A celebration of lifelong education

Volume 4 Issue 2 Number 13
December 2011 – February 2012

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Table of Contents
02 Table of Contents
03 From the Head of School
04 When is Your Child Ready for Pre-school?
06 Residential Living at PTIS
08 Whiteboard Jungle
09 PTIS Staff Profiles
10 From Forest to Flute
12 Student Profiles
15 Tenth Anniversary Celebrations
16 A Walk on the Wild Side
19 Flood Relief
22 International Baccalaureate Career-related Certificate
23 SAT at PTIS

Calendar

December
01 Grade 5 Camp – to 02 Dec
02 King’s Birthday assembly
05 Public Holiday: King’s Birthday
08 K – 12 Art Exhibition (Auditorium) until 12 Dec
13 Christmas Carols
16 Junior School Holiday Concert
Last day of term

January
09 First day of Term 3
21 Kite Festival until 22 January
28 Tennis Tournament
30 Staff Professional Development day: no lessons

February
20 Senior School Camp Week until 24 February

The Traidhos Quarterly is produced four times each year. All current families will receive one complimentary copy. If you would like additional copies or if you receive more than one copy please telephone Christopher Hall in the Admissions Office: + 66 807 929 925.
As Head of School I am very excited that PTIS is an important part of Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning. As a community we want to understand more about how our students’ brains work and what are the best conditions to make sure our students are learning in order to reach their full potential. We want to do everything we can to make sure our students have bright futures. To help us to achieve this important goal we invited international educator and presenter, John Joseph – The Brain Man, to work with our staff and students at PTIS in November.

John Joseph has presented to more than a quarter of a million people across twenty-six countries. Week after week, he facilitates workshops for student groups where he challenges young people to learn about learning, behaviour and emotions. John uses stunning computer-generated graphics and actual brain dissections to engage kids. He has facilitated the dissections of more than 140,000 sheep brains! Little wonder that people refer to him as “The Brain Man”!

Our Grade 6 – 12 students worked with John on Thursday 10 November and our 3-year olds to Grade 5 students worked with him on Monday 14 November to learn how to be superstar learners. John gives the students a lot of information about their brains, and he shows them how important sleep and healthy choices really affect their learning and thus their futures. He looks at the key elements that drive learner performance, identifies individual talents and strengths, and outlines the critical role of sleep and avoiding harmful drugs to care for the brain.

- He is amazing!
- He is so interesting!
- I am going to make changes in my life …

were some of the comments made by students following his presentations.

John Joseph has also presented to principals, teachers, students, parents, judges, business leaders, accountants, the medical profession, community service organizations, government departments and tertiary education staff. He has published more than one hundred articles, six books and a number of CD ROMs and DVDs. His web sites generate over 120,000 downloads monthly.

We asked him to present to our PTIS parents on Monday 14 November and over 130 guests attended the seminar at the Kantary Hills Hotel. One parent commented, “Everything about him caught my attention: his body language, his voice, and most of all his words and supporting digital imagery on the big screen in front of me. He understood what was happening in my very own home. He knew what I was enduring with my own two daughters. I listened intently to his every word. As I left over an hour later, I vowed to alter my own evening routine to fit in with my children and to alter their addictive nightly routine to fit in with their futures. No more would they see their Mum going to bed before them. Instead we would all change our bedtime routines to fit in with our new freedom, freedom from being trapped by the lure and obsessive use of the Internet. I have to persuade my children that this is the right path; but somehow I think John Joseph may have already done that for me.”

We have already invited him back to work with PTIS next year, as we are committed to give our students every possible chance to reach their full potential.
When is a Child Ready for Pre-school?

In the information age it can be difficult to find a straightforward answer to a straightforward question. Sometimes the more information available, the more confused one becomes, especially when given a “range” rather than a specific. This is no less true when parents are seeking the answer to the question, “How do I determine if or when my child is ready for pre-school?”

The first “range” one encounters is age. The general age of pre-school children is between three and five years old. At this age children will learn quickly and will assimilate information from, and express fascination for and delight in each new discovery. By being active in this process, a parent can assess a child’s attention span, curiosity and willingness to take risks – all considerations when deciding if a child is ready for formal education.

It is more important that a child is ready for formal education than that the child begins this process at a specific age. It is one of the most important decisions a parent must make, not only because it is the beginning of an experience most likely to last more than twelve years, but also because it will have a significant impact on the child’s feelings about school in general, the child’s adjustment to school and to later education.

When considering the option of pre-school, parents should ask themselves the following questions:

- Does my child have good play skills?
- Does my child readily share?
- Is my child good at taking turns?
- Does my child show empathy with playmates?

Monitoring and guiding a child’s social development during “play dates” affords a parent a prime opportunity to find the answers to these questions. Good social skills and self-confidence are positive signs that a child is ready for formal pre-school.

Another important fact to keep in mind when considering pre-school is that each child has specific needs. Before considering pre-school in general, or a specific pre-school destination, a parent needs to determine what the child needs from a pre-school. Children from the same family do not necessarily need the same early education. A parent should not assume what was best for the older child will be best for the younger one. Children from the same family often attend different types of pre-schools, or one has formal early education while the other has home early education.

There are conflicting views on early education. Some experts say that the earlier formal education starts, the better a child will do in academic matters. Others believe acquisition of skills should not be a vital component of a good pre-school education. Some pre-schools focus on academic subjects, some focus on social skills and some offer a combination of the two. What, if anything, will be the benefit to a specific child in any of these settings? Experts agree that what is most to be avoided is having a child drilled in academic subjects before the child is ready. Studies show that children in this situation often develop an academic disadvantage and low self-esteem. Between the ages of three and five, children experience life more holistically than at any other age, and most children learn through play. Young children need experiences that are challenging but not frustrating.

It cannot be stressed too much that parroting the letters of the alphabet or reciting the numbers from one to twenty is not necessarily “education”. Reciting numbers has little benefit if a child cannot tell you how many cookies he is holding.

When should a child attend pre-school? There is no magic answer but parents know their child best. The most important thing is to assess a child’s development and make a decision on what will most benefit that child.

PTIS student Kai (EY2)
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IMI will be present on PTIS International School in November, watch out for details!

www.imi-luzern.com
Residential Living

Over one hundred students from thirty-five nations, and thirteen House Parents and Interns make up the exciting community that is the residential program at PTIS International School. It is a challenging and enjoyable program and one with many activities catering for all students allowing them to develop unique life skills that will continue to assist them throughout their chosen careers.

The program promotes and nurtures the development of students in becoming caring, co-operative people who are committed to each other, the school and their studies as well as being tolerant, understanding, self disciplined and responsible citizens. We give the students lessons in leadership and good communication, helping them to become fully independent, as for many of them their time at PTIS is the first time they have lived away from Mum and Dad.

Residential students have great opportunities to further their education outside the classroom with supervised study sessions, access to academic staff and after-school programs. A special Boarding Curriculum program promotes participation in a wide range of sporting and cultural activities and community service and teaches them the sorts of things their parents would have taught them at home - such as table manners and healthy living.

The Traidhos Organic Farm is a very popular part of their education as the residential students are able to learn the secrets of growing fruit, herbs and vegetables, and learning about the care of animals. They can also practise their skills at “Jungle Cooking” and bake bread in the wood-fired oven.

Many people remember their old boarding days, with thirty or forty students sleeping side-by-side in huge dormitories, with strict supervisors patrolling the corridors. At PTIS it is a different story! Students are housed in modern and comfortable two-bedroom apartments with en-suite bathrooms, and have access to several boarding lounges with DVD and satellite TV. Residential students have access to all the sporting facilities at PTIS: an Olympic-sized swimming pool, playing fields, tennis and squash courts and golf driving ranges.

In addition to 24-hour security services, the residential clusters have a full-time nurse, and there is a medical centre on the campus as well. If a child is admitted to hospital, then a member of the residential staff will stay overnight with the student. Students and their parents can feel comfortable knowing that the residential apartments offer a secure and safe environment with full-time boarding staff, who live in the same residential clusters as the students.

The student residences are the real “heart” of the school – and a real “home away from home” for the talented and happy bunch of students from all over the world.
Student Testimonials

When I was considering which boarding school to attend, PTIS simply stood out from the rest. It was not just the wonderful facilities that were available, but the atmosphere the students and teachers brought to it. Living together in boarding at PTIS taught us to respect one another by being aware of our cultural differences, our backgrounds and our personalities. I believe that being a residential student at PTIS helped me to grow as a person. PTIS is much more than just a residential school. It was my home and I realize how privileged I was to be at PTIS, where I knew that I was always safe.

Gabriella (Peru) ex-student

I joined boarding at PTIS when I was in Grade 4. The people here take care of me and make sure that I am happy. I like living at PTIS because I get more homework done. I like the activities and the house games. I also enjoy the atmosphere on campus. Being around the older girls is fun and I like it when we sing in the courtyard in the evening. Other highlights of my life here include watching movies with my friends and having special suppers made for us.

Areeya (Thailand) Grade 7

There are many things I like about being a residential student at PTIS. I like the nice food, the nice students and the fact that you can ask anybody for help and they DO help. I have made so many new friends here. What I like the most is that PTIS is not only a residential school; it is a family and a home for me while I am away from home.

Thrizon (Bhutan) Grade 8
So here we have it. September and I’m not teaching. A term’s sabbatical stretches ahead of me, and it feels very odd indeed. I worked like stink at the end of last term, writing lessons on how not to be homophobic, how not to be a teenage mother, how not to be racist. And one on *Animal Farm* for good measure, which was wonderful as I could think about writing. I swept and sorted out my cupboard. I cleared out my desk for the new incumbent. Exhausted as we all were and pouring with slate-grey rain as it was. I managed a spring in my step as I worked towards these few months of ... of what? Freedom, undoubtedly. But with the freedom from the school comes a new kind of tie. Without the discipline of the students to control me I must rediscover my own discipline. And with that comes the fear ... now that I have time to think, will I still be able to?

There is another fear, too. At the beginning of every term, but particularly the autumn term, I always have nightmares about school. I lose my pupils, or worse I find them and have no control. I have no idea what I am supposed to be teaching, and then it’s suddenly science instead of Shakespeare. All very obvious. I’ve been having those dreams for the past few weeks, even though I’m not going back until January. So how terrible will they be when I really am about to go back? Will I actually be able to go back? I’m contractually bound to, but will stage fright finally take over and my courage fail?

So for now, while I make lists and plan a timetable to give myself the kind of structure I’ve been longing to leave behind but now find I need, I’m concentrating on the good in teaching, and on what I will miss. I have been with my tutor group for two years. They’re just reaching that stage where we begin to enjoy spending time together. There are a few who I feel especially need and trust me, and I worry that there’ll be no one to fight their corner in the next few months. Of course my cover is organised and professional and has been briefed about the children. But still ... I wouldn’t leave my own children for five months, would I?

My Year 10 (now Year 11) group is the only one carried forward from last year. They’re a cheerful lot of girls, quite bright, but they need a careful mixture of wheedling, encouraging and threatening to keep them on their toes. Will my cover manage it? Of course she will. But what about the girl who told me that I’d changed her view of English and made it all possible? When I told them at the end of last term that I was taking time out, her eyes filled with tears and she said that as a result she’d fail her GCSE. Of course she won’t ... but I still feel very guilty.

And then I remember what another girl said to me when we were revising Owen’s *Exposure* and I read it aloud to them. After I finished, there was a silence and I looked up, feeling the tears in my eyes, and almost begged them, “Do you see? Do you see how beautiful that poem is?” The silence was prolonged until one of the girls put up her hand. “No, miss, I don’t. But I see that you see it, and you make me want to see it for myself.”

That is it. It is moments like that which ensure I will be back in January. The naughty boy who handed in his essay on *Henry V* (early) saying, “I got it, miss. You made me get it and I loved it.” Another boy who wrote me a letter at the end of Year 11 saying, “You taught me in Year 9 and you made me love English. I’m doing A-level English next year and I want to thank you.” The girl who came with shining eyes thanking me for recommending a book which she loved. The girl who nearly gave up school but stuck it out and thought I had some part in helping her do that.

It is the old teaching cliché — but like all clichés it is fundamentally true. Not always, but often enough.
The Traidhos Quarterly | 9

PTIS Staff Profiles

Dustin Yakoubian
Dustin joined PTIS International School to teach Junior School PE – and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the very demanding and unique challenges of teaching three-year-old students as well as the older Junior School children. He is able to draw on his experience at Shekou International School in China as well as his teaching and studying in the USA. Dustin has a BSc in Physical Education from Eastern Connecticut State University, a BA in Economics from the University of Connecticut and a Master’s degree in International Education from Endicott College.

He has written a text book titled *The New PE Teacher’s Handbook* whose title is deliberately open to several interpretations – it is not only a text for teachers new to PE, but also for experienced teachers who wish to teach “the new” PE where every child is fully involved in team work with maximum participation and where adversarial and “knock-out” games are no longer the focus of lessons.

Dustin chose PTIS after meeting several senior staff at a recruitment fair in Bangkok, where he found that their philosophy on Physical Education and its future directions matched his own ideas. In his classes Dustin aims to be challenging, to build on skills children already have and to develop new skills.

When not in the classroom, Dustin enjoys photography, travel, cooking and reading.

Geneviève Huchulak
Geneviève joined the staff at PTIS in October 2011 to teach ESL, Spanish and French. She has taught at schools in China, Germany and Canada, where her most recent position was Department Head for Modern Languages at the Delta School District in British Columbia.

She has a Bachelor of Education, two teaching certificates, and additional qualifications in ESL and music. Having travelled extensively in Europe, Africa, North and South America, Geneviève carefully researched international schools world-wide to select the school and the area which would be most appropriate for “Phase 3” of her life. Her time in Beijing was an introduction to Asia, but life in South East Asia was seen by her as the very yin and yang of life in Canada and Europe, providing her with a very different perspective on culture, politics, history and life in general.

Prior to moving to Chiang Mai, Geneviève spent several months working on her family history, finally publishing a book tracing the Huchulak family’s emigration from the Ukraine at the end of the nineteenth century to their presence today in various parts of Canada and the USA.

She has worked as a member of many educational committees in Canada, and enjoys traveling, golf, hiking, photography, reading and especially, the fine arts.

Steve Service
Canadian Stephen Service is starting his seventh year teaching in Thailand and was in Chiang Rai and Rayong provinces before coming to Chiang Mai. Prior to that, he was teaching in Brunei Darussalam, Egypt, Indonesia and his home country, Canada. At PTIS he is teaching science and information technology.

He has over nine years of post-secondary education, including bachelor’s degrees in education and English literature and certificates in electronics, computer-aided design and business administration. Steve says he has known and wanted to be a part of PTIS since he was working in Brunei and started taking holidays in Thailand. Apart from the challenges and pleasures of teaching the International Baccalaureate program, Steve enjoys the great outdoors and the fact that in Chiang Mai the outdoors are so easy to access – unlike, for example, his time in Egypt.

Stephen, a keen mountain biker, once packed his bike onto his back, scaled a 300 metre cliff and set off across the baked crust of the Egyptian desert. Apparently if you ride fast enough, the bike wheels do not crack through the crust into the softer sands beneath. However, during the night the desert dogs circled ever-nearer and discretion played the part of valour ... and Steve beat a hasty retreat back to safety. He is happy that in Chiang Mai all he has to worry about are leeches and snakes.

Dustin Yakoubian

Steve Service

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Beatrix Potter, a British writer best known for her children’s books, is quoted as saying, “Thank goodness I was never sent to school; it would have rubbed off some of the originality.” Mark Twain was equally disparaging of time spent in the classroom, “I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.” Views such as these are not unique and there are probably as many diverging opinions on teaching as there are people who have been to school.

As a school that offers the International Baccalaureate’s Primary Years Program (PYP), PTIS believes that the best learning takes place “when it is connected to what is genuinely a component of the world around the student, and not merely what is contrived and imposed upon the student.” This means that learning beyond merely remembering takes place when students are engaged in authentic experiences based on real-life contexts.

According to the IB, these themes offer “a balance between learning about or through the subject areas, and learning beyond them” and allow “students to ‘step up’ beyond the confines of learning within subject areas.”

The first unit of inquiry for Grade 1 is based on the theme, ‘How the World Works’ with the central idea, ‘The design of structures is dependent on available materials, the environment and scientific principles.’

Students were asked to consider **What is a structure?** The discussion that followed generated more obvious answers such as a house, a bridge, a skyscraper and a road. The discussion evolved and students started to think more deeply about the question. **Is a chair a structure? How about a pen? Is an instrument a structure?** This final student question set us off on our transdisciplinary journey that would make connections across areas such as music, maths, language and science.

During music lessons students explored the effect different materials may have on sounds made, and then began to think more deeply about the actual structure of different
instruments. They considered the local environment and the influence this may have on instruments made and the music played in Thailand. Within the school grounds the children noticed an abundance of bamboo, which started a discussion about the instruments that could be made from this material. So began the project of making a musical instrument and considering its structure.

Ernest Boyer, an influential leader in education, suggested that, “To be truly educated, a student must make connections across disciplines, discover ways to integrate the separate subjects and ultimately relate what they learn to life.”

![Image of children working on bamboo instruments]

We worked out that we could get five bamboo rods out of one bamboo stalk and the students were encouraged to organize themselves in a human graph to work out how many stalks were needed in total.

![Image of children measuring and marking bamboo pieces]

This real-life situation allowed them to use their prior knowledge of graphing, sorting, tallying and early division to solve the problem. The students’ understanding of measurement was further extended in the classroom, as they were challenged to measure and mark different lengths accurately. These pieces would be later used to explore pitch in the music classroom.

![Image of children playing bamboo flutes]

Finally, the whole process formed the basis for teaching procedural writing. The students reflected on their experiences and recorded the stages they had been through.

Jeremy Gaysek (Grade 1 classroom teacher)
Elizabeth McIlroy (Junior School Music teacher)
Jessica Hodgson: Future Olympian?

Jessica, a Grade 10 student at PTIS International School, has been swimming competitively for six years. At first all she wanted to do was learn how to swim, but soon found that she had a natural talent. Not only did she learn how to swim, but she started winning races in freestyle, butterfly and backstroke. She is a member of Chiang Mai’s Kittiya Swimming Club and credits her coach, Australian Glen Evans, with her outstanding progress over the years.

Progress and success do not come easily for any élite athlete. Jessica trains for more than twenty-four hours each week, swimming eight kilometres per day for six days of the week. Her regimen also includes on-land training with weights and stretching exercises. For many teenagers, trips to the shopping mall or meeting friends to go shopping or having sleepovers are the highlights of their week. For Jessica, these simple pleasures have to be rationed – and fitted into a busy schedule of training, doing homework, attending swimming meets – and having some sort of a social life!

But it is all paying off. Jessica has her eyes on the 2012 Olympic Games but realises that she may not have quite attained her full potential by that date, and so the 2016 Games are her target and her inspiration. She has recently returned from competing in the South East Asian Games in Indonesia, where she represented Thailand in several events, including the 200 metre individual medley and the 400 metre relay – events in which she and other team members won silver medals.

The SEA Games allowed Jessica to meet up with international friends with whom she keeps in contact by Facebook. Friends from Vietnam, Singapore and Malaysia meet up at swimming pools throughout the area – and engage in friendly but spirited competitions.

Despite all the success of her competitions so far – her trophy shelf is full and is now overflowing to her bedhead! – Jessica is a committed student and currently hard at work on her International Baccalaureate personal project – a major assessment element of Grade 10 studies. She has decided to produce a booklet and a DVD designed to teach underprivileged children from Chiang Mai’s orphanages how to swim and how to survive in the water. It is a sad fact that every year far too many children drown – simply because no one has been able to teach them basic water safety skills. Jessica’s project hopes to remedy this failing.

“I’m not sure if I want a career as a swimmer – I just want to do my best in swimming. I am currently thinking that my career will be something involving business studies at university when I have finished Grade 12,” Jessica said. “I couldn’t have got this far without my parents getting me involved in swimming so many years ago, and without my coach who gets mad at me and pushes me – but it’s all worth it. I want to thank them all!”

The shopping mall ... or that thin black line on the bottom of the pool? For the next few years the black line will certainly be Jessica’s focus – and perhaps one day she will be on the podium while the Thailand National Anthem is being played and the red, white and blue is hoisted over an Olympic stadium.
It’s a long way from the beautiful German city of Wiesbaden to Chiang Mai, but that is a journey Grade 11 student Lucas Geiger chose to make, to follow the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program and to continue his specialised training in golf - a sport about which he is passionate. Lucas is the Club Champion of Germany’s oldest golf course, the Wiesbadener Golf Club, and he used to play its nine holes regularly, as well as playing the two longer 18-hole courses to be found in Wiesbaden.

While Lucas currently has a golf handicap of ten, he wants to reduce that to five in the next few months and eventually to be a scratch golfer on a zero handicap. His coach, “Spike” Collier at the Three-generation Golf Academy, is a great teacher, according to Lucas, who adds, “I realised two or three weeks ago just how good he is! I thought my old technique was fine but he has been slowly changing everything and I was asking myself – Why? Now he is starting to put it all together again and I am now playing much better than I was ten weeks ago.”

Lucas is balancing five days of training each week on the Traidhos golf driving ranges or at the many golf courses in Chiang Mai with the demands of his academic work.

Although he had studied English for many years in Germany, applying that knowledge proved difficult in the first few weeks at PTIS, where all the lessons are in English. Lucas realises that golf is unlikely to be his ultimate career, and has chosen a particularly demanding program of studies in the IB, aiming for a career in business. “The IB is the greatest certificate in the world, so it will help me get to one of the best universities,” he said.

“The world’s future markets are likely to be in Asia, so I chose to come to Chiang Mai to learn more about the people and the cultures that we will soon be doing business with,” Lucas said. He has already come a long way along that path, as he points out that some of his friends at the school are Thai or Vietnamese, American, Cambodian, Chinese, Australian / New Zealand, Dominican / German or Bhutanese!

Lucas is a boarder at PTIS and it is in the residences that he has made these multi-national friendships. He says that being a boarder is both good and bad – it allows him to meet lots of new friends but it is also not quite the same as being at home! But “home” recently came to Chiang Mai when Lucas’s father Thomas recently spent a few days with his son at the school and on local golf courses. Their favourite was the Highlands Golf and Spa Resort. Set in the foot-hills east of Chiang Mai, Chiang Mai Highlands was designed by Schmidt-Curley Design and gives golfers the distraction of magnificent views on every hole; although Lucas points out that all the water hazards make playing this course a real challenge.

“I am an ambitious golfer,” said Lucas, “and my motivation to succeed in this sport and in my academic studies comes from within. My dad is a great role model although he tells me simply to do what is best for me.” Lucas, a quietly-spoken, courteous young man, is a great ambassador for his home town, a valued member of the school’s residential community – and one who may well set the world’s fairways and business schools alight in the not-too-distant future.

Lucas Geiger: An academic golfer

Lucas Geiger with his father, Thomas
Tenth-year Scholarships

To celebrate its Tenth Anniversary, PTIS International School Chiang Mai offers students who are exceptional leaders and who have demonstrated outstanding qualities in the classroom, in the arts, in golf, tennis, cricket or football, a chance to be awarded special scholarships.

Who can apply?

* Students entering Grade 8, 9, 10 or 11
* Students not currently enrolled at PTIS
* Scholarships are available for boarding and day students
* Applications for the Scholarship are now open

Scholarships offer:

* 50% reduction in tuition and boarding fees
* Application Fee waived
* Security Deposit reduced to THB 20,000
* 50% reduction in Foundation Fee
* Payment of the reduced Foundation Fee deferred for twelve months and then payable in two equal payments over two years
  For students entering Grade 11, the reduced Foundation Fee will be payable in full at the start of Grade 12
* Scholarships tenable to the end of Grade 12

How to apply:

* Complete the Application form on the "How to Apply" page on the PTIS scholarships website: www.threegeneration.org/Scholarships/How to apply
* Gather the documents indicated
* Write the essay
* Email the completed application to the address shown on the website
ML Tri, Founder of PTIS and Three-Generation Community for Learning
Lister Hannah, Founding PTIS President
Maxine Driscoll, Head of School, with Linda Buck, Head of Boarding
Barge Interns Hannah and Eilidh with Lynda Rolph, Chief of Community
Melanie Dickerson with Jill Vincent at the Opera
Opera Guests Tiffany Crook and Kate O’Connell
Former PTIS student Arysa
Leonel Pinheiro, Tenor
Opera singers Pitchaya Kemasingko, Stefan Sanchez, Zion Daoratanahong, Leonel Pinheiro and Pimluk Vessavasdi Amanda (Gr 7) at the face painting stall
K Noong, K Yim, K Neung and K Keng at the 10th Birthday Carnival
Mimiw (Gr 7)
Maintenance Manager K Viroj Pam (Gr 6)
This article is dedicated to the animals and insects of Chiang Mai and the surrounding area and will feature The Oriental Magpie Robin, The Huntsman Spider, The Golden Tree Snake, and last but not least, The Brown Stream Terrapin. Most of these are very common and if you go out looking, can easily be found in your own back yard.

The Oriental Magpie Robin (Copsychussaularis) is a fascinating bird that can be spotted all over the Chiang Mai area. This bird is most common during the morning hours of the day and can be easily spotted on the roadside sitting on a post singing for your enjoyment. The Oriental Magpie Robin is a fairly small bird, similar in size to a European Blackbird and occupies a similar niche to its estranged relative. The Oriental Magpie Robin can be found in parks, gardens, grasslands and along the forest edge, but best of all can be found on your lawn, hopping around flipping its tail while it forages for invertebrates to snack on.

Oriental Magpie Robins are highly territorial and often sing to keep intruders away as well as to warn others in the area if there is a threat at hand. Although the Oriental Magpie Robin is quite a small bird it is not scared to put up a fight; it is often very aggressive to other birds, even others of the same type. The Oriental Magpie Robin breeds between January and June and can be found nesting in tree hollows or in small holes in the sides of buildings. The Oriental Magpie Robin is also the national bird of Bangladesh.

The Huntsman Spider comes in many shapes and sizes and has roughly 1009 separate species making up its family, the Sparassidae family. The Huntsman Spider is one of the largest true spiders in the world and can be found worldwide. Although the Huntsman comes in a variety of shapes and sizes they all maintain the primary characteristics of having their legs extended forward, looking much like a crab’s legs, and for this reason some people call the Huntsman Spider a Crab Spider, although the crab spider is a completely different spider altogether. This particular species of Huntsman is the Giant Huntsman Spider (Heteropoda Maxima) and is the largest Huntsman Spider species in the world – it can get close to a foot in length.

The Huntsman Spider favours brown-shaded areas such as wood and sand so it can blend into its surroundings. This is very beneficial for this spider as it does not build webs to catch its prey; it waits patiently for something to walk by and ambushes it, leaving its prey with little chance of survival. Although this spider looks absolutely terrifying, it is quite harmless to humans and is much more beneficial than problematic when it comes to them living inside your house. The main diet of the Huntsman Spider consists of almost all types of insects (especially cockroaches) and even small lizards. It will eat almost anything smaller than it is even some rodent species. If you leave this gentle giant alone, it will leave you alone, and take care of your household pests.

The Golden Tree Snake (Chrysopelea Ornata Ornatissima) is one of the most beautiful snakes in Thailand and is also known as the Flying Snake due to its exceptional gliding abilities. These snakes can leap from tree to tree just like some squirrels and lizards and are said to be better gliders than most other gliding animals. The Golden Tree Snake is unmistakable and is generally a bright green color with a black chequered pattern on it. At full maturity can reach five feet (150 cm) in length. Although this snake is said by most to be non-venomous, it actually has fangs in the back of its mouth – not like most venomous snakes with front fangs. However, this snake is nothing to be worried about as the venom is not strong enough to do any serious harm to humans.

The Golden Tree Snake can be found all over Thailand and they live just about anywhere they can make a suitable home, including your apartment. The Golden Tree Snake eats whatever it can get a hold of as long as it is size-appropriate: anything from birds, bats, rodents, eggs, insects, or other snakes and lizards, but its favourite delicacy is the Tokay...
Gecko. Active only by daytime, you do not have to worry about one of these snakes crawling up into your bed with you in the middle of the night.

The Brown Stream Terrapin (*Cyclemysdentata*) is also commonly referred to as the Asian Leaf Turtle and often causes confusion among people due to its relative the Vietnamese Leaf Turtle which looks very similar to the Asian Leaf Turtle. This turtle can be identified by its rounded carapace or shell (hence its generic name “Cyclemys” which means circle turtle) and can grow to be about ten inches (25 cm) in length. The base color of this turtle is brown and the rear of the shell has a serrated or jagged edge which is much more pronounced in the young as it adds extra protection against predators that think they are about to receive an easy snack.

The Brown Stream Terrapin can be found in almost any pond or river around Thailand, but tends to avoid anything that moves too quickly as this species of turtle is not a very strong swimmer. It would much rather walk freely along the bottom of a body of water than have to swim through it. Adults tend to spend most of their time at night on land and move to the water during the day when it is much hotter outside. The Brown Stream Terrapin is a true omnivore, eating meat such as frogs or fish, as well as eating fruit and vegetation.

This concludes our walk for now. Be sure to stay tuned for the next issue of *Traidhos Quarterly* for more fascinating creatures of Thailand.
TIMELESS /adj./
ageless, authentic, classic, eternal,
everlasting, natural, serene, spiritual, tranquil

Embrace the timeless rhythms of nature and authentic Thai culture at Four Seasons, a haven of tranquility and world-class hospitality.
During the dark months of October and November, Thais and the international community stood together, neighbour helping neighbour, supporting each other in their work to recover from the devastating flooding that affected vast areas of the country and its capitol city, Bangkok, home to over 115 international schools.

In October the President of ISAT (International Schools Association of Thailand), notified ISAT schools throughout Thailand of the closure for the first two weeks of November of all schools in twelve of Bangkok’s flood-affected areas. This also included the cancellation or postponement of any field trips or off-campus activities previously scheduled. Schools affected by this announcement were asked to provide make-up classes, using available and appropriate resources and timing, such as e-learning, additional periods, weekend school, summer school, or additional school days in the coming weeks and months.

As a concerned and caring community, PTIS International School and Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning saw an urgent need for immediate education assistance to families as a viable alternative to school closures. In just over twenty-four hours, an initial Flood Relief and EduCare Program was created, presented to and approved by the ISAT President. Members of staff from all sections of the Three-Generation Community for Learning worked to develop a program that would enable all Grades 3-12 children affected by the floods to continue their studies in a safe environment. The ISAT President immediately contacted all ISAT schools to inform them of the initiative and begin immediate implementation.

The Traidhos EduCare Program

The new “no-cost” relief program called Flood Relief and EduCare offered selective classroom study and care during a difficult time, providing temporary short-term schooling and on-campus living arrangements for up to eighty students and their families.

The first priority was to get the students back in the classroom. Under this program, staff from all areas of the Traidhos Community offered co-ordination support, classroom teaching, extended studies, after-school Exploria activities, supervision, nursing care, security and empathy. Several housing alternatives were made available – some children joined the boarders in the boarding apartments while in other instances entire families were accommodated in the Traidhos Residence and Spa.

The Traidhos EduCare program was developed as part of a curriculum that can cater for any form of natural disaster and can be implemented at short notice.

“I am overwhelmed by the generosity of people to help others. It really is what PTIS and Traidhos are all about. This program builds upon Traidhos Three-Generation Community’s sustainability initiative, and its education and care: caring about people, caring about our planet and caring about and doing something for people in times of need,” Maxine Driscoll, the Head of School, recently commented.

Flood victim students were not the only ones who gained positive experiences as visitors to our campus: through them PTIS students also saw first-hand how natural disasters can affect families, their homes and their livelihood. Although we cannot protect our children from natural disasters, we can open them to learning, seeing and interacting with compassion and understanding at a very early age.

Joy Huss
Traidhos Support Service
Masaki and Arthur (Gr 5)
Smile and Pim (Gr 5)
Grade 12 student Yu Yu
Visitors at the Universities Expo
Oct (EY2)
April (Gr 6)
Ajarn Nicola and Jennifer (Gr 4)
Hasun (Gr 5)
Junior School Teacher Assistant Nok
Jonas (EY2)
Grade 5 student Ruben
Ryan (Gr 5)
Term (Gr 6) with Korben (Gr 2)
Tiger and Harley (Gr 6) and friend
Nora (Gr 5) and friends
Tiger on Hallowe’en Night
IB Career-related courses at PTIS

A casual visitor to the world of International Baccalaureate education would be forgiven for being initially a little confused. If they stumbled upon the IB’s website, or met a group of IB teachers, they may wonder what the difference is between the PYP, the MYP and the DP. Understanding and applying the many aspects of the various IB programs, though immensely rewarding, takes a lot of work for parents, students and teachers alike.

A recent addition to the collection of IB programs is the IBCC. This umbrella qualification has a more vocational focus than other IB programs and stands for the International Baccalaureate Career-related Certificate. Students take two or more IB Diploma courses, a reflective project, a second language and a community service component. Schools will also offer students career-related courses which suit the local context along with the needs and interests of the students involved.

Is the IB élitist?

The IB has introduced this new course because it is trying to widen access to its courses. In an article in the Times Educational Supplement in 2008 Judith Fabian, academic director of the International Baccalaureate, said: “The IB is seen as a very élitist qualification and we want to dispel that myth.”

The IBCC runs parallel to the IB Diploma and students will take it in the last two years of school. The Diploma is very popular with schools and universities but it does not suit every educational context. Consequently, the IB has developed, in partnership with a variety of pilot schools from all over the world, a framework which suits the learning needs of many different students.

A school in Quebec piloted the IBCC on top of a course that specialised in police studies. Another school in the Lake District of Northern England is using the certificate to structure its courses in outdoor education. Each participating institution is encouraged to offer vocational courses suitable to its context. PTIS is offering a course in sports development, coaching and fitness to its first cohort of IBCC students.

A new sports course

With the excellent sporting facilities available on our campus, choosing a sports course was an obvious choice. The challenge came in finding a vocationally-based course that was available in English, and would allow international students access to universities around the world. The solution was the BTEC National qualification through the international qualifications agency Edexcel. We reviewed it carefully, and made sure it fitted what we could offer in terms of resources and teaching. We are very happy with the progress students have been making in it since we began in August.

Our immediate plans are to go through the next stage of IB authorisation for the program and move from a pilot school to one that is fully-authorised. After that, we will continue to explore the possibility of broadening the courses we offer and investigate partnerships that would help us train students in leisure and tourism management and perhaps design and technology.

An IB education means many things to many people and we are determined at PTIS to offer a wide range of opportunities to all our students. Future doctors, designers, coaches and hotel managers are all welcome at our school and all will be well-cared for in all of their needs.

Zachary, Kana and James: Grade 11 IBCC students
Many parents and students may not know that PTIS is a registered examination centre for the SAT exam. The SAT exam is the standardised test used by colleges in the USA to select suitable entrants. It is not the only criteria used but it is nonetheless an important one. For example, the SAT scores of students who get into Ivy League schools like Harvard are extremely high. The scores needed to get into an average USA college are much lower and the SAT scores almost perfectly correspond with the world ranking of the university or college. The higher the ranking, the higher the SAT score needed for entrance to that college. The exam consists of an essay demonstrating critical writing, an English critical reading component and a test of mathematical ability. It lasts three hours and forty minutes.

PTIS is the largest testing centre in Chiang Mai. We accommodate up to sixty students at each testing session. We welcome students from Bangkok, China, Vietnam, Burma as well as students from Thai schools and other international schools in Chiang Mai. For many it is their first and only trip to PTIS so we hope they carry away a positive report on our school and how we run things. For our own students it is a convenient service to have such an important exam done in familiar surroundings.

Students come to PTIS at 7:30 am and leave at 12:45 pm. There are also SAT2 exams that can be done here which are one-hour subject tests that some USA Colleges demand.

The SAT is held five times a year at PTIS and enrolment for it is online at www.collegeboard.com. Specialised coaching can be arranged in Chiang Mai on Saturdays but there are also online coaching programs and self-coaching manuals. The general pattern is to do your first SAT in Grade 11 and then sit for your definitive SAT in the first semester of Grade 12.

Students hard at work – SAT exams
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