I don't do well in a test, it is maybe because I'm stressed and sleep-deprived. I wish you would be less stringent.*
- *To stop comparing me with my siblings. We work at different levels. We are all different.*
- *You mean the world to me; you are the best mother in the world. You are truly my best friend. All the crazy things we do together just proves how connected we are.*
- *I understand why you worry about me when I stay out late at night. But please make exceptions at times. I want to enjoy myself and create new bonds. I promise to be responsible always; please give me some freedom.*

NATIONALS

It is my great pleasure to write once again about the WIS swimming Champions.

The Namibian National Short Course Championship took place last weekend in Swakopmund. Twelve WIS students represented their swimming clubs to the best of their abilities. *Victoria Ellmies, Salomé Rey, Kgosana Hekandjo, Dominic Fitzpatrick, Oliwia Stephanus, Sarah Tibazarwa, Martha Kali, Mark Tibazarwa, Candice Rey, Kabelo Hekandjo, Gizelle Slinger and Rhuize Zhou (Jeremy)* competed in many races, received many medals and personal best times. WIS swimmers proudly showed off their swimming skills and confidence in the water. They demonstrated excellent techniques, stamina and competitive spirit.

Any sport demands determination, commitment, and perseverance. I'm impressed with all our students, they have shown it all. ***Congratulations to you all!***

A special acknowledgment goes to our oldest swimmer- **Victoria Ellmies** for receiving the second place **Ludorum in the Senior Category** - "the winner of the games" and **Kabelo Hekandjo**, our youngest one for receiving **The Brother Sebastian Trophy** for his performance throughout this year.



Let's hear what some of our swimmers and parents had to say about the experience in Nationals. **Salomé Rey** said "This was my first Short Course Nationals Gala so I was very stressed, but even more excited! Although there were some very serious and intense moments, we still managed to have a lot of fun. I got to know a lot of people better and see some of my teammates from a different perspective. Overall, it was an amazing experience!" **Kgosana Hekandjo** "This was personally the best nationals I have had, it was the first time I came second, and improved by so much at nationals, and I qualified for SA Junior Champs." **Martha's mom:** "It was the third NASU Championship that Martha has participated, she managed to get into the finals for 50m & 100m fly. Most importantly she improved on her times. Although she was disappointed that she did not perform as well as she wanted in the finals, she has come away more determined to improve and become a better-disciplined swimmer"

We will be reading more about the swimmer's personal achievements, and their reflections and photos in our Yearbook.

They all made a fantastic effort and we are very proud of them.

Our next swimming event will take place on the 25th & 26th October 2019 during our inter-school Pupkewitz Gala, where our students will compete with many other schools from Windhoek.

The Sports Committee is looking forward to seeing many new swimmers there!

Beata Stephanus

PLEASE NOTE:

There will be no afternoon activities for Primary students on Tuesday, 1 October and Wednesday, 2 October due to the Parent/Teacher conferences.

Basketball

On Monday 23rd of September it was the clash we have all been waiting to find out which primary school has the right to be called Kings and Queens of the Court when our Under 11 mixed team battled it out with DHPS. DHPS was the reigning champions for 2018 and WIS was in third place so we had it all to play for. It was a fight from the first jump ball to the end. The Under 11 veterans played it out with DHPS (A) and the WIS (B) played it out with DHPS (B). The veterans played it out for gold and silver and WIS (B) played it out for the third and fourth place.



The game between the veterans and DHPS(A) was a nail-biting from the start with both teams playing for pride and bragging rights with the WIS veterans emerging as the winner and gold medalist with a score of 18 to 17. The WIS(B) had a much more dominant win over DHPS(B) with a score of 19 to 8 to win third place and a bronze medal.

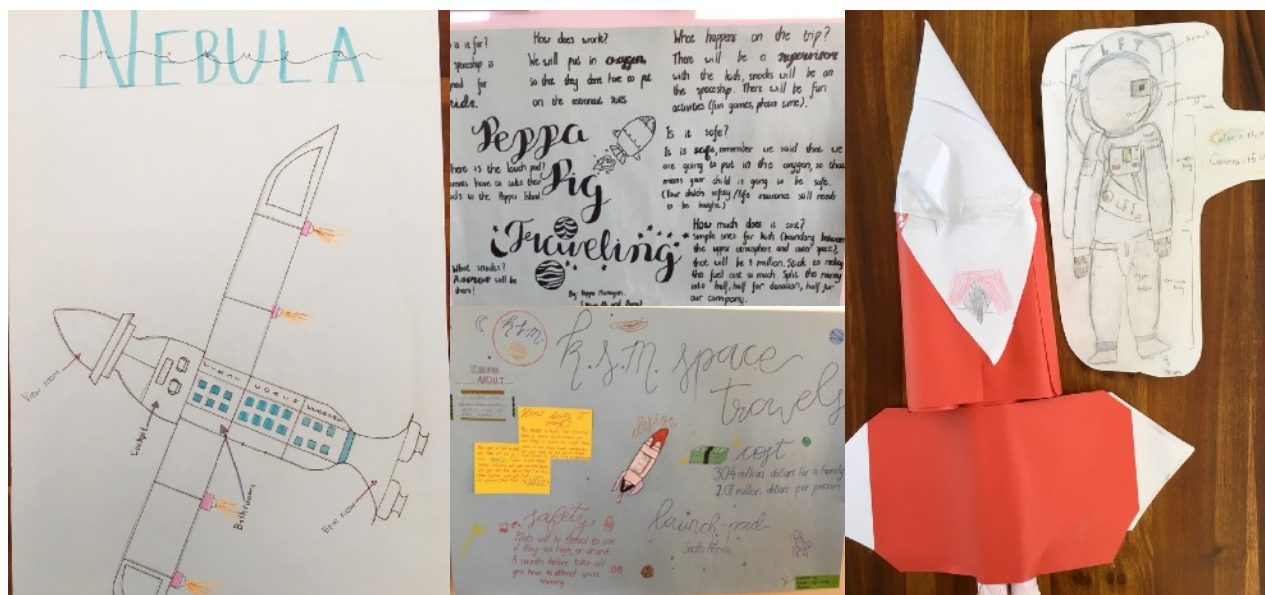
As coaches, we want to thank all the players for the hard work and commitment. A **BIG THANK YOU** goes out to the parents for all the support from sending them to practise and bringing them to all the game. Without your support it would not have been possible. We also want to thank Mrs. Avril and Mr. D for being our drivers and Mrs. Avril our number one supporter. Thanks to Mr. MacKenzie for supporting the teams and being there for the games.

Audrey Bock

Space Tourism

If you could travel to space for fun, would you? What if I told you that for only US\$250,000 you could be one of the lucky few to be the first 'space tourists' in the VERY near future!?

Over the last couple of weeks the Grade 7 Social Studies students have been studying tourism. Recently we have explored Space Tourism and how Sir Richard Branson's company, Virgin Galactic, aims to be the first company to get ordinary people into space for a 'holiday'. Students were challenged to compete with Virgin Galactic and 'steal' some of their potential customers. They had to design a rocket- / spaceship, come up with a business plan and present this to potential clients. The students explored different rocket designs, worked out the costs and came up with creative ideas of what they will do with their time in space. They also explored the potential dangers and proposed safety precautions.



I was amazed by their creativity and ideas! A few groups included environmentally sustainable ideas, some included education of tourists and some of them proposed different pricing structures to make it accessible for more people. Watch out Sir Richard Branson... You've got some serious competition! Well done to all the Grade 7s.

Johan Meyer

PTA NEWS

We had a very peaceful coffee morning last Friday for World Peace Day. Thank you to all of you who attended and contributed. As you can see, our members were also preparing for the Climate Change March that took place last Friday as well. "Fridays For Future" – the global learner and student movement for climate protection.

On Friday 20th September 2019 the Fridays for Future demonstration took place in Windhoek for the 2nd time. Lots of young people and students from several schools were involved, demanding from the Namibian Government to take substantial actions against climate change – NOW!

Students and parents from WIS were part of the march from the Ministry of Environment to Ausspanplatz and created these powerful billboards:



We, the PTA would like to encourage all WIS students and the WIS community to be part of this important movement which is taking place in 150 countries now. We will let you know when the next Fridays for Future demonstration will take place.

Let's be an active community for climate protection! - Anne

Next Thursday as part of celebrating our cultures as a mixed cultured school we shall be celebrating the Jewish New Year. Amit will be bringing in some food to share and will leave some information about how Jews celebrate their New Year. If you would like to come and share your culture with us please contact pta@wis.edu.na We look forward to seeing you.

Plans for International Day are well on the way, but there is still lots to do, so we will be setting up a google doc for volunteers to help on the day or by providing a traditional food dish that we hope to use to create our own WIS Recipe Book. We will also have a bake-off to raffle. We will have lots of activities and Mr Jackson-Read will be running an ultimate frisbee tournament. We will have live music to get you dancing and singing

CALLING ALL OF YOU LEARNERS, FAMILIES, TEACHERS, COMMUNITIES WHO WANT TO PERFORM ON OR HAVE A STALL FOR INTERNATIONAL DAY, PLEASE COME SEE ME, PHONE OR EMAIL Michelle Jackson-Read.

Let's own our International Day pta@wis.edu.na

With peace, warmth & action,
WIS PTA

W.O.R.D.
 Guess who is also reading during our
 scheduled reading lessons...



Cutest of the Pack

Pet Calendar 2020 Photo Contest

Has your pet got what it takes to be crowned a winner?
 Do you have the purrfect pet?

Enter for your pet's chance to be the **Animal of the Year 2020**.
 The top **12 winners** will be featured on a full spread in the calendar.
 The top **120** will be featured in the calendar.

Enter and vote between 1 September until 14 October 2019.

Tara Mette
 PHOTOGRAPHER

The winner gets a pet photo shoot with professional photographer **Tara Mette** and the calendar cover photo. Photography session can be scheduled in Windhoek and in Swakopmund!

- Cannot wait to enter your pet? Follow these simple steps:**
- STEP 1:** Email a photo of your pet (1 animal, no humans) sized 1-3MB and include a blurb about your pet (max 100 words) to photocontest@spcawindhoek.org.na
 - STEP 2:** Pay **NS100** at the SPCA, online, or make an EFT. Now wait!
 - STEP 3:** The SPCA will review and upload your pet's photo to our Facebook page within 24 hours.
 - STEP 4:** Once the photo is uploaded, it is now up to you to share the photo wide and far with friends and family and get them to vote on YOUR pet!

MOST VOTES ON FACEBOOK WINS!

Would you or your company like
 to sponsor a page in the calendar?
 Contact us for more information!





INTERNATIONAL
FOOD
& CRAFT
BAZAAR

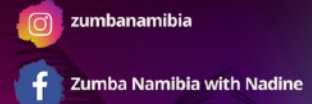
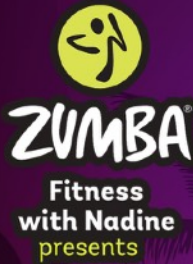
Association of Diplomatic Pouses

Saturday
28 Sept
2019

10:00 - 14:00
FNCC Terrace | Free entry

ALL PROCEEDS FROM THIS YEAR'S EVENT WILL GO TO CHARITIES SUPPORTING YOUNG WOMEN AND FEMALE EMPOWERMENT IN NAMIBIA.





70s DISCO ZUMBATHON

celebrating the SPCA turning 70

PLACE: Safari Court | DATE: 4 October 2019 | TIME: 18:00 - 20:30 (starts at 18:30)
TICKETS: Presale: N\$100 | Door: N\$120

ZUMBATHON with ZES Ola from Egypt!
And more than 10 local Zumba Instructors!

For ticket information contact Nadine: 081 744 4574 OR events@spcawindhoek.org.na



Sponsored by:



Tel:+264 61 241 783/ Fax: +264 61 264 777 - Schepmann Street, Pioneers Park Ext. 1, Windhoek, Namibia/ [WIS website](#)/ Email: [Reception](#)

