



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

BOARD MATTERS -

1. The Board

WIS is a Section 21 (not for profit) company governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The current Board numbers ten. Most, but not all, are parents of children attending the school.

In any school the Board plays a crucial role. It is the authority that decides the character and strategic direction of the school. It sets the annual fees and has ultimate responsibility for the financial wellbeing of the school. It is the Board that appoints, evaluates, and if necessary replaces the Director. These are major responsibilities.

(What the Board does NOT do is run the school on a day to day basis. It delegates all operational matters to the Director supported by the other members of the leadership team.)

Board members don't get paid and they rarely get thanked. But the work they do is critical for the health and long-term viability of the school. You may not even know who is on the Board but you and your children benefit every day from decisions and actions taken by various Boards over the years.

There are two routes onto the Board. One is to be invited onto the Board by the existing members. This can be useful when the Board wants to bring in someone with particular expertise – say, financial or legal. The other route is to be elected by the parent body at the Annual General Meeting.

2. The Annual General Meeting

All parents are invited to attend the AGM. (But note that only those whose fees have been paid may vote.) The AGM is held in the school auditorium on a weekday evening. I will confirm the date as soon as it has been finalised but the current plan is to hold it during the first week in December.

Parents who wish to stand for election to the Board must be nominated and seconded by other current WIS parents and nomination papers must be submitted not less than ten days before the date of the AGM. Nominations may not be made from the floor during the AGM.

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Dates to Remember

October

- 17 - 21: Secondary Week B
- 17: Term 2 Starts
- 24 - 28: Secondary Week A



Teacher Feature

James Guest - Secondary English

I've been at WIS for three years. In my time at WIS, I've taught Year 8 through Year 13.

I currently teach English to Year 10's, 11's, 12's and 13's. In Year 13 we are currently reading *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou. In Year 12 we are reading *Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway*.

In Year 11 we are reading a collection of 20th Century poetry. In Year 10 we are working on Narrative Writing.

I'm from the United States and previously lived in Namibia for two years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the 1990's.

Here are some facts about me:

- Name: James Guest
- Subject: English, Years 10-13
Years at WIS: 3
- Degrees Earned: BA in English; MA in Curriculum and Instruction; Ph.D in Educational Leadership.
- Favourite City: Cape Town

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So if you think you have valuable skills or experience that would be valuable to the Board and if you can devote a few hours a month to Board matters, do please consider standing for election in December. But I would strongly urge you to talk to me or an existing (or ex-) Board member first to get an idea of what you would be committing yourself to.

As I suggested above, you'll rarely get someone stopping you in the car park to thank you for all your efforts (especially if the Board has just decided to raise fees!) but you will get the opportunity to help shape the direction of the school and the satisfaction of knowing and understanding how and why decisions (usually important ones) are made.

3. The Collection of School Fees

And here is a perfect example of the kind of decision that the Board is asked to make. The Board meeting this week approved the adoption from next year (August) of a revised schedule for the payment of school fees.

NOTE: This only concerns the **timing** of when invoices are sent out and when they are due. No decision has yet been made on what increase may be announced for 2016-2017.

As at present, parents will have the option of paying fees in one instalment, in three instalments, or on a monthly basis. However, the monthly option will be spread over ten months (July to April) instead of twelve.

The reason for the change is that the school is spending enormous amounts of time (and not an insignificant amount of money) chasing fees that are overdue. This is simply unfair on those (the majority) who regularly pay their fees in full and on time. For these parents, the new schedule will make little difference but it will protect the school against parents who are habitually late or even withdraw their children while still owing the school money.

I will write separately with details of the new schedule. But it will not come into effect until August of next year – more than nine months from now.

With best wishes

Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Conferences

Thank you to all who attended the Primary Three Way conferences Wednesday or Thursday. From my perspective, the students seemed pleased and proud to be sharing their conferences with their parents/guardians. We are always reflecting on what went well and what can be improved.

With that in mind, your feedback regarding the conferences is helpful and appreciated. This link will take you directly to the [Feedback form](#). Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the form.



Teacher Feature continued

- Favourite Place to Visit in Namibia: Okahandja
- Favourite (Recent) Quote: Everything changes.
- Favourite Singers: Prince; Stevie Wonder; Bruce Springsteen
- Favourite TV Show: The Wire
- Favourite Premier League Team: Liverpool
- Favorite Educational System: Finland
- Interesting Quote I Read Recently: If you want to know who you are, look at your five closest friends.
- Best Star Wars Movie: The Empire Strikes Back

Assemblies

This year each class and/or year level is responsible for one assembly, showcasing the learning that has taken place in a particular unit or area of study as well as in the specialist subjects. These assemblies give children an opportunity to experience being up on stage in front of an audience and also to learn audience behaviour. During Term 1 we have had three wonderful assemblies lead by 6B, Year 2 and 6A respectively. Parents are welcome to attend the assemblies and will be especially invited when their child/ren's class is performing.

October Break

Next week's October break is a time for children and teachers alike to get rested, rejuvenated and reenergised for Term 2. For those who are traveling, may your travels be smooth and safe. I wish everyone a restful, relaxing and fun holiday that includes some quality family time. I look forward to welcoming you back to school on Monday, 17 October.

Regards,
Beth Smith



What's going on in the IB PYP?

Term 1 has begun with a PYP parent interactive workshop. These series of workshops were held on the **28th and 29th of September 2016**. We had up to 70 parents from the Primary section attend the workshops.

PTA Representatives 2016 - 2017

Chair: Sandra Camilo-Giroud

Vice Chair: Nerine Petrick

Secretary: Janet Roscoe

Treasurer: Yolanda Visser

Members: Bill Walker, Derell Louw-Dammon, Uschi Webb, Cynthia Martin

School Representative:

Beth Smith (Primary)

Maggie Reiff (Secondary)

Teacher Representatives:

Kathleen Britz (Primary)

Lian Cohen (Secondary/Middle School)



Our objective and aim of the workshops was to deepen parents understanding of the IB PYP Philosophy and Programme. Parents were wonderful in their participation in learning about our programme in an inquiry and explorative way. Over these sessions we explored the history and statistics of the International Baccalaureate, our school philosophy as an international school, exploration of the Written, Taught and Assessed curriculum of the Programme, and further exploration of the Five essential elements within the PYP: Knowledge, Concepts, Attitudes, Skills and Action.

We used a variety of teaching and learning approaches and technology tools:

like comic heads, chatterpix, tellagamietc. to simulate an inquiry classroom. Parents were discussing and learning from each other as well as investigating the PYP blog to find out more information about the curriculum. I would like to say a warm thank you to the parents who attended and participated. Also a thank you to Mr. Danai Maramba



(WIS ICT Integration Coordinator) for his assistance throughout the workshop.

To reconfirm communication channels in Primary:

- The D6 Communicator is a tool to communicate whole school news
- The class blogs give you information specific to your child's class
- The PYP blog describes the programme

Please subscribe to: <http://wispyp.blogspot.com/>



I would like some feedback from parents to inform future communications: Please complete [this google form](#).

Avril van Zyl

Roots and Shoots

By: Kendra Van der Merwe

Miss Barbara and her Roots and Shoots student, Kendra, took a walk around our school with our Director, Mr. MacKenzie. We found three amazing birds: the Southern Masked Weaver, the Laughing Dove, and last but not least, the White-browed Sparrow-weaver. We saw six, neat and tidy nests at the PLC and they were made from the Southern Masked Weavers. Other nests, the messy ones, were made from the White-browed Sparrow-weaver. It was wonderful to see all of the bird life around campus.

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Reviewing the first term

Time has passed fast and we are at the end of the first term. I would like to invite comments from parents and students on the first term - what was good, what needs attention, suggestions to become even better in what we do.

- Student Parent Teacher Conferences. If you have any feedback on these, kindly complete this short form to give us your opinion - [Feedback](#).
- During this first term we had a visit by Steve Hamilton - recovering drug addict - that touched many of our hearts.
- We also had an interactive concert for our students by well known artists to advocate for students to be involved in different after school activities. This concert was well received by our students.

- In the last week of September, our Year 10 students went onto the traditional Orange River Canoeing trip. Students and teachers returned happy and with great memories to keep.
- The Year 12 students visited Arnhem Cave for a day to get to know each other better and enjoy some time together.
- Year 7s will have a 2 day trip in the last two days of term. They will be going to Arnhem Cave as well and will be doing some team building and group work on the trip. They will also reflect on the first term of being in Secondary School and discuss their experiences, fears and hopes.
- This past term we had trouble with children missing school or being collected from school without the school having been informed in writing by the parents. Please be advised, that we need to know where our students are. If they just miss school and we do not know that, they might have been dropped off at school, you think they are here and we think they are at home.
 - ✦ Please write to reception@wis.edu.na to excuse your child/ren from school, if they are not in school.
 - ✦ Try to arrange for doctor's appointments to be held in the afternoons
 - ✦ If at all possible, do not take your child out of school for a longer weekend or holiday - your child will miss lessons and is expected to independently catch up on work missed during that time.
 - ✦ Make sure your child does not miss a test when absent. If a child misses a test because of absence, we can make an arrangement for them to re-take the test or something in that line. However, if a child is just absent without us knowing, he/she will be awarded a 0 for that test.
 - ✦ If a child is ill and has a test in that time, please submit a doctor's note.
- Please ensure that your child is in school before 7:20, so that they can be in their classroom at 7:20 for registration.
- International Day will be held on the 5th of November. This is regarded as a school event and students are expected to attend and help with the day. The event runs from 10:00 - 14:00. We urge parents to support their child/ren's country in as many ways as possible (sponsor things needed, help on the day, assist before the day, supervise).
- We want to wish our MUN team success. They will be attending the JoMUN Conference in Johannesburg (<http://www.aisj-jhb.com/page.cfm?p=518>) from the 6th to the 9th of October.

Finally, we wish all our families a few days of rest and relaxation. If you are traveling, travel safely.

Regards,
Maggie Reiff

THE TRIAL OF GOLDILOCKS

Guilty or innocent? Was the young girl a selfish spoiled brat intruding where she didn't belong? Or, was she the victim of three conniving bears (and their "band of hoods" in the woods)?

In rhyme, mime and mirth, this exciting new comedy brings Goldilocks to court on charges of breaking and entering, and examines the familiar fairy tale from three points of view: the traditional, the Bears' and Goldilocks'.

The drama department is ecstatic to announce that we will be putting on a middle school production in April. Auditions for the play will take place after



the break, during our first week back at school. Students in years 7-9, who would like a role in the play please pencil in attending an audition during our first week back.

There will be opportunities for many children in years 7-9 to participate - other than being on stage we will need sound and light technicians. Please get in touch with Ms Kate to see how you can be involved.

Kate Matzopoulos

Year 13 English



The Year 13 Diploma Standard Level English students Skyped with renowned Kenyan author, Ngugi wa Thiong'o after completing their first Part 4 text, *Caitani Hultharaba Ini (Devil on the Cross.)* Thiong'o's book is a post-colonial novel written originally on toilet paper while he was detained in prison.

Wa Thiong'o wrote the book in Gikuyu after he declared he would no longer write in English. He translated his own book two years later. The book is a critical examination of Kenyan society employing allegories and satire to explore exploitation, independence, education, religious hypocrisy and degradation of women.

Wa Thiong'o brings to life a story of economic injustices through potent character naming, the gicaandi player (traditional poet and musician who serves as a griot/prophet) and megalomaniacal characters.

The Skype discussion provided students the platform to ask the author questions about the symbolism of the number 7 and 3 in the book, what challenges he faced when translating, how he views capitalism from a US

perspective (where he lives and works now) and how the musical elements and Gikuyu idioms play a role in the text.

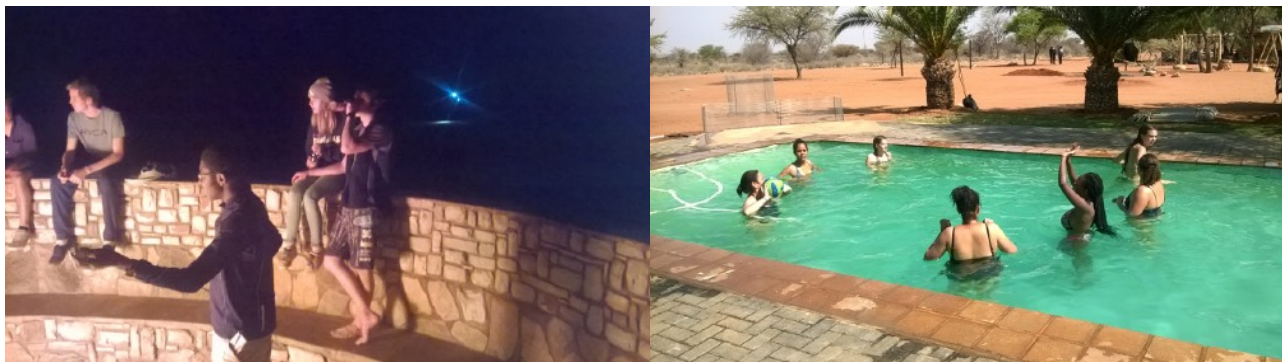


Not often can a student speak directly to the author of a text they analyse but thanks to technology and wa Thion'go's willingness to wake early (7am in California) to speak to us (4pm in Windhoek), they benefited from this unique opportunity to enrich their understanding of a book which they will use to write their final exam.

We thank Mr. D for his time and effort being present to help with the technology connection!

Melissa Kandido

Into the depths



There comes a time in every student's life when he/ she has to find the ultimate answer, the one that has been plaguing mankind since 1939. I am of course talking about the question- what is Batman's obsession with bats all about???

The Year 12s set out to find this very answer last weekend, when the whole class departed for Arnhem caves. It is not only the longest cave system in Namibia, but also hosts 6 different species of bats. The first day was spent in the swimming pool, playing ball games and, unexpectedly and without any planning or practice, setting a new world record! Yes, it took 6 big strong boys 3 and a half hours to pitch a tent. We are all very proud of their effort!



The evening saw the students applying their scientific and engineering knowledge, firstly by exerting great pressure on balloons and then by creating safe housing for an egg. None of the eggs survived (except for one, which made Sam so happy that he threw it into the air in jubilation. And then he missed the catch...)

After an eventful night, in which a killer kitten set his sights on Surbhi, forcing her to spend most of the evening trapped in the bathroom, with only a thin door separating her from his (very cute) mandibles of death, we woke up and got ready for the cave tour.

The cave is dark, dusty and anyone with claustrophobia's nightmare. Being risk-takers, and also because no-one wanted to quit when they saw the little 5-year-old doing the tour fearlessly, all the students descended into the depths. It is an incredible structure with amazing secrets, fossils and other mysteries. The



students thoroughly enjoyed this new experience.

After a hearty brunch, we returned to school to enjoy the rest of the weekend. I was particularly impressed with this group of our new IB students and look forward to seeing them complete their last two years at WIS. If they approach it with the same enthusiasm as they did this trip, it will certainly be a group to watch.

Riegardt Smit

Year 10 Orange River 2016 Field trip

Orange River isn't just an experience. It's a memory that you'll cherish until the end.



At two in the morning on Sunday the Year 10 Class of 2016 had to pack all the needed supplies and jump onto the Econolux bus driven by Mr. Otto. It was a long drive to get there, everyone was tired but hyped as the 11 hours flew past.

When they finally arrived everyone was gasping at the beauty of the lush green that surrounded them. They unloaded all their belongings and started setting up their camp at Felix Unite. As it was a hot and sunny day, they all decided the pool was a great idea. In the evening Petrus, the main guide, explained everything about the Canoes; two per boat, each gets a cooler box, each person gets two buckets, how to close the buckets on the boat, etc.

The next morning, around five o'clock two boys by the name of Tjaku and Moses decided to start packing. But by packing they meant giggling until six. Everyone, more tired and craving sleep than a bear in hibernation, ate breakfast and packed all the belongings into their buckets. The Year 10's took their buckets and walked down to the boats. At first, it wasn't a pretty sight at how inexperienced some were at paddling. After a while everyone got the hang of it, and of course Chiara and Anya were the first to get stuck and almost capsize, but eventually they made it back into line. A few minutes passed and the guides stopped at two huge boulders. Immediately students left their boats and swam to the rock, climbing on. Others who didn't want to jump stayed at the bottom and took responsibility of the others' boats. As soon as some got up there they experienced vertigo but they needed to jump down due to the way down being too slippery. The first day was where everyone had to get used to everything, so obviously there were some difficulties of getting stuck on rocks, getting stuck in general, and being splashed by Mr. Jackson-Read and Ms. Heike. At one point when Sasha and Louise were paddling they saw a small reptile on a sand bank. They steered towards it but then the people behind them, Tjaku, Moses, Chiara and Anya screamed "Crocodile" and paddled like they had fire ants in their pants towards a different sandbank as it entered the water. It was later said that it was a baby Komodo dragon (something which does not live in Africa but ok...). The first to capsize were Nacim and Francesco, and I think everyone might agree that Ilay and Mr

Rishchynski had some troubles as they kept steering into the reeds on the side of the river. At the end of the day everyone enjoyed setting up camp and eating the delicious food that was provided. While everyone was sitting in a circle and talking, Mr. Jackson-Read told a horror story and obviously some couldn't sleep that night.

Everyone woke up to find that a boat was missing. To be specific, Ndaueda's and Vanessa's boat. Sadly Vanessa's expensive king size sleeping mattress was in the boat. That was quite an issue due to Vanessa not having anything to sleep on and there not being enough space to carry extra people. Eventually they made a plan. Everyone enjoyed the munchious breakfast except two: Tjaku and Moses because they came too late and the toasts were gone. We started to break down camp and paddle a few meters when the guides told us there is a rapid ahead of us, called the Entrance Exam. Petrus explained that if you failed this rapid there's a 90% chance you will fail the mighty Sjambok. A few started to panic, others were calm. The first to capsize in the Entrance Exam rapid was Dora and Huambi, and the second pair was Sasha and Tjaku. The rest of the day they paddled peacefully on the river enjoying the magnificent view, but that peace was soon disturbed as Mr. Jackson-Read switches his playful mood on by splashing everyone and tipping their boats over. Some of the group decided it was cool to just paddle on and disobeying the guides calls for them to stop as they finally found Vanessa's and Ndaueda's boat. When Vanessa found out her "inflammable mattress" was gone it was comical. Nacim and Mr. Rishchynski capsized in a small rapid so we had to halt our boats and wait again.

It was a long day, but everyone got their energy back at lunch with delicious salads and mouth watering fresh fruits. As they reached camp everyone was definitely tired. Later they went on a hike to find Flourine stones that explode once thrown into fire.

On the third day was the most feared and anticipated. The Year 10s were redder than tomatoes because the sun was feasting on their flesh a day before, but it wasn't that bad. What awaited them was the biggest rapid on the course; The Legendary Sjambok. It was first explained that only four at a time may go and in which directions you steer, and then it began. Everyone in the class made it out alive, although some did capsize like Lola and Marco and Anya and Ms. Heike. After everyone survived the year 10's were allowed to swim down the Sjambok. A few had no fear, but went in groups and had to strain their muscles even harder to get back to safer grounds. Most of their time was wasted by scooping out water from the boats which could've created a new lake. A couple of minutes later, there was another rapid and here Lisane and Chiara capsized together with Lola and Marco. Lisane helplessly held onto a rock but later flowed down the river like Lola and Marco with her head bobbing in and out of the water and landed on an island. It was discovered that Lisane and Chiara lost their paddles but got one from a guide. Sadly there are two people and one paddle so Chiara had to endlessly paddle 20 minutes in still water to the rest of the class. While the Year 10's were waiting, Moses decided that it was cool to splash Mr. Jackson-Read. So instead of taking revenge by splashing Moses back, Mr Jackson-Read jumped out of his canoe and swam to Moses and pulled him out of his boat into the ice cold water. Moses learned his lesson after that.

After reuniting with everyone, the Class paddled relaxingly down the river. It was calming to listen to soft water splashing when the paddle hits the water and the birds chirping in the distance.

As the Year 10s hit the campsite, the last one at that, everyone found out here was a talent show to be competed in. Everyone got into groups and started planning different acts to perform. The talent show was after dinner when everyone was well fed. Everyone enjoyed the show of laughter and entertainment, and especially the games



towards the end where many fell into the sand mouth-first and others stomach-first. Lisane and Nicolas were the champions of the “furthest cup” game. Towards the end, no one was completely overrun by tiredness, so all stayed up but after a while were forced to sleep.

The last day was where the actual pain in the shoulders kicked in, well for most. But everyone was sad because it was the last day and they would only paddle for half a day. The year 10’s had a few more water fights on the river by splashing their paddles into the water, which resulted in some having a personal nature shower. The guides also started getting playful and would swap boats with students and splash the others on the river. Kahewa had the honor to steer a guide’s boat on her own and when there was a rock she’d yell “AI MAMI HELP ME!”. Tjaku bravely paddled by himself down a rapid and accidentally starts to turn 180 degrees and others like Mr. Jackson-Read and his partner and the guides paddled backwards down the very last rapid. Lunch was as always incredible yummy, but as much as the year group love eating, they had to move on. It was then to say goodbye to the great Orange River as they reached the bus at land.



The drive back to the Felix Unite base camp was short as they drove through bright green grape vinyards. Back at camp, the girls especially enjoyed the warm and welcoming showers awaiting them. That night sleep didn’t come so easily as they had to leave the Orange River at 2:30 am. As before, the ride was long but songs and games got us through the ride and we safely returned home with only a few scratches and bruises to tell our story.

The Year 10s would like to give an enormous thank you to Felix Unite, the guides: Petrus, Alaska, Leslie, Bertu, Mr Otto for driving us all the way, and an even bigger thank you to WIS and the three staff members (Ms. Heike Ruppert, Mr. Thomas Jackson-Read and Mr. Anthony Rishchynski) who, with all their might, were dragged with the year 10’s to Orange River.

Chiara Zorn 10B



SPCA WINDHOEK AGM NOTICE 2016

All SPCA Members are hereby notified about our 2016 AGM.

DATE: 18 October 2016 | TIME: 18:30 for 19:00 | PLACE: Old Wheelers Club, Olympia



PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE PAID YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR 2016!

WIS

INTER HOUSE SWIM GALA

2016

Year groups: Year 2-13

Events

- 25m Freestyle
- 25m Backstroke
- 25m Butterfly
- 25m Breaststroke

Dates: Friday, 28 October 2016

Venue: UNAM School of Medicine

Time: 14:30 - 17:00 (TBC)



JOIN THE
GLOBAL WALK
FOR OUR
ELEPHANTS
AND RHINOS

Saturday,
8 October

Meet at 9am
at Sam Nujoma
Statue, Windhoek

Walk starts at 10am

Bring banners, dress
up, let's send our
energy and support
to bring awareness
to our gentle giants



MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WIS CAR BOOT SALE SATURDAY 22 OCTOBER

Time: 10am to 3pm
Open to all
Come and buy or sell

What can you sell? BRAND NEW OR USED GOODS!

Anything you no longer love or want
Arts and crafts, jewelry, pottery, hand-made cards, paintings, furniture and fittings etc.
Anything goes!

N\$100 fee per car boot

Children welcome and entrance free
Games, food, drinks, ice cream and more on sale

Further queries to Sandra @ 081 446 5625 and kbritz@wis.edu.na



