ADOPT A BUFFALO!

At our farm, we have one male and four female buffaloes: Boon Mee, Big Mama, Jan Pen and Gluay and Jean Genie.

Whilst they are certainly the biggest, most hard-working animals on the farm, they are also the most calm-natured!

Their typical day consists of grazing the fields, ploughing the rice paddies and bathing in the ponds. They’re also known to love a good mud-massage!

If you’re interested, scan the QR code or contact us at farm@threegeneration.org

ADOPT A GOAT!

We have several goats and kids in our farm who all love to spend their day in the open fields around the farm, grazing alongside our buffaloes.

Our goats like to snack on young bamboo leaves and love to be petted by our students. But beware; they love to chew on your clothes as well!

If you’re interested, scan the QR code or contact us at farm@threegeneration.org

ADOPT A TORTOISE!

Stella is our only reptile friend at the farm. She is a 10 year old African Spurred Tortoise, and is now a major part of our farm family.

She loves to meet new people and play and interact with them - she is very responsive and friendly, and really has a personality of her own!

She is a herbivore and loves to be fed flowers, cucumbers, watermelon, long beans, and lettuces.

If you’re interested, scan the QR code or contact us at farm@threegeneration.org

RENT A FAMILY PLOT

You will get a 20 x 2m size plot where you can plant anything you want.

We will provide you with water, organic compost, natural pesticides and tools from the farm.

For more information contact us at farm@threegeneration.org or scan the QR code above!

Traidhos Three-Generation Farm Presents...
The Three-Generation Community is a unique educational centre. It offers Prem Tinsulanonda International School (an IB World day and boarding school), a dynamic Visiting Schools Program, the exciting Traidhos Camps, an artists’ residency program, an educational farm and a converted rice barge used for educational environmental studies on the Chao Phraya River in and around Bangkok.

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Editorial

Across the international community, the academic year has come to an end. However, at Traidhos the learning continues. We have various visiting schools and campers coming to Traidhos for an experiential learning experience that can’t be had in the classroom. A well-rounded education takes learning beyond the school gates and into new environments. This is where we thrive, offering hands-on learning that teaches new skills and broadens perspectives. It’s going to be an exciting next few months here in Chiang Mai.

Once we leave formal education, learning remains a life-long pursuit. Schools and universities should ingrain a thirst for learning, after which the desire for knowledge only grows. Students must be taught the skills they need to learn independently and effectively throughout their lives – a vital ability in today’s world of rapid technological change. Through the internet, technology has provided us all with unprecedented access to learning resources. More than ever before, it is never too late to learn, no matter our age or circumstances. In the wise words of Mahatma Gandhi: “Live as if you’ll die tomorrow, learn as if you’ll live forever.”

This issue contains a wide selection of articles on the theme of learning. We look at the power of real-world learning; examine reptile training through the Traidhos tortoise, Stella; and learn about seed banking for food security. There is an original short story and reports on a recent clean up of the Chao Phraya river and the Earth Day celebrations at Prem. We also take journeys to new and foreign lands, see the world through a climber’s eyes and learn about the theory of multiple intelligence.

I guarantee that this magazine can teach every one of our readers something new. Let the learning commence!

Editor
Jacob Smith
Have you ever found yourself standing at the exact spot that you had read or studied about, but a place that you never imagined that you would see for yourself? Somewhere that you never thought you would fully embrace, nor be present to experience the sites and sounds – the whole sensory immersion of seeing and hearing and feeling for yourself?

This was the reality of the experience for me, as I stood at the confluence of River Nan and River Ping at Pak Nam Po, Nakhon Sawan. After many years of teaching about Thailand’s major river, the Chao Phraya River; after drawing many crude maps with wobbly lines showing where the rivers converged, marked by a large dot stating Nakhon Sawan, the geography lesson was over. Those two blackboard lines were now living, flowing rivers. I stood there watching the energy and life as green waters merged with brown waters. This was a marriage. Two becoming one. Two cultures and histories blending and uniting. Those murky waters, the sands and silts hiding their stories, hiding the secrets of mountains and waterfalls they had travelled over, cabbage farms and gerbera cultivation that they had left behind, those two rivers giving up their own identities but in sacrificing this, becoming the mighty Chao Phraya, River of Kings, Lifeblood of Thailand.

This was it! Without fanfare or celebration an almost fictional place proving its reality.

As I stood in the early evening sunshine, on the land right at the point of the confluence, I pondered how these rivers were the metaphor for my own learning. The factual stream merging with the stream of experience forever changing my understanding of the Chao Phraya’s story. This is what field trips and learning should be about – a coming together of taught knowledge or practised skills with reality. It’s extremely powerful when video and textbook information from the classroom joins with the interviews and data collection, observations or experiential games of the field trip. It is this re-ordering of ideas; experiences building on experiences; that makes those neurological changes leading to what we call “learning”.

As I sat and watched the swirling flow of water carrying water hyacinth towards the distant sea, I marvelled at the lessons nature is willing to teach if we stop and take notice. It reaffirmed my belief in the value of experiential field trips, be they to forests or streams, to the sea or to built environments. It challenged me to excite and motivate everyone to keep seeking, to keep thinking and to keep learning.

**Chao Phraya**
- Length: 372 Kilometers (approx)
- Tributaries: Ping, Wang, Yom, Nan
- Mouth: Gulf of Thailand
- Watershed Area: 35% of Thailand
- Species: 280 species of fish, 30 of which are endemic; 6 endemic dragonflies.
- Transport: 50,000 people per day

**Pasan Monument**
- Built where the Chao Phraya begins at Nakhon Sawan.
- Construction took twelve years.
- The design is flood resistant, incorporates public meeting spaces and is in harmony with the local scenery.

Lynda Rolph is Head of Community at Traidhos Three-Generation Community for learning and has been working with the company for over fifteen years. She is a highly respected environmental educator, with teaching experience in the United Kingdom and Thailand. She is the former director of the Three-Generation Barge Program.

Photos: Lynda Rolph
We are often bombarded with shocking facts and figures, such as that by 2050 there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish, but how often are we actually driven to prevent the destruction of our environment? Barge Program recently joined forces with Bangkok Metropolitan Administration to help clean up the Chao Phraya, a river whose story forms the basis of many Barge trips.

When it comes to mismanaged plastic ending up in the ocean, Thailand has a particularly bad record. Data sourced from 2010 placed Thailand as the sixth largest contributor of mismanaged plastic in the world. Since then, the Thai government founded a range of initiatives to reduce this statistic, however, these schemes have so far only caused a minute reduction.

The Chao Phraya River, starting at a confluence in Nakhon Sawan where the Ping and Nan rivers meet, flows through much of Central Thailand. As the river works its way down it takes in water from polluted khlongs (canals or small rivers), which contain tonnes of plastic waste. In Bangkok alone, there are 2,604 kilometres of khlongs and many of these are congested with waste. As all of the khlongs and tributaries of the Chao Phraya River eventually join together, the river itself is often clogged with large quantities of plastic waste. Fortunately, the diligent workers on the yellow boats of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration work tirelessly to clean as much rubbish as they can from the river and then, most importantly, dispose of this waste properly.

On Saturday the 1st of June, the Barge Program and a brilliant team of volunteers joined the yellow boats on the river to help clean up. It wasn’t just a case of cruising up the river and picking out plastic bags, the team had to go underneath piers, around docked boats and through construction sites. The team worked along a seven-kilometre stretch of the river and by the end, we had collected enough waste to fill four boats.

The waste collected was mostly styrofoam, straws, rubber bands and small sauce packets. Much of the waste will take centuries to decompose and some will never fully decompose, instead becoming microplastics, which are next to impossible to recover. Plastic waste hotspots seemed to be around tourist areas such as underneath Asiatique, which was covered in a blanket of waste, and around the many hotels on the river.

Of course, you don’t have to join the Barge team on a river clean up to help make the world a little bit cleaner. Small changes to your daily lifestyle will have an impact. Such changes can be as simple as saying no to unnecessary plastic bags, always ensuring your waste goes into a properly sealed bin, recycling whenever you can and using alternatives such as reusable cups and straws instead of plastic ones.

This was a great opportunity for the Barge Program staff to clean up the river that forms the foundation of many of our lessons. Perhaps more importantly, it also equipped us with a deeper understanding of how Thailand is trying to manage the waste floating within her most famous river. The Barge program would like to thank Bangkok Metropolitan Administration for allowing us to join them for the day. We look forward to working with them on future projects.

Will Chilton and Sutida Naksaro work for Traidhos Barge Program. They are both committed to helping the environment through practical action and education.

Photos: Sutida Naksaro

For more information, visit barge.threegeneration.org
Learning in Reptiles – The Curious Case of Stella, the African Spurred Tortoise (Centrochelys sulcata)

After outgrowing her family home, Stella the tortoise has been a welcome addition to the Traidhos Three-Generation Farm family. Our resident Herpetologist, Sandeep Varma, looks at learning among reptiles and details his training with Stella.

Turtles, tortoises and terrapins belong to a very ancient group called Chelonia, whose lineage goes back at least 220 million years. What’s the difference, you ask? Technically speaking, turtles are almost entirely aquatic, while Terrapins spend significant time on land as well as in water, and then we have tortoises, who are almost entirely land dwelling. Tortoises have stubby elephant-like feet with little or no webbing, signifying its adaptation to move on land; turtles and terrapins have three-quarters to full webbing, helping them move through the water with ease. There are 356 species of turtles, terrapins and tortoises in the world, with more than fifty per cent of this ancient lineage threatened by extinction due to human pressure, for example, through hunting (eggs as well as individuals), habitat destruction, the pet trade and pollution. For a lot of the species, there are ex-situ and in-situ conservation efforts, with research trying to understand the diseases they might contract, the effect of habitat loss, and breeding pressures. This knowledge is vital in trying to conserve the species in the wild. In zoos, many of these chelonians are kept as genetic representations of their species, or for re-introduction in case of catastrophic population loss in the wild.

Zoos have been keeping animals since the mid-1800s, and began keeping reptiles from the early 1900s. Most reptiles require less space than mammals and so smaller enclosures. Being ectothermic, they also require substantially less food than mammals. Because of their lifestyles, reptiles were initially seen as lazy, unresponsive animals, but as people learnt more about them, this view changed. Thus, zoos started exploring animal enrichment techniques. The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) defines enrichment as “a process for improving or enhancing animal environments and care within the context of their inhabitant’s behavioural biology and natural history. It is a dynamic process in which changes to structures and husbandry practices are made with the goal of increasing behavioural choices available to the animals and drawing out their species-appropriate behaviours and abilities, thus enhancing animal welfare.”

Reptiles, like bearded dragons, green iguanas, monitor lizards, boas and pythons, turtles and tortoises, and even certain species of frogs can be trained to calmly and voluntarily enter a crate instead of having to be physically forced. Reptiles can also be trained to accept various veterinary procedures such as ultrasounds, nail clipping, blood draws and medication. Reptiles with chronic conditions requiring regular visits and/or treatments can be trained to cooperate. Desensitising and enrichment training allows for reptile treatment that causes little to no stress for the animal and keeper.

In 2012, I had an opportunity to learn a bit about animal enrichment and training when I worked at the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust and Reptile Zoo, India’s leading ex-situ conservation organisation. I was fortunate to work with several species of crocodiles, chelonians, snakes and lizards, and for the first time, I saw that reptiles have personalities and the ability to be trained. I learned a lot from Mr Soham Mukherjee and Mr Ajay Kartik, the assistant curators at that time and I tried my luck training some of the juvenile animals. That small experience equipped me with a basic idea of how to go about training reptiles.
The first time I saw Stella, our African Spurred Tortoise, was in February 2018. She was this moody, shy animal, always resting in one corner of her enclosure. Stella looked lethargic, uninterested and generally bored. During my first few visits, I used to sit in one corner of her enclosure, observing her, calling her name and expecting her to respond, but she did not. That's when I decided to put the knowledge I learned to good use. First, I decided to wear bright coloured clothing to get her attention. Most tortoises are attracted to bright colours and Stella wasn't any different. As she curiously approached me, attracted by my bright shirt, I decided to use the vocal cue of "Stella" and "come" and then reward her with cucumber, watermelon or hibiscus flower every time she reached me. I repeated the same exercise for three days at around four in the afternoon. On the fourth day of training, I decided to wear a dull colour and try the same exercise. I went into the enclosure and started my vocal cue: her name followed by "come". It took her a few minutes to respond but she finally approached me. I moved further away as she was approaching to make sure she understood the commands. She did and was rewarded when she reached me. I continued the exercise for another week until she was familiar with the commands. Along with these training sessions, I used desensitising techniques like touching different parts of her carapace (top shell). Gradually, it gave me an idea of the areas on her shell where she enjoys a brief scratch. She, like a dog, loves bum scratches. When receiving these she stretches her neck outwards and wiggles her back.

People generally feel that animals cannot learn, especially if they are older. This is not correct. All pets require attention, not just food and the right habitat. Most of the animals kept as pets enjoy human interaction and require it regularly. By doing this, you will get to understand the personality of the animal you keep, its behavioural mannerisms and abnormalities. So, with any pet, read up on their requirements before you invest your time. Most species of animals learn to adapt to an environment, even in captivity and this should be constantly be kept in check so that your pets don’t end up being bored in your home. Try to stimulate them with something new. With animal interaction and training, you will generally get back what you put in.

Sandeep Varma is Head of Activities at Traidhos Three-Generation Farm. He holds a postgraduate degree in Conservation Biology from the University of Kent and has worked in the field of conservation education and outreach for more than eight years.

Photos: Cláudia Carracha and Jacob Smith
During Spring break Prem Intensive English Program (IEP) students, alumni to present, and teachers travelled to Bhutan for an unforgettable experience. Our trip was a shining example of how experiential learning can transcend beyond classroom walls and into the field.

From when we landed until we departed, students had an adventurous itinerary of hiking, camping rafting and sightseeing. The weather was unexpectedly cold at times, reaching temperatures of minus five degrees centigrade at night. This was challenging for all, especially after hiking three thousand metres up into the mountains of Paro, where we spent two nights camping and trekking. The students did an incredible job of pushing beyond their boundaries, stepping outside of their comfort zone and displaying resilience and risk-taking attributes; for most of them, it was their first time hiking, rafting and camping.

We were also fortunate enough to arrange a visit and cross-cultural exchange with the Utpal Academy, a private junior and senior school in Paro. The school was very welcoming; Prem students and teachers spent the morning engaging with the senior school students and the junior school students treated us to an evening of traditional Bhutanese performances.

No trip to Bhutan would be complete without a walk to Tiger’s Nest (Taktsang) monastery. Students and teachers did a fantastic job of walking all the way to the main prayer halls; the air was thin and the hike was challenging but by then we had all become seasoned hikers: there wasn’t a single complaint, only expressions of awe at what lay in wait for us upon entering the temple spaces.

Experiential learning is as important, if not more, than the academic learning that takes place in the classroom. Arranging and organising a trip to Bhutan for teachers and students was a full time job of its own, or rather a labour of love. It was a great pleasure to watch the students grow and learn new life skills that they will carry with them forever; momentous progress was made and felt by all.

Bhutan is a magical country; words and static images hardly do it justice. I would highly recommend a visit to this special land, where Gross National Happiness (GNH) takes priority over Gross Domestic Product (GDP); where the environment always comes first; where the benevolence of the Royal Family is revered and felt by all.
Traidhos Quarterly interviewed the IEP students about their experience in Bhutan:

**Chisa:** My favourite place was the temple. We could see the monks going about their every day activities in the temple. Our guide explained about the temple and the monk’s life. I had never visited a place like this before.

**Yidding:** The visit to the temple was very inspiring. I want to become a monk in Bhutan one day.

**Claira:** Rafting was my favourite activity. It was challenging because it was my first time and I thought it looked very dangerous. But when I started it wasn’t scary and was actually very fun. I want to do more rafting here in Chiang Mai.

**Katie:** When we did the hiking, at first I thought I couldn’t do it because the mountain was so high and I had a headache. But, around halfway I ate some chocolate and felt better. I knew then that I could make it to the top. When we finished the hike I was very happy with myself. I also really liked going to the museum. We learned about Bhutan there and its history with India and China, which was really interesting.

**George:** Camping was great, although it was very cold. The weather was the coldest ever during spring in Bhutan, with snow and hail. Our phone batteries had died but it was never a problem because we had stories and cards. I liked not using my phone. I have been using my phone less since I came back from Bhutan.

**Yidding:** Yes, it was fun without our phones. We played games and pranks and I talked more to everyone. We got new nicknames and all became better friends.

**Casey Gramaglia** has been living and teaching in Thailand for nearly twenty years. He was there for the birth of the Intensive English Programme in 2014 and has been part of the Prem Community for seven years. Both a teacher and a parent, Casey’s three generation family has fully embraced Mom Tri’s (Traidhos founder) vision of living and learning together. Casey hold’s a PGCE & a Master’s Degree in Education from Keele University. He is an avid athlete who loves to swim, bike and run.

**Photos:** Casey Gramaglia

Intensive English Program (IEP)

With a dedicated team and curriculum, IEP is working hard each year to improve the program so as to offer the most dynamic language learning experience possible for students. Our main focus in the IEP is teaching students English and preparing them to enter an international school. We do this by providing students with an array of creative learning opportunities, such as: English outside of the classroom activities, sustainability classes, yoga, art, drama, meditation and much more.

Whilst in the IEP, students not only learn the academic language necessary for an IB education, they also learn self-confidence skills, such as how to be part of an international community while forging friendships for life.
Save Your Seeds Today and Have Food Security Tomorrow

Pun Pun Organic Farm is one of the biggest seed banks in Northern Thailand. Community member Sheena Niamjan explains the magic of seed saving.

The word leadership stirs up all kinds of images, but the one I can relate to the most is the image I see here at Pun Pun Organic Farm and Center for Self Reliance. The image is of people crouched down in a circle around a small pile of earth and a black plastic seedling tray. This group is one of many who come to the farm to learn how to plant seeds and grow their own food. It all begins with the simple act of delicately placing a seed into the earth. We then need to nurture the seed as it grows into a beautiful plant that’s ready to be harvested and eaten. Its body can then provide nourishment for ours.

Through these training sessions, people from all over the world can use their new skills to produce and consume their own food. This is true leadership, allowing for people to become empowered and self reliant in meeting one of their most basic needs. Whether it is rice, corn or wheat; vegetables, beef, fish or tofu, we all connect with food. Urban or rural we can all face struggles with access to good food. When we start to look at food security and what we can do to address it, one of the simplest ways is to begin saving your own open-pollinated heirloom seeds. By learning simple techniques to save seeds you can create your own food security, for today and for future generations. You can then become a leader and role model in your community by creating lasting access to good food.

"These seeds, these tiny capsules of life and witnesses to the past, they speak to me in my dreams.”
-Rowan White, Director of the Sierra Seed Cooperative

We can separate our seeds into three main categories: dry seeds, wet seeds and slimy seeds. To save dry seeds such as lettuce, beans, kale, carrot or basil you simply go out to collect the dried seeds from the plants. To process them, crack open the dried seedpods and select the healthiest, most beautiful seeds and dry them in a shady place. For giants of the world like Monsanto, Bayer, Syngenta, BASF, Dow chemical and DuPont. These companies specialise in producing pesticides, herbicides, fertilisers and genetically modified (GMO) seeds. At Pun Pun, our community members work together to collect and process our own organically grown, open-pollinated heirloom seeds. Seed savers are a link between that which was and what will be. Realising this deep and sacred connection between plants, seeds and the next generation of plants is crucial to our sustainability.

Bit convoluted. Make it more clear the processes for each or collect the processes that are the same and say the, once.

"Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children”
-Anonymous

This simple act of saving seeds reconnects us with our past and with the lost generations of farmers and seed savers who have worked tirelessly to feed us. For many indigenous and local people around the world it is a sacred act to save seeds, one that rekindles the connection to their elders and brings them closer to their creators. This is a brave act in the face of the modern agro-chemical giants of the world like Monsanto, Bayer, Syngenta, BASF, Dow chemical and DuPont. These companies specialise in producing pesticides, herbicides, fertilisers and genetically modified (GMO) seeds. At Pun Pun, our community members work together to collect and process our own organically grown, open-pollinated heirloom seeds. Seed savers are a link between that which was and what will be. Realising this deep and sacred connection between plants, seeds and the next generation of plants is crucial to our sustainability.

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wet seeds such as eggplant, chili, pumpkin or watermelon you simply allow the fruit to become extremely ripe on the plant and then cut it open and remove the seeds. Wash the seeds, select the most beautiful ones and dry them in the shade for a few days. To save slimy seeds such as tomato, papaya, passion or gak fruit you simply collect the ripe fruit and then wash the seeds. After washing the seeds, soak them in water to allow the slimy coating to ferment and rot away. This soaking process can take one to five days depending on the plant variety. Dry the seeds in the shade after the coating is removed. Once your seeds are dried, place them in a glass container or plastic zipper bag and store in a cool, dry place or a refrigerator or freezer to further extend storage life. These seeds are then ready to be placed in the soil along with an invocation or prayer to our ancestors and for future seed savers.

As a mother, bringing my daughter into the garden and sharing time together in that special place is one of the most wonderful times we have together. To have her share in the knowledge of saving seeds so that we can grow our own food from our own seeds is one of the most powerful experiences she can have and I am so proud to be part of it. If she can have these sacred moments with her children in the future, that will be my dream of a sustainable future come true.

Sheena Niamjan is a community member at Pun Pun Organic Farm and Center for Self Reliance. She was an original member of the Traidhos Farm staff and helped create its educational program. She has also worked with the Traidhos Barge, Visiting Schools and Camps Programs.

Photos: Sheena Niamjan
April 22nd is no ordinary day. This is the day that for the last forty-nine years has been the official celebration of the planet, Earth Day.

History of Earth Day

In the 1970’s many things were happening in the United States and development and status were becoming more prominent. Gas-guzzling vehicles, industrial development creating air pollution and chemicals used in agriculture were being shown to cause the death of some species. This was also the time of the counterculture from which the environmental movement began to gain momentum.

During this period, a Senator from Wisconsin, Gaylord Nelson, witnessed a devastating oil spill in the ocean. He then decided to use his position within the government to raise awareness about the environment. During the first year, this led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and to the development of a number of environmental acts that are still in place today (e.g. the Clean Air Act). The first Earth Day was observed in 1970 in the United States.

In 1990, Earth Day went international, becoming a yearly global network of events and activities to raise awareness and educate about the environment.

Earth Day at PTIS

As an International School, Earth Day is one of our most important community days. We, as a community, are very privileged to be situated in surroundings that are filled with wonderful wildlife, but we are not immune from the pressures that are being placed on the entire planet and this year has seen us dealing with the worst air pollution season in many years.

So, due to the severe air pollution, our celebrations were postponed until May 17th.

The whole community wore green for the day and celebrations took place in the afternoon, after a meat-free picnic lunch for the whole school. The Junior School ate lunch and made chalk drawings on the playground, whereas the Middle and Senior Schools ate in the Amphitheater and used the Farm’s bicycle blender to make their own fruit smoothies.

In Junior School, the main idea was to provide students with the opportunity to appreciate the outdoors and take action to help our Earth in the future. Students engaged in a campus clean-up by collecting litter and also made degradable plant pots. The students planted seedlings in these and will look after them in their classrooms. Grade 5 conducted an environmental debate.

Some of the younger grades had the chance to simply enjoy nature, take part in a natural scavenger hunt and learn about some of the cool invertebrates that we have on campus.
Senior School activities focused on developing sustainable skills and thinking, along with addressing some of the environmental issues that had arisen during the year. The newly formed, student-led Sustainability Committee identified a number of areas where improvements to our sustainability and overall campus environment could be made. These were incorporated into the activities.

**Plants for classrooms**

During the extended period of air pollution this year, all classrooms were kept closed and air purifiers were used. Research showed that carbon dioxide levels were increasing in the classrooms during these times. We found that including some specific plants in the rooms helped to improve the overall air quality.

The plants that we selected are the snake plant (Sansevieria trifasciata) and the golden palm (Dypsis lutescens), both known for their beneficial air-filtration properties.

**Upcycled fashion**

A number of our Grade 11 students are studying with Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) with a focus on fashion. These students ran a number of sessions focusing on upcycled fashion. As a boarding school with a uniform, we have been running a second-hand uniform store but we have many extra, unused uniforms. These acted as the base for the students to design and make new, funky outfits from old uniforms and scraps of fabric. Many had never used a sewing machine before and everyone enjoyed cutting up the old uniforms – every would-be rebel’s fantasy! Their creations highlighted the considerable artistic talent and skill we have within the school.

**Prem campus shopping bags**

With such a large number of students and staff living on campus, we have various facilities on site such as a shop, café and restaurant. These all went plastic bag free last year and the students in the Sustainability Committee suggested trying out a boomerang-style bag system. These would be used exclusively on campus and allow anyone using the facilities to take the bag and return it later.

“Earth Day has given me a new perspective. Initially, I disregarded the devastation of our planet, but I have become more aware due to Earth Day. The fact is, Earth Day brings to the table a very serious issue that throughout our everyday lives we ignore. It is the acknowledgement of this issue which allows all of us to understand and then act.”

**Kenneth Hamblin – Grade 11**

Emma Shaw is an internationally published PhD holder. She has worked with Manchester Metropolitan University, the University of Central Lancashire, the University of Manchester and Chiang Mai University. She teaches Senior School Science and is a Grade 9 Homeroom Teacher at Prem.

Photos: Prem
Why do I try? I think, as I grab my change from the cashier’s hand and shove it into my pocket. Is it even worth it? I think, sitting down on the bench outside the store. I feel my motivation ebb away, and apathy fills my head as the convenience store drink fills my stomach. I sigh deeply and look up into the sky – it glares back at me with a grey condescension, as if to mirror my contempt for life. Or at least my life as it is now. It’s going to rain I think, finishing my drink.

Rain, for most, is just an inconvenience, which symbolises gloom and misery. Not to me, I love everything about rain: the sound of a million droplets of water, the feeling of it on my skin, even the grey colour of the sky and its reflection in the world around me. When I was younger, I would walk out into the rain for hours and come back to my parents, cold and shivering but without regret. However, today is different. After our third consecutive loss, it’s hard not to question why the hell I play, if all the hours upon hours I spend practicing, serving, receiving or spiking amount to nothing more than a temporary release from the world, or from thoughts of my parents.

I never really had the choice of what I would do when I grew up. I guess that’s a privilege that a lot of people take for granted but my life didn’t go that way. When I was younger, I would dream of being an astronaut or a doctor, or an astronaut and a doctor – a space doctor. These days though, I don’t have such dreams. Such innocence left me abruptly when I was told at the age of twelve that I was going to be a professional volleyball player. I don’t know why, even though I resented being forced to follow my father’s legacy, I didn’t rebel against it – even a little. No, I just sat there, across the table from him and said, “Sure Dad, okay”. I hated myself for that.

The irony is that I fell in love with volleyball. I love it more than anything. I guess no matter how hard you try to escape your parents, the apple never falls far from the tree. My obsession with volleyball made me drop my social life, but that didn’t matter as long as I was on the court. The problem is that volleyball is a team sport, so I was forced to make friends. But we’re only friends on the court, and I still hang out by myself in the rain. Today, however, rain would be an annoying inconvenience, miserable even.
Why do I play volleyball? Is it because of my parents? Is it because I love the game? Days like this make it hard not to question why I do it. Recently, I have had many days like this. Days where we lose multiple games and I blame my teammates, even though they’re trying their best. I guess the difference between them and I is that when they graduate from high school they’ll probably stop playing volleyball. They’re not chained to the game by expectations and thus don’t have the will to take the extra step or go the extra mile, as I do.

I am not a short-tempered person usually, but when I play, I always shout. Even when we’re winning, I shout my lungs out until my throat hurts. I guess we get angry about the things we care about; maybe I just care too much about a sport I didn’t want to do. I can’t control what I feel, but then I never really had control over much of anything. I guess nobody really does, nobody chooses the world they get born into. Yet, these dark clouds staring contemptuously down upon me remind me of my insignificance.

"Please, don’t rain. Not today."

I stand up, throwing my drink into the trashcan and begin the walk home. Home to the father that’s going to give me my ten thousandth motivational speech. He will tell me that I need to be stronger than ever, and many other things that will leave me feeling hollow. I never hated my parents, I only wish that I had stood up to them when I was told what I was going to be, even if I am still doing what I love.

The gloomy clouds seem to follow me as I walk the empty streets. My thoughts are building up, evaporating up into the sky and gathering, poised ready to rain down on me in a storm. I begin thinking of all the problems in the world, all the conflict, discord and suffering; so many of us take the luxury of peace and prosperity for granted. And me.

All of the world’s problems begin to cloud the discontent I feel over a loss, overshadowing the insignificance of my bad day. Realising how small I am in the world makes me recognise just how inconsequential I am in the grand scale of things. My problems are so minor compared to the reality of daily suffering that many face – like a single droplet of rain in the midst of a storm.

As I get to my house, the sky is clearing up. I reach for the door when one perfectly aimed drop of rain lands right on my face – so small, yet so big. I look up at the now clear sky and pause. A wave of contentment washes over me and is reflected in the bright blue sky above. Wiping the droplet off with the back of my hand, I walk inside with a smile on my face.

Just one of those days.

Ryan Kirkwood is 2019 graduate of Prem’s International Baccalaureate Careers Program (IBCP). He hopes to have a career in creative writing in the future.

Painting: Pim Nicha (Bruised Skies)
Photos: Bruce Warrington, Michele Feola and Nathan Dumlao
In the recently released SAT Subject test results, a Prem Grade 11 student, Siraprapa Wisithipakdeekul (nicknamed Gase), achieved a highly commendable highest possible score in the SAT Chemistry test. It was a pleasant surprise to hear that she scored the first rank worldwide in her SAT Chemistry Test in her first year of IBDP course. She conquered the SAT Chemistry Test with an outstanding 800 mark score out of the maximum 800 marks possible. Many congratulations to her on this remarkable success! This great news thrilled all of us and we are so proud of her.

It takes a lot of effort to study hard in the first year of IBDP (Grade 11) and also tackle the SAT subject tests. Most students elect to sit the SAT subject tests in their second year (Grade 12). It must have been a really tough ride for her but she managed it very well – in fact, perfectly.

Her Chemistry teacher and ‘Exploria SAT Subject test Prep’ advisor, A. Charles remarked; “This is a testimony of how hard work and dedication towards both, in and out of class activities, always result in pleasing success.”

SAT shows students skills in particular subjects, like Chemistry, Biology and Maths which are all particularly important in Gase’s case.

Gase told us:

“I need my SAT score because I plan to apply for Thai medical school and of course they want me to show my skills in a particular subject.”

“Prem really supported me to go through all the study content by providing activities after school and subject teachers who covered all the content that is usually done in Grade 12. My teachers were always available when I needed help, even during break times and after school.”

“Once I discovered my score, I screamed and I cried and then I talked to my Mum and told her what I achieved. My family were so happy.”

The news about her results has made us all very proud. We will continue to strive to inspire all of our students by providing an all-inclusive setting, and numerous Exploria options that help to develop our student's best qualities.

Photos: Prem
Sahahpanh (BIGz) Prapaipanich

“Red and Blue”
Watercolour, Acrylic and Pencil on Paper, 21 x 42 cm

These pieces work as a series of self-portraits, in them I attempt to communicate observations and experiences from my daily life. The symbology contained within these works explores many facets of what it is to be human. The duality of existence, male/female, good/bad right/wrong. None of these labels are final but all intertwined in life’s journey. As Shakespeare once said, “there is nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so”. These works were made as a record of lessons hard learned, and to celebrate the harmony of contradiction.

Catherine Lange

“Dual Meaning”
Digital Print on Paper

Dual Meaning explores how every person views events differently. Mental illnesses, and eating disorders in particular, often arise from people feeling alienated because they view things differently to others. Inspired by Barbara Krueger, I used this art style to highlight the ease of opposing perceptions arising between individuals who are viewing the same thing.
Taking Rock Climbing Outdoors: A Personal Exploration in Taking Learning Outside

Traidhos Camps Coordinator and outdoor enthusiast, Gijs de Jong, takes us step-by-step through two different climbs and the lessons they taught him.

My classroom is a wall. A wall that’s twelve meters high with rock-like shapes stuck to it. But the rock-like shapes aren’t rock coloured. No, they come in many different colours, resembling an incomplete rainbow trying to move together from the ground to the anchor at the top of the wall. As colourful as it looks, there is a rule you have to follow: in order to make it to the top, you have to follow and touch only one colour. The colours are graded at different difficulties by expert climbers, who place and test the routes for your convenience.

Today, I decide to climb the green route, a 5a+. I visualise my climbing, picturing myself moving from one hold to the next. Then, I put on my harness, tie in my figure eight knot and begin my ascent. My belay partner is already tied in and will ensure that I’m safe should I fall. I look up, focusing on the next green hold, strategising how I will move from one hold to the next. I stop. There’s a hold that’s just out of my reach. I switch positions on the hold, finding a way to extend my reach. I’m calm. There’s no need for me to stress out, I’m tied in and clipped in and my belay partner knows I just need time to work on this mini puzzle. Ten seconds later I figure it out. I stretch my hands and legs out and push up on my tiptoes. I’ve got the hold. I pull up and I’m at the top. I clip the rope into the top anchor and yell: “Tension!”. My belay partner tightens the rope. He yells back: “I got you!”. I sit back and he slowly begins to lower me. A sense of pride shoots through me as I survey the route I’ve just completed. It feels great! Now time for something more challenging.

My classroom is a rock face. A face that’s over fifty meters high and has rocky shapes sticking out of it. But these rocks aren’t coloured like a rainbow. No, they’re rock coloured with a bit of white stuff in places, which I can only assume is either climbing chalk or bird poop. In order to make it to the top, I’ll have to follow the bird poop – surely a tried and tested route up. Today I will attempt to climb the King Cobra.

The guide book we brought with us says it’s a 5a difficulty route with five bolts.

This should be easy. I put on my harness, tie in my figure eight knot and count my quickdraws and carabiners. I brought spare just in case I drop one. I look up and see the cobra’s head rising up above me, poised to strike. I begin my ascent. I put in the first quickdraw *clip* and clip in my rope *clip*. 
I see a different option, maybe this will work instead. I call down to my partner: “Okay, I’m going to need a bit of slack, I’m going to try a different move.” The rope loosens. My right hand is on a new hold in the rock, this one is a bit awkward but maybe it will work. I push off with my right hand and try to grasp something, anything, with my left hand. It grasps something but again I’m falling.

“AAHH!”

“Umpf”

“Alright Mate, come on down.” My partner taps me out and lowers me to safety.

We switch positions. Now he’s climbing and now his knees are at the last quickdraw that I clipped in. He looks puzzled and shouts down: “What the heck, there’s nothing here to hold!”

From around the rock face, a local climber appears next to me and yells up at my friend: “Try the hold just to the right above your head.” “This one?” He’s holding that big bump that my hand was on. “No, just a bit higher in the crack.” “Here? Oh, wait, no here it is, I have it!”

He must have found that sweet spot because a second later he reaches the next bolt and *clip, clip*. He’s done it like it was nothing! He reaches the top, clips in a final carabiner to the top anchor and I repel him back down. This time I decided to try it again, but on a top rope system. My body is still shaking from the two falls.

My knees are just at the quickdraw that I clipped in. My friend is shouting at me, guiding me to where the crack is. I find it. My eyes widen, and I quickly get annoyed at myself. “How did I not find this earlier? It’s so comfortable and easy to grip.” I pull up as if it was nothing and reach the top, completing King Cobra. My friend lowers me and I’m back on the ground.

The elation I feel soon leaves me and a sense of frustration takes over. I didn’t complete something that I could easily do in a rock climbing gym. I guess I can’t take my indoor skills and simply assume that I’ll be able to work at a similar level in the outdoors. Then I smile, I realise I’ve accomplished something. I’ve completed my first outdoor climbing route, and now it’s time for a smoothie. From here, the only way is up.

Gijs de Jong grew up in diverse cultures. By the age of 18 he had lived in 15 different countries over 4 different continents. He eventually settled in the United Kingdom where he got a degree in Outdoor Education from the University of Cumbria. Gijs enjoys trail running, tennis, canoeing, climbing, mountain biking, and drinking coffee.

Photos: Gijs de Jong and Pim Hserkwawah
Round Square Junior Conference

As a Round Square school, Prem works closely with others in the network to create meaningful, real-world opportunities for students to develop global competence, character and understanding. Junior School teachers Agnes Wdowik and Gillian Turner provide an account of a recent Round Square experience.

Recently, Prem students from Grade 4 and 5 were given the opportunity to join other students from the Asia Pacific region in their first ever Round Square Conference. Intrepid and nervous, they boarded a plane to Jakarta to spend the next four days with other like-minded ten to twelve-year-old students. They were going in order to learn about and participate in the six ideals of the Round Square philosophy: Internationalism, Adventure, Service, Sustainability, Democracy, Environmentalism, and Adventure.

The focus of Round Square conferences is the development of future leaders that will take action; our future leaders developed skills that they can use in their lives at Prem and beyond. This experience is a valuable one for our whole community and will help us develop ideas for when we next host a Round Square conference ourselves in 2020.

"When we first arrived at the British School Jakarta (BSJ), we met everyone in the sports hall. This was followed by the opening ceremony and an Indonesian traditional dance performance. We were organised into our Barraza (public meeting place) groups and did activities to get to know each other. We made new friends who were going to be with us for the rest of the trip."

(Kate, Grade 5)
Service (Day 3) This was our fourth day in Jakarta and it proved to be a very long day. This was the day when we went to Yum Farm. We rotated around different farming activities - we harvested, washed vegetables, made organic insect repellent and much more. We also played with the local children and taught them some games that we play in our own schools. Some of us then helped to deliver food to the elders in the village.

Environmentalism (Day 4) This was our final full day in Indonesia. We spent the day at Taman Safari. We learned about the animals living in the park, went behind the scenes with the tigers, elephants, and orangutans, as well as going on the safari tour. We were even lucky enough to visit the red panda and giant panda enclosures.

“We thought about how so many of the animals were living in very small areas. Some were even locked in cages. We reflected that it's not nice to see people treating animals like toys.”

(Kate, Grade 5)

On the way home the students reflected on their Indonesian adventure. They discussed how nervous they were when they first arrived but then how quickly they felt like part of the group and confident enough to add their thoughts and ideas to discussions. They compared the similarities and differences of Indonesia and Thailand, of Jakarta and Chiang Mai, of British School Jakarta and Prem, and of the other student’s thoughts and their own. Everyone was proud of themselves for being risk takers, for putting their hands up and stepping outside of their comfort zones. Everyone was away from their families in a foreign land, trying hard to make a difference in this world of ours.

The students have since returned to school charged up and ready to take action and work on projects of significance together, armed with the tools they learned at the conference.

Agnes Wdowik is a Junior School Learning Support Teacher at Prem. She has been living and working in International and Special-Needs schools for the past twelve years.

Gillian Turner is a Junior School homeroom teacher at Prem. She has over thirty years of experience teaching all primary levels in schools in the UAE, Qatar, Australia and Thailand.

Photos: Agnes Wdowik and Gillian Turner
Multiple Intelligence

Modern educational thinking understands that everyone learns best in different ways. Learning Support Teacher Keiko Shofu explains one of the main educational theories that attempts to categorise an array of intelligence types.

When you were a student, how did you learn new concepts and study for tests? If you have children, how do you help them learn? Did you sit at a desk and copy what teachers wrote on the blackboard? Are you telling your child to write the same word one hundred times and to repeat multiplication facts to memorise them? Did all these activities help you? Does your child enjoy learning? There is a theory called Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligence, and it may help you learn more efficiently and in a fun way.

According to the multiple intelligence theory, there are nine different kinds of intelligence. The theory tells us how information is processed and how individuals learn. Using this theory, you can understand the type of learner you are and what kind of activities will be most suitable and enjoyable for you to learn through and express your ideas.

1. Verbal-linguistic intelligence: Well-developed verbal skills. They love words and they are good writers and/or speakers.
2. Logical-mathematical intelligence: Ability to think conceptually and abstractly. They enjoy working with numbers and logically to solve problems.
3. Spatial-visual intelligence: Capacity to think in images and pictures. They are able to visualise accurately and abstractly.
4. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence: Ability to control one’s body movements and to handle objects skillfully. They learn through movement and touch.
5. Musical intelligence: Ability to produce and appreciate rhythm, pitch, timber, and environmental sound. They process information primarily through sound.
6. Interpersonal intelligence: Capacity to detect and respond appropriately to the moods, motivations and desires of others. They like to interact with others and cooperate well.
7. Intrapersonal: Capacity to be self-aware and in tune with inner feelings, values, beliefs and thinking processes. They prefer to work alone and learn through reflecting on his/her own.
8. Naturalist intelligence: Ability to recognise and categorise objects in nature. They investigate and make connections with the environment, and can see patterns and relationships between nature and life.
9. Existential intelligence: Sensitivity and capacity to tackle deep questions about human existence. They may question: What is the meaning of life? Why do we die? How did we get here?

How can we use the knowledge of these different kinds of intelligence to help children learn? How can teachers apply the theory in the classroom?

Each person can have multiple preferred types of intelligence. In order to know which type of learner you or your children are, try different activities that teach the same concept. For example, after reading a book, how would you like to tell others what the book was about? You may choose to draw pictures about the story (special-visual), discuss the story with others (interpersonal), make a song about the story (musical), or write a summary and retell the story (verbal-linguistic). When your child learns fraction, he/she may learn better by moving different objects, such as blocks (bodily-kinesthetic), finding fractions in nature (naturalist), finding fractions in the rhythm and demonstrating it (musical), or by making their own fraction chart (intrapersonal).

Once you know what kind of learner you are, learning can be both more enjoyable and more powerful. Teachers create different activities in the classroom to provide a variety of effective learning experiences for all students. Using a pencil and paper while sitting at a desk is not the only way to learn.

Keiko Shofu is a learning support teacher at Prem. She has ten years of teaching experience, and before arriving in Chiang Mai, taught in Guatemala, Honduras, and Vietnam. Keiko holds a Bachelor’s degree in English Literature from Baika Women’s University and in Early Childhood Education from the University of Northern Iowa. She also has a Masters of Education degree with an emphasis on Special Education from the University of British Columbia. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, exploring new cultures, finding new restaurants, dancing, and spending time with her friends and family.

Photo: Markus Spiske
Creature Feature by Traidhos
Three-Generation Farm

Wildlife expert and Head of Activities at Traidhos Farm, Sandeep Varma, shows off some special butterfly species he has photographed around our campus.

Golden Birdwing (Troides aeacus) is one of the largest species of butterflies found inside the campus of Traidhos Three-Generation Community. Birdwing butterflies are among the largest in the world and are named for their size, angular wings and bird-like flight. They are generally a high-flying species of butterflies, seen fluttering around on the canopies of trees. They belong to the family Papilionidae.

Common Lime Butterfly (Papilio demoleus) is also called lemon butterflies or lime swallowtails because their caterpillars are hosted in citrus plants like lemon or lime trees. They also belong to the family Papilionidae and are seen in large numbers at Traidhos, during the monsoons. They are a very successful invader thanks to their strong flight and an increase in agricultural land worldwide. This has allowed them to become the most widely distributed of the 550 swallowtail butterfly species in the world.