



# THE ORYX

*The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School*

## Contents

- From the Director p1
- Primary News p2
- Secondary News p3
- Other News p5 - 10



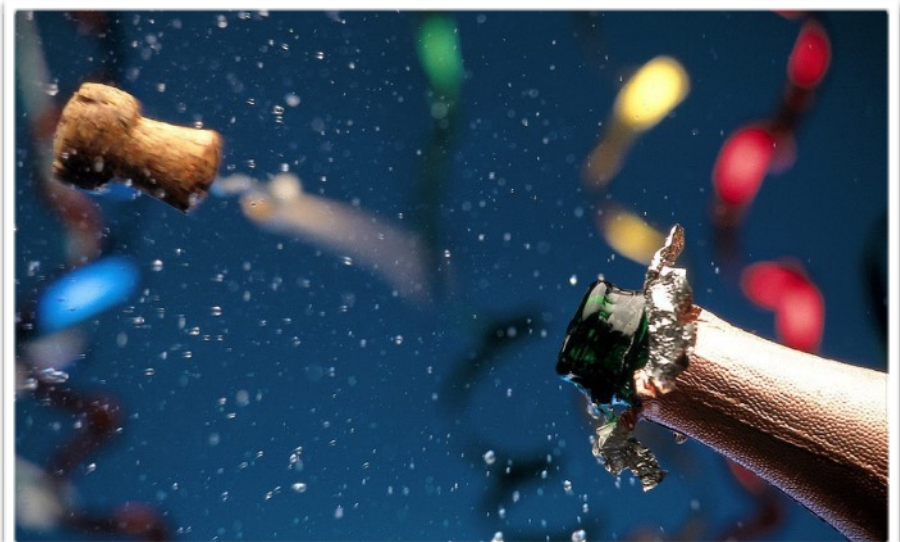
## Dates to Remember

### January

- 22 - Talent Show
- 23 - WIS 25th Gala Dinner
- 27- PTA Meeting @ 12:00

### February

- 12 - PTA Coffee Morning
- 16 - Early Close
- 18 - IGCSE & IBDP information evening



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY WIS!

Celebrations are continuing and will conclude tomorrow night with the Dinner at the Hilton. All tickets have been sold. It should be a wonderful evening.

During the week I have received important and touching messages of congratulations from two people whose contribution to the history of WIS was unique.

The school was the idea of Bodil Reske-Neilsen. Her photograph still hangs in the Reception and, quite simply, there would be no WIS without her. She has written:

*"Congratulations! 25 years ago you became a reality. The dream of establishing a school for international students as well as Namibians became a reality in 1991. A lot of hard work has been put in to what is now a school with more than 500 students. We started in January 1991 with 120.*



*You now have many internationally hired teachers. In 1991 we had none. But we had some wonderful Namibian and locally hired expatriate teachers who believed in our philosophy. Thank you to two of the Namibian pioneers: Maureen Rainey and Genie Albrecht. It was brave of you to join despite the strong criticism and ridicule from some of the local schools.*

*The buildings that we moved into in 1994 have grown dramatically. Thank you to Nahas Angula, who was Minister of Education in those days, for supporting us and finding premises to house us.*

*Congratulations WIS. I am proud that my dream has been allowed to grow so much.*

*I wish I could celebrate with you."*

Bodil not only founded the school but served as its first Director until 1994.

And in 1994 she was succeeded as Director by an educationalist who came to Namibia with an already impressive record in leading international schools in Tanzania and Austria, Kevin Bartlett. Kevin stayed as Director for seven years and truly put WIS on the international school map. This week Kevin wrote:



*"Our very warmest wishes from wherever I am in the world right now, on this very special day for WIS, you, all of us. I've enjoyed every school I've worked in but, now that I have left school leadership there's no doubt in my mind about the school that has a special place in my heart. For those of us who were lucky enough to be there in the first few years, WIS was our baby. We were pioneers, proudly bringing international education to independent Namibia. Proud to be in Namibia, that fine and beautiful country, hoping and helping to give education a good start.*

*So many memories. The day when we so proudly displayed our new logo...still the WIS logo today. Our dear, departed friend, T. Shawn McGrath and his snakes. Introducing Special Olympics to WIS...we were an inclusive school before anyone invented the term!*

*The Sports Days and the new coloured bleachers. Signing the contract for the Portuguese Centre on literally my last day in Namibia. Beginning every day with a five-minute staff meeting, not just for the news, but for a laugh together. Support staff who were so much part of it all, like Regina and Edwin. Brilliant, dedicated teachers, a whole cast of characters, too many to mention...*

*...and, of course, the WISKIDS. Such a special bunch of youngsters...from different homes and backgrounds, different ethnic groups with different languages and cultures...but all part of the big, warm family of WIS. To this day I'm so proud of them, and still in touch with some, as is my lovely wife Marta who is in regular contact with her WIS Grade 1 class!*

*I'm so honoured and proud to have been part of the team that nurtured our young school through infancy towards adolescence. At 25, the baby is grown up, and I'm sure the school is better than ever.*

*From Marta and me and from our kids who were there with us, our warmest congratulations on this very special day. WIS has so much to be proud of and so do you all. We're sorry we had to be somewhere else on a work assignment, but our hearts are with you today and are thoughts are of wonderful Windhoek International School.*

*With much love to you all,*

*Kevin and Marta Bartlett"*

Sitting in the Director's chair in 2016, these are big shoes for me (or anyone!) to fill. But I have replied to both Bodil and Kevin to assure them that if they visit (no, *when* they visit) they will find a school that may be bigger and older but remains true to the ethos that was so important to them during the school's first ten years.

With best wishes

**Peter MacKenzie**

## Saturday Morning Dodge-ball Club with Mr Jackson-Read

**NEW TIME:**

**9 AM until 11 AM**

**Y3 - Y6**

### All Welcome

Please bring a drink, sports  
cloths and lots of energy!

Session will be on on the  
following days

- Saturday 23rd January
- Saturday 30th January
- Saturday 6th February
- Saturday 13th February
- Saturday 20th February  
(NO SESSION)
- Saturday 27th February
- Saturday 5th February
- Saturday 12 February
- Saturday 19th February

## PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

The Primary School is back into full routine with many things happening. Current units of inquiry are coming to a finish with presentations while new units are being introduced. Here is a glimpse into what many of the year levels have been doing.

As part of the How We Express Ourselves unit, the Year 1 classes performed a fashion show and drama presentation for their parents.

The Year 2 classes have been inquiring into the theme of How We Organize Ourselves. The art lessons were integrated with this unit and the students hosted a special display of their works in the art room.

Year 3 classes have become inventors during their unit, Where We Are in Place and Time. The students held an exhibition presenting what they think will be the next great technological communication device.

The Year 6 classes are at the beginning stages of the PYP Exhibition. You'll be reading more about the Exhibition in future issues of the Oryx.

Afternoon Activities began this week with many students signed up for the various activities offered. Approximately twenty-five activities are open to Primary students, including such new activities as Kwik Cricket, Sensational Play and Chef School.

Best wishes to all who are participating in the WIS's Got Talent show tonight. This show promises to provide great entertainment while showcasing some of our wonderfully talented students.

Thank you to all who attended the Family Fun Day last Saturday. There was a real community feeling and everyone seemed to have a good time. I look forward to seeing many of you at the 25th anniversary gala dinner tomorrow evening and celebrating this important event.

Kind regards,  
**Beth Smith**

## Holiday News

Year 2 students chose how they would like to share their holiday news - we had photos, objects, posters, PowerPoint and iPad presentations. We heard about everything from how to snorkel and learning to ride a bicycle to family time, safaris and even seeing real dinosaur footprints (close to Kalkfeld).

This prompted all sorts of discussions about extinction, islands, balance, wildlife identification and what does the Statue of Liberty hold in her hands!

What a great way to learn from each other!

**Jan Le Roux**



**Year 2 started the New Year with Tessellating New Years Resolutions!**

## SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

*"I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."* (Michael Jordan)

How do we decide on our future when we are young and there are so many opportunities around us? When do we start looking at careers and start deciding on our future - in Middle School? Once we finished IGCSE? Only once we are done with school?

Many young adults don't know what exactly they want to do until they are almost finished with school. In today's world, however, it is quite crucial that young people start looking around and thinking about their future early. There are a lot of factors influencing choices and the abundance of career opportunities does

not make the choice easier. However, with events and experiences we encounter, we can find our way and develop our interest so that, when it comes to making a concrete decision, we have already done some exploring. WIS requires students to do a work experience in Year 10, so that they can explore possible paths to pursue later in their education. During IGCSE, most students start finding out what exactly their strengths are and what they would enjoy doing. IGCSE still enables students to choose a wide range of subjects that are not going to prevent anyone from venturing into any field once they go into the IBDP. However, once students choose subjects for their IBDP they start paving their way to further education.

When applying at universities, there are specific requirements for specific courses and there are grade and level requirements for specific subjects. It is therefore advisable, to already have an idea of the field a young person wants to study so that they can gear their IB Diploma towards having the required criteria covered.

Places at universities are often limited. It is important to be competitive in your application. Having done a work experience, having been committed to school and society, does give you an advantage over other students.

But there is also the financial aspect of choosing your studies. Again, being realistic and starting to prepare early, can make it possible for you to do what you dream of and to eventually have the career that best fits your person. Best said in Abraham Lincoln's words: "The best way to predict the future is to create it."

The information sessions for Year 10 and Year 12 (2016-2017) are being held on the 18th of February. It is important that this opportunity to be informed and to explore is utilised by students and parents alike. The more information you gather the better you will know what to apply for, what to work for and what to achieve to eventually be able to create a career that will make you happy.

More detailed information on the IGCSE and IBDP information session will be posted in due course. The admissions officer for the University of British Columbia (Canada) and the Cooperation Attachée for French Language at the French Embassy will also be visiting WIS on the 18th of February to talk about applying at the University of British Columbia and study opportunities in France.

Kind regards,

**Maggie Reiff**

## SPECIAL TEACHER FEATURE



**Genie Albrecht - January 2016**

Luckily I am young enough to say that I have only done one 25 year stint at a place of employment! Luckily I am old enough to say that I am older than the trees and furniture on the present WIS campus!

We knew at the start of WIS that we would celebrate our first 25 years - and suddenly out of the blue it hits us - NOW! Where has all the time gone with all that water under the WIS bridge. But prior to all of this, let's backtrack and reminisce:

I was born in South Africa, raised in Namibia, worked in London, (including the South African Embassy), studied in Kwazulu Natal, South Africa, lived in various other parts of South Africa and finally returned to Namibia to get married, teach and pot (as in ceramics, nothing else!!).

After having worked and lived in London (and travelled all over

Europe) for four years, I realised that I had to do something more meaningful with my life. The British Home Office kindly decided that for me: NO work permit unless I returned as a teacher or a nurse!! I had often thought of teaching. So sadly I left the bright lights of London and returned to Southern Africa to study in Durban and live in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Bloemfontein and then finally teach.

Having taught at a private school for a number of years here in Windhoek, the unbelievable rumour had it that in 1990 an international school was opening and they were looking for staff. WOW::: I knew this was for me! I was looking for something different, something much broader and far more interesting than the confines and mindset of this country at the time, in that it had:

- (a) to have international students;
- (b) to run an international curriculum; and very importantly
- (c) to be internationally-minded.

Immediately I applied and got the job as a homeroom teacher of Grade 2 and 3. It was fun to be part of the history of a new school, setting traditions and realms. So how does one start a new school?

My most striking memory was buying staplers for the school! Why do I remember this, because whilst in the shop at that moment I 'felt' the vision of the first director, BODIL-RESKE NIELSEN (Danish) who knew and believed in WIS, "We've got to get this school rolling; we'll make it the best school in Namibia!" Besides buying staplers, we also drove to Okahandja to get school furniture, we went from shop to shop getting the best price for other things, etc. and literally started moving into the school in Windhoek West in December 1990.

I vividly remember the first day with about 119 students arriving at WIS: it was unimaginable and thrilling that this was really happening right here in the 'new' Namibia. Months later, we had three different schools on the same premises: Van Rhyn School (a government Afrikaans school) in Windhoek West, who kindly housed us, and a SWEDISH school which had to be evacuated from Angola during their civil war. We swapped and shared classrooms – this was so exciting and such a glorious means of learning to be flexible, tolerant, empathetic and respectful.

Professionally I grew by leaps and bounds. In the beginning, besides teaching, I was part of evaluating and placing students in primary school. When the IBPYP was introduced by KEVIN BARTLETT, (British and the school's second Director) I took several of the PYP courses offered. I was also given the opportunity to take an ECIS Accreditation course and travel to many countries as part of the Accreditation Teams, all the time learning about what it is to be 'international' and to network. During my tenure, I was a Primary Coordinator; did press releases for the school; was on the Professional Development Committee, etc and was a homeroom teacher for 10 years.

Then in 2001 the golden moment arrived and I was offered the post as Primary Art Teacher and was whipped off to do an art course in July in Massachusetts, USA. Now I could foster my love and passion of art and more so, be part of the creative journey of the students, from whom I too, have gratefully learnt so much. Teaching the students at WIS with so many backgrounds and tales of their countries has been enormously rewarding: they are courageous, spontaneous, honest and willing to try anything in art. For two years running I was invited to teach at two art summer camps in Maine, USA. and attend art workshops in Nova Scotia, Canada. In addition to art, I had the experience of being the primary principal for about two years, which was singularly interesting. As a result I have been fortunate to see the school from so many angles, weather the ups and downs and watch it grow from strength to strength.

My love of ART (and in particular ceramics) and TRAVEL brought the whole world closer to me. I met and made many friends both teachers and parents with whom I have stayed in touch and visited, exchanging experiences, visiting various international schools and getting back the itchy feet I had when I left London so many years ago to experience so many more cultures.

Last but not least, my son, Dylan had a fantastic education at WIS where he too grew to have sincere and remarkable friends living all over the world and now works successfully in London. AND ... 25 years later WIS is still is the best school in Namibia!

*Genie Albrecht*

## Family Fun Day - 16 January 2016



We had an absolute blast on Saturday the 16th. We enjoyed fun games, a potjie-kos competition and so much more... happy Birthday WIS, here is to another 25 years to come!! The teams placed as follows in the potjie-kos competition:



**1st - Place**

Birgit Eysselinck & Graham van Niekerk

**2nd - Place**

James Damon & Bill Walker

**3rd - Place**

Angie, Christi, Charne & Viviana

## WATER

*By: Ndauanenua Ndilula - Year 9B*

Water is running low  
 Our taps are becoming slow  
 All our dams are shallow  
 Some are even hollow

What are we going; I don't know  
 Our water took a low blow  
 The seas are rising  
 The polar bears are crying

Climate change is a real problem  
 the countries are blaming  
 when we should be shaming  
 The sun is getting hotter it's blazing

If we work together we will find a way  
 To stop climate change maybe not today  
 Maybe not for us  
 But for the future

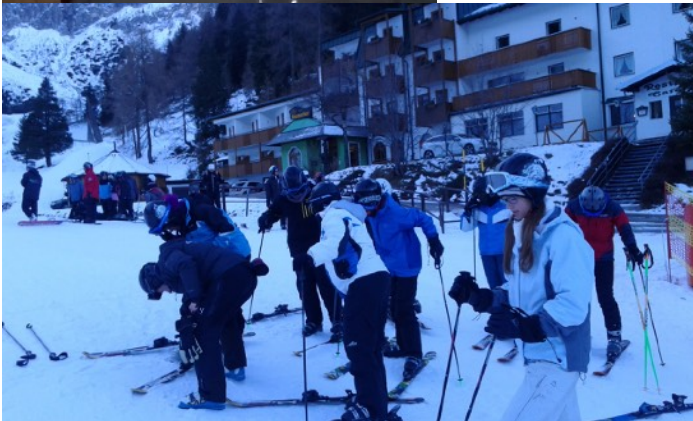
We leave the earth for them  
 And they must take care  
 Nurture nature like it did us  
 So nature can once again trust

## Sand Dwellers in the snow



During the December holidays, 27 students and 3 teachers embarked on a journey to Austria for a week-long ski trip. The fact that we are from the Land of Sand became apparent as soon as we saw the first snow. Eyes got wide and mouths hung open as the landscape became whiter and whiter the closer we got to our destination.

We arrived at our hotel at the small ski resort Axamer Lizum. We

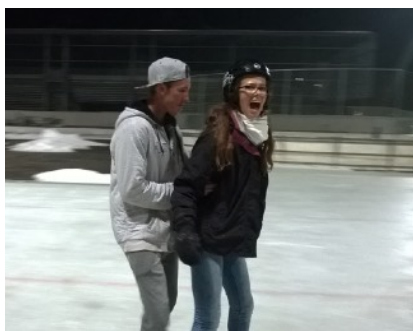


were issued with our gear, and after the long day's journey were ready to get into bed for a well-deserved rest. This was not to be the case, however...

Another group had just finished their ski tour on the same day, and they were celebrating their trip until the early morning hours. Our students, always ready to make the best of a bad situation, promptly tried to join them, leading to worried staff members running up and down the hotel stairs trying to keep them off the Disco floor.

The next morning our official skiing started for the week. What followed was a lot of grunting, moaning, crying, falling, some not quite serious injuries, screaming, upset phone calls to mothers and lots more, but at long last we all had our ski shoes on and was ready to go skiing. After this it went much better, and we spend the rest of the week going down the slopes, mostly on ski- and snowboards, sometimes on our backsides, but we all had a lot of fun with the minimum amount of pain.





The week was not all skiing, however, and we had the opportunity to see a true, White-Christmas type of Christmas market, go on shopping sprees (the highlight for some...) ice-skating in the evening in the rain on

an outside Olympic skate-rink, go sledding (ouch), have our own disco and pizza evening, and generally just have some quality time (sometimes at 03:00 in the morning, with Mr Smit lying in a fetal position crying "I just want some sleep!").



This trip will not be forgotten quickly. I would like to thank all the students, who were simply an amazing bunch, the teachers and parent who accompanied us and made life so much easier, all the behind-the-scenes arrangements from Mrs Reiff and our account department (who sometimes had to bend over backwards to help us secure tickets, bookings etc) and all the parents who not only did a great job raising these special students, but were very supportive throughout the process.

Here's to the next one!

*Riegardt Smit*

## Secondary P.E.

Well done to all the Y7-10 student who have managed to consistently wear the correct kit for Physical Education lessons. Remember that you need a House t-shirt or a plain white t-shirt in addition to a WIS cap.



City of  
many faces

# City of Windhoek



Vision: To enhance the quality of life of all our people



## PUBLIC NOTICE

### WATER SAVING RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR



2016 is here and it is the time of the year when many dwell on the recent past and make decisions or plan for the future (or that is the theory at least). Sadly very few people make 'New Year's Resolutions' about saving water when in reality a reduction in our daily water consumption is something that we should all be taking very seriously. So whilst most people are rejuvenated after a nice, relaxing summer holiday we thought we would share a few tips on saving water for inclusion in those fiercely determined decisions taken this time of the year:

- Keep a constant focus on water saving in your immediate surroundings and remember those small ideas add up to massive savings;
- Undertake to invest in the future of our great city in the coming year. Teaching children about the value of water, our most precious natural resource, will not only save water now, but carry well into the future;
- Whether you are planning to renovate or simply change your garden in the coming year – GO NATIVE. Regardless of whether you are planting new vegetation at home, school or the office, select native plants because they tend to require a lot less water;
- Undertake to regularly check your water meter or at least your monthly bill in 2016. Undetected and/or invisible leaks amounts to huge water losses that you may be paying dearly for and are costly to all residents in the bigger scheme

In general Windhoek residents made great strides in the month of December towards achieving reduced consumption and managing our precious resource more carefully. Spurred on by the thousands of individuals who shared their conservation tips and ideas Windhoekers of all stripes enthusiastically joined the effort to save water at the end of last year. Based on weekly averages, consumption has dropped by more than 20% compared to the same period in previous years. The City of Windhoek would like to carry this momentum into 2016 and achieve even greater results while making water conservation a permanent effort. Despite some recent rainfall the country, and particularly the central areas, are still in the grips of a persistent drought. With reference to the City of Windhoek Drought Management Plan (available from our website) households should aim to conserve 50% on their historic (normal) consumption with an overall drop in demand of 30%. We are proud to confirm that the 30% overall demand reduction target has already been accomplished for short periods since the announcement of the Water Crisis so we know that residents can achieve this provided we all work together.

We wish to thank everyone who has contributed to the savings already achieved. Let's use this as inspiration for better cooperation and even greater savings.

Issued by:

Office of the Chief Executive Officer  
Corporate Communications, Marketing, Tourism and Customer Care  
Tel: +264 61 290 2365 / 2044  
Fax: +264 61 290 2344  
E-mail: communication@windhoekcc.org.na

