

# Dragon Tales

Volume 10 Issue 19

Friday, January 22, 2010

FREE

## WHAT'S ON?

### MRISA CULTURAL EXCHANGE HIS, VIETNAM

Thursday 21 to Sunday 24 January

### SECONDARY AWARDS ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 26 January at 1:30pm

### LANGUAGE MEETING

Tuesday 26 January at 7pm

### MRISA SR. SOCCER ISPP

Thursday 28 to Sunday 31 January

### GRADE 5 EXHIBITION

Tuesday 16 February at 6:45pm

## Welcome & welcome back!

By Steve Alexander  
DIRECTOR

We would like to give a warm welcome to the students and their families who are new to VIS this second semester. Also, welcome back to our students, their families and staff. We hope you all had a great holiday and wish you a great 2010 and semester 2!

## Language meeting

A reminder that we will have a very important meeting to present to parents changes in our language programme for next year. The meeting will be held at VIS on 26 January at 7pm. A letter confirming parent attendance at this meeting was sent home with the youngest child in every family before the break. Please read it and respond as soon as possible. Thank you.

## American School of Vientiane Reunion

The American School of Vientiane (ASV) was in operation from 1960 to 1975 and was attended by approximately 500 American children during those years. Next Monday 25 January 2010, ASV is hosting an Alumni Association Reunion and about 30 members will be visiting VIS for a tour and discussion. The discussion will take place at 4pm in the VIS canteen. We invite any interested parents, students, staff and friends to attend this event.

In an earlier email to parents, it was mentioned that a press release on the reun-

ion will be attached to Dragon Tales today. The article is now only available by email. Please email [jamiet@vislao.com](mailto:jamiet@vislao.com) for a copy.

## The Giving Tree

By Kendis McAden  
PTA MEMBER

Welcome back and Happy New Year to everyone! The PTA would like to sincerely thank all members of the VIS community who contributed to the 'Giving Tree' that was set up on campus in December. While we got off to a great start last year, the PTA would like to continue the Giving Tree project a bit longer in order to help two local schools acquire much needed supplies and funds. Donkoi Children's Development Center and Ban Saphanthong School have expressed a need for the following items:

- ♦ **uniforms for grades Prep through Grade 5** (white shirts/navy blue shorts or sinhs - available for purchase at Talat Sao or other local markets)
- ♦ **pencils**
- ♦ **blank writing books**

Students, parents or faculty who wish to contribute any of the items listed above are asked to bring their gift to school to place under the tree. Cash contributions are accepted as well and will be put towards a larger project (the specific project will be chosen by VIS students, and will address much needed facilities such as a toilet block or library). Cash contributors can bring their donations to Paramy in the school office and will be given an ornament with their name to hang on the tree. The PTA will continue to collect donations until the end of January. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated by Donkoi Children's Center, Ban Saphanthong School and the VIS PTA. With your help we can make the Giving Tree a successful tradition that VIS and the local community can look forward to in years to come!

## VIS Statistics December

as at 31 December 2009

### Enrollment

|                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Primary:                 | 196        |
| Secondary:               | 130        |
| <b>Total Enrollment:</b> | <b>326</b> |
| New Students:            | 2          |
| Departed Students:       | 11         |

## Payments

By Bryndis Chapman  
BUSINESS MANAGER

Please be reminded that the payment deadline for Semester 2 invoices was 15 January 2010 (unless your child is enrolling in January) and payments received after this date will incur a late fee.

Should you have any queries regarding invoices, please contact me at [businessmanager@vislao.com](mailto:businessmanager@vislao.com).

## Use of student images

By **Jamie Touttavong**

DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS & MARKETING

Occasionally, VIS will use images of students to promote and advertise the school. Images refers to photos (including digital), video footage on tape, CD/DVD or in digital format and any other form of medium that identifies your child. These images will be used either by VIS or authorized third parties such as printers and designers in publications, the school website, promotional material and any other documents published by the school or third parties.

In future, images of students will only be used with permission from par-

ents and in no circumstances will a published image be associated with a student's name. Please carefully read the attached form and indicate whether you give VIS permission to use your child's image. All families must submit a completed and signed form.

Should you have any queries regarding this policy, please email me at [jamiet@vislao.com](mailto:jamiet@vislao.com).

## Reducing our carbon footprint

By **Karel Campbell**

IT COORDINATOR

Vientiane International School is a member of the global community and as such seeks to find responsible solutions to environmental problems. One global

problem is waste. One way the IT department at VIS tries to minimize waste is by recycling print cartridges.

Print cartridges are made of plastic. Plastic is not biodegradable and does not decompose when thrown out. When we recycle, it means that instead of discarding a printer cartridge once it is empty, the cartridge is sent to a local company, refilled and brought back to the printer for reuse. If print cartridges are not refilled, the plastic could potentially be melted down and reshaped or crushed for a different use, but by reusing the cartridge for its original purpose, this extra effort is avoided.

It is comparable to choosing between buying a beverage in a plastic bottle that is thrown away or buying a beverage in a glass bottle that can be refilled. Recycling saves energy, decreases landfill and promotes responsible global citizenship.

## Staff News

By **Steve Alexander**

DIRECTOR

I am pleased to announce the following teachers who will be coming to VIS in August 2010.

**Anna Cervantes** will be teaching Primary Music at VIS next year. She is presently teaching Music at the Pacific American School in Taiwan. Anna will be coming to VIS with her 12 year old daughter. They are citizens of Poland. Anna has a Master's Degree in instrumental music and she is a concert pianist. She has a teaching certificate from the Nowowiejski Music Academy in Poland. Anna has also taught music at the International School of Krakow in Poland and in Kuwait. Anna has experience with IBDP. She has taught Music from Kindergarten through Secondary school in two schools.

**Carolyn Seymour** will be teaching middle school Science and Chemistry in the Diploma Programme next year. Carolyn is presently Head of Chemistry and is also teaching Biology at the John Lyon School in the UK. Carolyn has previously taught Science at St. Dominic's International School in Portugal, at the Ottawa Carelton School in Canada and at the Quinte Secondary School in Ontario, Canada. Carolyn has a Bachelor's degree from the University

of Toronto and an Honors Bachelor's degree also from the University of Toronto. Carolyn is Canadian.

**Courtney Smedes** and her husband Jonathan will also be joining us next year. They are from Australia. Courtney is presently teaching a grade 2/3 class and is PYP coordinator at the Medan International School in Indonesia. Courtney has a Bachelor's degree in Primary Education from Monash University. She also has a Diploma of Community Service (Children's Services) from the Box Hill Institute of Technology. Courtney has also taught grade 5/6 at the Kallista Primary School in Melbourne, Australia. Courtney will be teaching grade 4 at VIS.

**Jonathan Smedes** is currently teaching Humanities and MYP Language at the Medan International School in Indonesia. Jonathan has a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics from the University of New England. He has a Graduate degree of Secondary Education from Catholic University and a Bachelor's degree in Globalization Studies from Victoria University. Jonathan will be teaching Humanities at VIS in the Secondary School. Jonathan has previously taught at the Australia Center in Medan, Indonesia, Eltham College in Melbourne, Australia and the Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School in Melbourne.

**Olivier Guevel** will be teaching French in middle and high school next

year. He is presently teaching French at the MEF International School in Turkey. Olivier is from France and has a Bachelor's degree in Anglo-American and French Studies. He also has a Master's degree in teaching French as a foreign language from the Universite Stendhal Grenoble. Olivier has IB experience in PYP, MYP and DP. He has previously taught French at the Lyford Cay International School in the Bahamas, at the HB Rhame elementary school in South Carolina, USA and at the College de la Sainte Famile in Cairo, Egypt.

### Teachers leaving VIS at the end of this school year:

**Carine Visser** - (leaving end of January 2010) EAL Coordinator

**Janet Sankar** - IB Physics and Chemistry, MYP Science

**Paul Carter** - Primary Music

**Ron Lel** - MYP EAL, Humanities, IT

**Rowland Jepson** - DP Coordinator and Humanities Teacher

### Staff changes for next year:

**Alison Francis** - PYP Coordinator and Grade 3 teacher

**Julia Lachet** - moving from French to position of Whole School Language Coordinator

**Kim Green** - Secondary Head / MYP Coordinator

**Todd Richer** - DP Coordinator and Humanities teacher

## Primary Update

By **Carmel McCormick**  
PRIMARY HEAD

Welcome to Semester 2! An especially warm welcome to our new Primary students and their families. We look forward to getting to know you.

On Thursday 21 Grade 5s hosted our first assembly for 2010 and did a wonderful job coordinating this event. It was lovely to see parents participating in the assembly.

The Grade 5s reminded us to "Stay COOL at SCHOOL" by wearing a hat and bringing a refillable water bottle.

Thank you to the parents who have already returned the "Two Wishes and a Star" reflection and goal setting sheet along with the Portfolio. These will assist the students and teachers to set Se-

mester Two goals. The next formal reporting will be the Student Led Conferences on Thursday 6 May.

Please be mindful that school begins each morning at 7:50am. The first session in each class is well thought out and as important as any other lesson. I therefore ask for your cooperation by planning to have your child/ren at school on time. There will be odd times when you may be unavoidably late and teachers will be understanding of this.

The students are dismissed at 2:55pm (2:10pm on Tuesdays) and are supervised until 3:10pm. Students who have not been collected by then will need to go to the office and phone calls to parents will be made.

It is important that if there are any changes to the pick up routine at end of the day, you must notify the school in advance. Whilst it is important for children to think for themselves and to be

independent, it is also important that they understand and respect that there are times when the adults must make the decisions. Making play dates should be done with parent approval from home. Please ensure that if you have staff collecting your children that they are also aware of this expectation. Thank you for your cooperation in this.

We have many exciting events this semester. Primary Sports day will be Thursday 18 February and Fun Fair is on Saturday 27 February. Information from the PTA and the Primary class parents, will explain how you can become involved.

Plans are underway for the Grade 5 Exhibition. The first workshop involving Grade 5 parents, students and the Exhibition Team of teachers is on Tuesday 16 February at 6:45pm. Detailed information will be sent directly to the Grade 5 community.

## HEALTH & SPORTS

### Dengue & JE

By **MoeMoe Fennema**  
NURSE

This week we have received many reports of cases of Dengue fever. As you are most probably aware Dengue fever is caused by mosquitoes. Therefore, we all need to take precautions both at school and home. VIS had the campus sprayed over the break and we know this is helping. We will also have the canal cleared of vegetation which should help with removing the stagnant and settled water.

Dr. Justin Denny of WHO and VIS's medical advisor suggests that students receive the Japanese Encephalitis vaccine. New evidence is showing Japanese Encephalitis is more prevalent than initially thought and is also caused by mosquitoes. Although the Japanese Encephalitis vaccination was previously not required if there is no exposure to rural villages, cases are now being reported in Vientiane and there is a strong recommendation for this vaccine.

The recommendation for JEV vaccination is as follows:

- ♦ first dose from 18 months old
- ♦ 7-14 days after first dose
- ♦ 28-35 days after first dose (or after one year)

- ♦ booster 3 years after first dose
- Please check your child's vaccination record and inform the school of any changes. Stay healthy!

### Snr Boys Soccer

By **Philip Graham**  
ATHLETICS DIRECTOR

Shortly (January 28-31) the senior boy's soccer will be travelling to Phnom Penh to take part in their annual tournament. They have been working very hard and have had numerous practice games and trainings including over the Christmas break to prepare. Special mention must be made of the effort coaches Mr. Todd and Mr. Dan have put in. Those travelling are Dai Nguyen, Dominic Aeschbach, Maurice Schill, Jin Vangthachanh, Em Seangduangvixai, Rayne Barnes, Torje Rydland, Moo Sung Kim and Jackie Phothisane. We wish them all the best.

#### Upcoming MRISA events

| AGE GROUP/ SPORT                              | DATES     | VENUE |
|---|-----------|-------|
| Snr. Basketball (Boys and Girls, Grades 9-12) | 1-4 April | SSIS  |
| Jnr. Soccer (Boys and Girls, Grades 6-8)      | 6-9 May   | HIS   |

The next two MRISA events are described below and students will be contacted shortly to start arrangements for these two tournaments.

If any student is interested in attending either of these two events they need to get a sign up sheet from Mr. Philip now.

### Activities Qtr 3

By **Dan Foggo**  
ASA COORDINATOR

Activities for quarter three start this coming Monday 25 January. Group lists are attached to today's emailed version of Dragon Tales. They will also be posted on the ASA notice board. As a reminder, activities run from 3pm to 4pm except on Tuesdays when they run from 2:15pm to 3:45pm.

If you have any queries please email Mr. Dan at [danielf@vislao.com](mailto:danielf@vislao.com).

## Welcome to Semester Two

By **Kim Green and Rowland Jepson**  
IB COORDINATORS

Welcome back to all of our students, staff and parents. A very big welcome to the new students who have joined us at the beginning of semester two. At this point of the semester it is important for our students to re-evaluate their SMART Goals. What do they want to achieve for the semester, academically, socially, physically, emotionally? There is space in the Student Planner for the SMART Goals to be recorded.

What advice can our students take from the reports and put into practice this semester? We encourage you to spend some time with your children to revisit and reflect on the comments in the reports that were distributed before the break.

During this semester we will see many key events occurring such as Honor Roll Assemblies, Showcases of Learning, the IB Diploma External Examinations, VIS Examinations, VIS Idol, and the VIS Charity Gala. Watch Dragon Tales for the dates so you can be part of these events.

## Semester I Secondary Honor Roll

On Tuesday 26 January the Secondary School will be hosting the Semester One Honor Roll Assembly. We invite you to join us to acknowledge our students' academic excellence and diligence. Students are awarded Honor Roll for demonstrating academic excellence or an outstanding effort in their learning throughout Semester One. We look forward to sharing with you this celebration of our students' successes.

### BOOK SIGNING

**COLIN COTTERILL**  
@  
**VIS CHARITY GALA**

## VIS Annual Charity Gala

*Save the Date!*

By **Kim Green**  
MYP COORDINATOR / STUDENT COUNCIL ADVISOR

Each year the Secondary Student Council hosts the VIS Annual Charity Gala. This year the event will be held on **Saturday 20 February at 7pm**. Save this date!

This is a formal event organized by the Secondary Student Council which provides an opportunity for the VIS and Lao community to come together with the intent of raising funds to put towards the students' 'Youth Educating Youth' projects. It is fully organized, planned and hosted by the students.

As a result of the Gala over the last two years, the students have donated money to Big Brother Mouse which went to sixteen villages and meant that over 1600 students were able to own their first book. The donation also meant that each village was given a small library of books for the children. The VIS students have also raised significant funds through last year's Charity Gala which will be put towards the construction and establishment of a school library at Ban Saphanthong Tai Primary School.

This year the VIS students want to help a trained team of Lao students in Lao Ngam Secondary School who volunteer to work in remote villages, educating families about the dangers of trafficking and the methods used to traffic young women. Our students intend to raise funds to support the efforts of the Lao Ngam volunteers by working with them to design, produce and supply resources that can be used in the education of rural families.

We are fortunate to have Colin Cotterill joining us this year as our guest. Colin is a novelist who bases his stories in Laos and returns a share of the profits to fund books for rural villages in Laos through an organization called Big Brother Mouse. He will share with us his vision and be available for book signings.

The evening looks to be action filled with a 'hot' auction, live music and great food.

Over the past two years the students have demonstrated responsibility as caring and respectful young adults who want to be able to touch the lives of others and help make a difference in our world.

Join us on **Saturday 20 February** and help our students make a difference in our world.

### WHAT IS HAPPENING



- ♦ **Secondary Honor Roll Assembly**  
Tuesday 26 January  
@ 1:30pm in the Canteen
- ♦ **Active Parenting of Teens**  
Begins Tuesday 2 January
- ♦ **Language Meeting**  
Tuesday 26 January @ 7pm
- ♦ **MRISA Senior Soccer**  
27-31 January
- ♦ **MRISA MUN**  
3-7 February
- ♦ **Secondary Sports Day**  
Friday 12 February
- ♦ **Secondary Assembly**  
Tuesday 16 February
- ♦ **VIS Charity Gala**  
Saturday 20 February

You're invited to attend

# Active Parenting of Teens : )

For Parents of Teens and Tweens

The challenge of successfully ushering children through their teen years has always been among parents' hardest-won achievements. But in today's society where children seem to become adults overnight, and where they often make decisions about drugs, sexuality, and violence before they understand the consequences, a parent's job is more important than ever. So how can you ensure that your teens develop the skills and character they need to not only survive but to thrive as they gain independence?

You *can* create harmony and stability in your family while raising your teens to be responsible, courageous and prepared for independent life. *Active Parenting of Teens*, a video and discussion program by parenting expert Dr. Michael Popkin, will show you how. In six sessions packed with activities, discussion, real-world examples, and feedback, you'll learn a proven approach to parenting, plus indispensable techniques and insights for overcoming obstacles, that will bring happiness and harmony into your home. You'll leave each session energized and motivated to make positive and realistic changes in your own family's daily life.

Since 1983, millions of families have learned the benefits of Active Parenting. Now it's your turn.

Join us at the next session and see the difference!

*Active Parenting of Teens* will give you the guidance and support you need to turn the challenges of raising a teenager into opportunities for growth. You'll learn:

- Methods of respectful discipline
  - Skills for clear, honest communication
  - Concrete strategies to prevent risky behavior
  - How to be an encouraging parent
- ... and much more, plus insight into important issues such as teens online, bullying, and depression.



Narrated by TV mom Daphne Maxwell-Reid ("The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air") and by the author, Dr. Michael Popkin

Active Parenting  
of Teens : )

third edition

**SIGN UP NOW!**

*"If there is anything that we wish to change in our child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could be changed in ourselves."*

*C.G. Jung*

## Active Parenting of Teens Course

By Leslie Corcos  
COUNSELOR

Secondary parents, come to our parenting course! Only 6 sessions! It will help you communicate better with your child, offer direction with disci-

pline, and allow you to share ideas with other parents.

Feb. 2, 16, 23, March 2, 16, 23 in the VIS library from 8am to 10am. Sign up with Paramy in the school office. Costs only \$20 for the course book.