

Dragon Tales

Volume 10 Issue 16

Friday, December 4, 2009

FREE

WHAT'S ON?

GRADE 9-11 EXAMS

Monday 7 to Wednesday 9 December

PRIMARY ASSEMBLY

Thursday 10 December at 8:10am

SECONDARY YOUTH NIGHT

Friday 11 December 6-8pm

SECONDARY ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 15 December 1:30pm

Study Trip Showcase in room 323

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Monday 21 December to
Friday 15 January 2010

Carols by Candlelight

*Church of the Holy Spirit
presents...*

*An outdoors cultural
celebration of the Christmas
season*

Bring your family and friends for
carol singing by candlelight

**Wednesday 16 December at
5:30pm**

- ♦ On the football field, VIS
- ♦ Bring a mat to sit on
- ♦ Bring food and drink
- ♦ No alcohol permitted
- ♦ Candles provided

Soccer Cancelled 8-15 December

By **Dan Foggo**
ASA COORDINATOR

Unfortunately our soccer coach Mr. Tu has had to cancel all of his soccer classes from 8 to 15 December due to commitments with the SEA Games. Mr. Tu assures us that he is committed to making up these missed sessions at a later date.

The Giving Tree

During the next two weeks, the VIS community (parents, students and staff) will have the opportunity to contribute to the VIS "GIVING TREE". The PTA is working in conjunction with the school to determine the nature of the gifts which shall be donated to students at Don Khoi and Ban Saphanthong Tai Schools with which we have a long standing relationship. At this time of year when many of our community will be both giving and receiving gifts from loved ones, friends and colleagues, it is a good time for us to also think of others. We see this as an authentic opportunity to model giving and to build on the community service component in our three IB programmes.

Youth Night Friday 11 December 6-8pm

By **Steve Alexander**
DIRECTOR

Our first youth night for Grade 6-12 students took place on 27 November and was attended by over 50 students. The response from students was very positive and we will have the next Youth Night next Friday from 6 to 8 pm in the VIS cafeteria. We will need 2-3 parents to help out with chaperoning the students. If you would like to chaperone the next Youth Night please email me at stevea@vislao.com. After the semester break we will also plan on having a Youth Afternoon of activities for Primary students.

Positions open at VIS 2010-2011

By **Steve Alexander**
DIRECTOR

For the 2010-2011 school year we anticipate teacher openings for a Primary Music Teacher and a High School Science (Chemistry/General) Teacher. If you know someone who is interested and has at least two years experience along with a teaching qualification they should contact me at stevea@vislao.com.

PTA INTERNATIONAL COOKBOOK page 3...



CIS/WASC Re-accreditation Preparatory Visit a Success

By Kim Green

ACCREDITATION COORDINATOR

Over the last week VIS hosted Ray Davis of CIS and Ali Copple from WASC. The purpose of their visit was to review the preparatory report that was developed by VIS, review current documentation and have conversations with a range of staff. The visit was successful with both Ray and Ali gaining a very good understanding of life at VIS. They were both very positive about life at VIS and were impressed with the rapid change that has occurred within the school over the last few years.

It is important to acknowledge the team of staff that put the preparatory report together and everyone that met with Ray and Ali. Our visitors valued and commented on the welcoming nature of VIS and highly respected the open and honest conversations. Thank you to all the staff, board members, students and parents for your work on ensuring that the true VIS was seen during the visit. The commendations are a result of the hard work by all VIS staff and the VIS community.

A few of the commendations that were shared during the oral report are:

- ♦ There are strong positive and harmonious relationships between all groups of the VIS Community
- ♦ All staff embrace personal improvement so that the best quality education can be offered to the students at VIS
- ♦ All staff make students feel valued and strive to best mould programmes around VIS students' needs
- ♦ There is a wide range of learning and teaching strategies used by teachers that cater for individual needs and learning styles
- ♦ There is a strong understanding by teachers to plan curriculum that is built around what the students need to know, understand and be able to do as they move through their education
- ♦ All staff are very supportive of the school and what the school is working towards
- ♦ There is a strong sense of collegiality within the VIS Community
- ♦ The strong caring family atmosphere that has not been lost through change
- ♦ The work that has been accomplished

in constructing the school, facilities and developing the campus

- ♦ The management by the Director and School Board through the process of development and change in the facilities
- ♦ The training that the School Board has undertaken
- ♦ There is a clear distinction between governance and management and the clear roles of the School Board and Director

As a result of the visit Ray and Ali will submit a report to the CIS and WASC Boards who will approve VIS moving into Candidate Status for Re-Accreditation. A formal report will be sent to VIS in January which will outline commendations and recommendations as identified in the visit.

This point of reflection should be celebrated by the entire VIS community. We are all in partnership in an exciting school which is constantly working towards improvement so that the best quality international education is offered to our students. Congratulations VIS.

Philosophy & Objectives Committee

By David Boyes

P&O COMMITTEE CHAIR

A Philosophy and Objectives committee has been established and consists of representatives from the School Board, staff, parents and students. This committee will be beginning a review of the VIS Mission Statement and Purposes. This review is a key part of the self-study process. All other committees will use the VIS Mission Statement and Purposes as the central point for review and identification of VIS's strengths and

areas for growth. Attached to this week's Dragon Tales is the current VIS Mission Statement and Purposes. Your ideas and opinions are a very important part of the ongoing process of improvement that VIS continually strives to achieve. If you would like to make any comments or suggestions please email Ms. Jamie at jamiet@vislao.com.

Introducing Board Officers & Committees

Board Officers

Chair: Bobby Allen
Vice-Chair: Catrin Moore

Treasurer: Else Veum
Secretary: Nicole Stein

Board Committees

Finance

Chair: Else Veum
Member: David Boyes

Policy

Chair: Catrin Moore
Member: Bobby Allen
Member: Jamie McAden

Facilities Development

Chair: Rick Reece
Member: Nicole Stein
Member: David Boyes

Marketing & PR

Chair: Nicole Stein
Member: Rick Reece
Member: David Boyes

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PRIMARY NEWS**Dragon Tales**

SEMESTER 1 REPORT & PORTFOLIO

By **Carmel McCormick**
PRIMARY HEAD

On Thursday 17 December the Primary students will bring home the 1st Semester Report Card and Portfolio. These two documents are designed

to be shared and discussed with your child.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the teachers for the time and effort they put into writing the very detailed and concise reports. The report card forms the official record of the evaluation for the 1st semester. The students will be well aware of what is in their report card as the evaluations are based on the learning and the assessments that they have actively been involved in. Please do not hesitate to make an appointment if you and your child would like to discuss the report card with the teacher concerned.

The Portfolio is an ongoing assessment tool and has been compiled with

student input. Your children will very proudly show you through the portfolios and explain the learning they encountered along the way. Please dedicate some special time for this. The report and portfolio are also intended as tools to assist with setting goals for the next semester. The Portfolios for Prep to Grade 5 need to be returned by 22 January 2010. EY3 and EY4 portfolios do not need to be returned as electronic copies are on file.

Please understand that the report cards will not be available before 17 December. If for some reason your child is not at school on the 17th the report card will be returned to the front office for collection.

PTA NEWS

'Tis the season for giving

the VIS Giving Tree

By **Nicole Stein**
PTA MEMBER

During this season when many of us are looking forward to receiving gifts, let's think of giving instead, especially giving to those in our local community. The PTA would like to start a tradition of the "Giving Tree" at VIS. The PTA will be collecting gifts that will be donated to two local schools, starting 14 December. You can help by contributing a gift to the Giving Tree that will be set up on campus. Check next week's Dragon

Tales for a list of items that are most needed by the local schools and what you can contribute to this community and family event.

PTA Fund Raising Success

By **Nicole Stein**
PTA MEMBER

The PTA would like to give a heartfelt thank you to Nalin of Dragon Cafe for donating \$100 from her Halloween Night food sales to the PTA coffers. Also, thank you to all the parents that gave their children money to buy baked goods at the last PTA Bake Sale. We were able to raise roughly \$150 at this event.


US\$15

VIS 2009 COOKBOOK in English & Lao

Available for purchase on

FRIDAY 11 Dec
MONDAY 14 Dec
TUESDAY 15 Dec
WEDNESDAY 16 Dec
THURSDAY 17 Dec
FRIDAY 18 Dec
3PM at VIS

US\$15



Grade 10 Trip to the South

By **Ranjana Chopra**
GRADE 10 STUDENT

This year the Grade 10 study trip was a tremendous victory. We had lots of fun while learning new things and everyday was filled with a different sense of excitement. Where the first two days were calm the remaining days were tiring. However, all of us successfully came back home without any injuries and everyone was contented with the trip. Whether it was kayaking or biking, laughing or singing, it was wonderful.

We started our journey on 16 November 2009 thinking about what awaits us for the next few days. The trip began with visiting a religious temple that many students worshipped in and others respected. This was followed by lunch at Pakading where we enjoyed eating Lao food. After a long walk across the bridge and a few hours later we reached Riveria hotel. Everyone was shocked to see the hotel as it was so much better than what we expected. The evening ended with a stunning sunset at Sikothabong Stupa and an appetizing dinner in the hotel.



The next day began with a superb breakfast followed by a 16km cycle. It was sunny and windy and while some biked to the Buddha Cave others were not able to continue and played UNO in the Tuk Tuk. When we entered the Buddha Cave we were amazed to see how well it was kept in terms of just being discovered in the year 2004. Quickly

after that we were ready to see the power plant and reservoir. Currently it is the largest one in Laos. It was very cold out there and most of the people were unprepared. We are thankful to one of the members of the project who explained to us the advantages and disadvantages of the developing hydro-electro power plant. The greatest part about this day was that we could have dinner wherever we wanted around town. As we woke the next day, we were ready to pack our bags and leave for the Sala Hinboun Resort. We all knew it was going to be a long ride of six hours. When we were in the middle of the mountains, it was unbelievable to see how chilling it was in Laos. After approaching the guesthouse we were ready to go to the Ban Nakan School to donate and plant trees. It was the first time in the history of the Ban Nakan School that an international school visited. We were very exultant during our community service and also when we played volleyball and soccer with the school. The bonfire was so soothing as it was very frosty at the resort. Around the bonfire we played some games, sang a few songs and ate barbeque. We had no idea how fun the next day was going to be. The entire Khonglor cave was completely dark without a torch. It was something never seen before by most of the people. It is the longest and largest cave in Laos and one has

to pass the complete cave by boat for seven and a half kms. Later on everyone just jumped in the water to swim right after lunch. Kayaking was powerful as we kayaked across the blue lagoon. We all had fun as we were banging into each other. At the Baci ceremony we prayed for our safety and wished good luck to each other for our future. We were very blissful the next day when we

finally reached the school at 3 o'clock.

Overall we all enjoyed ourselves. Where we learned many new things on one hand, on the other we got to know each other more and enjoyed the company. We had fun even when we were in a religious temple and also when we were singing loudly in the bus. Every moment of the study trip was enjoyable

and we thank our teachers, Mr. Hotrich, Mr. Dent, Mr. Jamie, Ms. Campbell, and the Green Discovery staff for the challenging activities and an excellent trip.

Jnr Basketball News

By **Dan Foggo**
PE TEACHER

The Junior Basketball MRISA Tournament, which was held at NISC in Phnom Penh last weekend, proved to be a fun and successful tournament for both our Junior Boys and Girls teams. The boys' team showed commitment over the two days, winning two out of their five games to finish in sixth place. The girls' team improved throughout the tournament. They finished in seventh place and were rewarded for their positive approach with the sportsmanship award. Well done to all junior athletes who played their part in this tournament.

ACTIVE PARENTING of TEENS

Because parenting does not come with an instruction manual

Learn:

- ◆ Methods of respectful discipline
- ◆ Skills for clear, honest communication
- ◆ Concrete strategies to prevent risky behavior
- ◆ How to be an encouraging parent

6 sessions: 2, 16 & 23 February and 2, 16 & 23 March
8:00am to 10:00am in the VIS Library on the 2nd floor.

Cost: \$20 for the course book
Sign up with Paramy in the office.