A celebration of lifelong education

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What can IB?

At PREM IB World School, specialised training in tennis, golf, cricket and football enables students to achieve their goals. What can I be? The answer is up to you.

Prem's challenging and fully-accredited learning and boarding programs offer amazing opportunities in a safe and natural environment.

Cover caption: Swimming team member Piers M, Grade 5, at a special Prem Panthers Assembly. Photograph by Alex Soulsby

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 + 66 807 929 925.
Prem Tinsulanonda International School (Prem) is a remarkable place! As well as being a day and boarding school for children from all over the world, it is also a part of Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning and so benefits from the specialised activities offered by the Community – sporting academies, the farm, cooking school and the Bangkok-based Barge Program. Prem students from over thirty different countries attend the school and participate in all the different programs available. The diversity of opportunities available and the diversity of cultures represented make it an amazing international experience for each of our students.

One of our growing student groups is children and teenagers from Bhutan. As many of you know, Bhutan is revered around the world for their Gross National Happiness, GNH, rather than GDP, and our Bhutanese students certainly bring wonderful qualities of happiness, friendship, creativity, good work attitudes and proficient English with them when they come to Prem. Over the past few years we have had forty-seven Bhutanese students attend Prem, and I have been very fortunate to get to know many of them really well.

As Head of School, I decided it was time to travel to Bhutan to say a very big THANK YOU to the Bhutanese parents who have supported Prem so well and who have done such an exemplary job in raising polite, kind, respectful and knowledgeable young people. Linda Buck, our Director of Boarding, accompanied me.

Very early one morning recently I flew into Paro International Airport, a short distance from Bhutan’s capital city, Thimpu. The descent between the towering peaks of the Himalayan Mountains surrounding the city was simply marvellous. Possibly even more marvellous, however, was my discovery that the pilot of our Druk Air flight was a Prem graduate, Kinga Tshering. Imagine how impressed I was to know that one of our students is now a pilot who regularly navigates the very difficult flight into and out of Bhutan. On this page is a photo of some of our Bhutanese graduates with me, and Kinga is on the right. We are so proud of them all. Tashi, Sonam, Pema, Jana and Kinga have achieved success in arts, business, tourism and aviation and they are also such lovely young people. Pema and Sonam invited me to their new restaurant and wine bar which they have renovated beautifully. Tashi is an exhibiting artist at Terton Galleries in Thimpu with her own art dealer, and Jana is taking a gap year to further her experiences before starting university.

It was also a delight to meet many parents at a reception later that day and at individual meetings the following day. They were very welcoming and friendly. It was wonderful to learn from them how we can improve our service to boarding students and their parents. Prior to our visit to Bhutan, Linda Buck had also made a short trip to Nepal to greet and thank our parents there. Both events were so positive that we have decided to make more of these short visits to other Asian countries throughout the year, visiting more of our boarding families.

As well as children from Bhutan, we have students who have come from America, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Britain, Cambodia, Canada, China, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Korea, The Netherlands, France, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lao, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland and Thailand. Unfortunately we will not be able to visit all of our students’ families this year…

On my return to Prem, our new Bhutanese Dzongkha language teacher and cultural Mentor, Ajarn Sonam, invited me to a cultural evening at our Cooking School with the Boarding students. How great it was to learn Bhutanese dancing and to hear about Bhutan from our existing students. We plan to hold cultural events for our boarding students more regularly so that we can continue to learn from each other. And of course, all Prem families and other visitors to Chiang Mai are always most welcome to attend.
While many visitors to northern Thailand regularly go elephant riding, zip-lining through the treetops or hurtling down rivers on bamboo rafts, scuba diving does not instantly come to mind as a Chiang Mai activity. However, for forty-two youngsters taking part in a recent Traidhos Summer Camp, it proved to be one of the highlights.

Working with Kru Piak and his team of certified PADI dive instructors, the campers participated in a Bubble-maker Course as part of their Summer Camp program. The Bubble-maker Program is especially designed for students eight years of age and older, but who are too young to dive or to manage standard dive equipment. The program introduces them to all of the essential elements of diving: how to communicate under water, how to become familiar with the equipment and how to gain confidence by having fun, by playing games and completing routines in the relative safety of a swimming pool. Everything was learnt under the friendly, watchful eyes of the skilled trainers.

A new piece of equipment was introduced in each lesson, and by the final session the children were confident and eager to gear-up as “real divers”. They were excited using the regulator and finding that they could breathe confidently at the bottom of the Traidhos swimming pool. For some, using their fins like fish proved a highlight, for others it was playing under the water for a long time, and for many it was the confidence gained in mastering new skills.

One of the aims of the Traidhos Summer Camps is to nurture new interests. We hope that the seed of interest planted during the camp may one day grow and lead some of the children who enjoyed the new experience of ‘Bubbles under Water’ to go on to enjoy the marvels of the underwater world.

For more information about a Bubble-maker Course at the Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning or the October camp program, please contact jaytanat@threegeneration.org

For information on the Bubble-maker Course see http://www.padi.com/scuba/padi-courses/diver-level-courses/view-all-padi-courses/bubblemaker-8-yrs/default.aspx/
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A new President at Traidhos

“You are going to be President?”

The little boy’s eyes were open wide, “Like in America?”

We laughed: the President of The Traidhos Three-Generation Community can hardly be compared to Obama, and yet scaled down for our own community, perhaps there are similarities: meetings to attend, policies to be decided, accounts to oversee, difficulties to mediate, guests to meet and working with all the different members of the community.

“You are going to be the leader?”

We were getting closer to it now. The Leader. I asked him what qualities a leader should display. With the confidence that can only come from an eight-year-old, he said, “You should be kind, you should think about things and be helpful.” He clarified “helpful” by saying that I should work alongside and with people, rather than stand back and be bossy.

Later I reflected on the wisdom of his words. I could never have dreamed of becoming President of the Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning, fourteen years ago, when I said goodbye to my classroom in London, after many years as a teacher and as a teacher-tutor with the University of Hertfordshire. When I arrived in Chiang Mai I taught at the school which preceded Prem. The role of President was not on the horizon during the years I spent helping to develop the Traidhos Barge Program in Bangkok. In Outliers, Malcolm Gladwell refers to a level of competence being reached after 10,000 hours. A good few of those practice hours were experienced as I took on different roles on the Barge. I was Environmental Educator, Education Manager and Barge Director. More hours were clocked up when I returned to Chiang Mai to head up the Visiting Schools Program team. The rest of those hours were probably accumulated through years of leading guiding groups and teams.

As a young teacher I had told my Head Master that I did not want to be ‘Management’, and that I would always be a classroom teacher. But Life seems to have had a different idea. Most recently I worked as Head of Community, a role I enjoyed working to re-define what Traidhos really is, and encouraging departments to work together to a common goal and making our vision central to everything. I believe that we should grow to be an international community of learners, across generations, working together for a sustainable future. I value the chance to network and to learn from local people and local organizations, and believe that as life-long learners, each of us should be able to continue to learn new things and develop new interests.

ML Tri’s vision is for Traidhos to develop into a genuine learning community. Prem Tinsulanonda International School is central to that vision. It will be enriched by the academies and programs as well as by the activities for families and local people, which will benefit both the school and the community as a whole. I hope that during my time as President, we will develop this sense of community. I hope that we will continue valuing and learning from the operations and support staff who bring many years’ experience. I hope that as we grow, we will continue to develop each department to be professional and committed to offering challenging learning programs taking advantage of the amazing setting of the Traidhos campus.

What sort of a President will I be?

I plan to be connected to what is really happening - so perhaps you will not always find me in the office! I hope that the classroom teacher deep inside me will, now and again, still have a chance to share with a group of children the wonder of a seed popping through the soil. I hope that colleagues will know that I am here to listen to them and to suggest a way forward and that parents will discover a leader who cares about the trust they have invested in Traidhos, and who values their participation in the Traidhos Community. I will do my best to encourage and support all who are part of Traidhos … and living the characteristics defined by my wise eight-year-old friend, to be kind, to think about things … and to be helpful.
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It is a long way from Rio de Janeiro to Chiang Mai or the Chao Phraya River in Bangkok. There may also appear to be vast differences between global concerns and what we do in our own homes and schools, but lessons learned in Brazil can easily be put into practice in Thailand.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) addressed many points. Following the June 2012 conference in Rio de Janeiro, its themes were condensed into the seven key areas of jobs, energy, sustainable cities, food security, water, oceans and disaster readiness. The UN recognises that environmental education plays an important role in eradicating poverty and improving sustainable development.

By providing students with details of new practices and new methods of sustainability, and by giving them the right information, educators will help students realise that they can make a real difference to the environmental sustainability of their homes, their schools and their communities. The UN conference highlighted that schools and other education institutions must promote development both through research and teaching, and by disseminating the new knowledge to their students. Schools play an important part in achieving the vision of Rio+20 by enabling everyone to acquire the values, competencies, skills and knowledge necessary to build a more sustainable society.

Environmental Education is not just the job of those in schools or higher education. With organisations such as Eco-Schools, Eco-Campus, UN Academic Impact and many others, companies, schools and individuals worldwide are making concerted efforts to become more sustainable.

Prem Tinsulanonda International School in Chiang Mai, and Traidhos Three-Generation Barge Program in Bangkok are no exceptions. For some, sustainability is a recent concept, but the Traidhos Three-Generation Barge Program has been delivering environmental education trips to schools, embassies and companies around Thailand since 1995. Some may say the Barge Program is a veteran in promoting sustainability, as it continues to encourage schools and students to learn about their environment and their connection to it. The program teaches students how to develop more sustainable lifestyles.

On the barge, many activities and expeditions provide students with a greater understanding and appreciation of the environment. The key theme is community; individuals, working together, achieve results and this can clearly be witnessed on the Barge. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions so they participate as Barge Crews. Students clean the boat, cook food for the group and provide the entertainment. Working in the confines of a converted rice barge forces groups to work as a team and to learn from one another. The barge adopts the concept of the ‘5 Cs’ to remind groups to conserve, communicate, challenge themselves, to be considerate and to cooperate with one another at all times. When one thinks of others, sustainability can be practised.

The quest for sustainability is also reflected in other activities on the barge. In River Observations, students adopt the AtKisson Compass of Sustainability to observe the Chao
Phraya River and comment on the interrelationships between nature, economy, society and well-being. Through this method, students appreciate that every action has a consequence and that a person does not have to be living directly by the river to impact on its water quality. To develop the notion that everyone is connected in an ecosystem, and that everyone has a part to play, students take three-minute showers, are immersed in the local markets to purchase their own food and are challenged to come back without any plastic bags. This is a challenge for some students, but once it is achieved it makes them appreciate what can be done to promote sustainability – and without too much effort.

Prem is part of the Traidhos Three-Generation Community and it works to infuse sustainability into different areas of the curriculum and into all areas of the organisation. Core values of sustainability are built into future planning, the Operations Department considers the types of cleaning materials used, and how cooking oil, vegetable peelings and tree trimmings can be re-cycled. The school grounds include native species and different areas to promote bio-diversity and it is networking to lead to positive partnerships and collaborations.

Transformative methods of teaching open students’ minds to the possibilities of sustainable living. Because teaching is not confined to the classroom, environmental education is considered a “catalyst for education renewal” (Wals, Learning for Sustainability, 2012). It allows teachers to adopt new ways of teaching so students have a greater realization of how their actions can have an impact on the environment. Because hands-on activities, development of research and focus on practical learning are fundamental to sustainable development, the Barge Program supports and practices the vision of Rio+20.

Environmental education is set to continue beyond the UN “Decade for Sustainable Development” when it ends in 2014, and with institutions declaring their commitment to environmental education, and programs such as Traidhos Three-Generation Barge Program, we hope we are heading towards a sustainable future.

www.unccd2012.org
It’s time for a change!

Prem opened in 2001 and celebrated its tenth birthday at the end of 2011. For ten years the blue Prem uniform was a familiar sight in and around Chiang Mai. Over thirty nationalities have worn the uniforms with pride. To celebrate the next stage at Prem it was decided that a new school uniform would be created, and so a competition was launched. The competition was open to students, parents and professional designers – and some striking ideas resulted.

Designed to be contemporary yet corporate, “uniform” yet flexible enough to give students a chance to express their individuality, the new Prem outfits continue to have a stylish white Lanna shirt for formal occasions, now complemented by shorts, skirts, skorts and long trousers in a darker green that is almost black – “Green is the new black?” – and by daily-wear white shirts with a contemporary cut-away vest style in the lower shirt panels. For students who want a more formal approach, a dark green necktie may be added to the white shirt. The striking winter jacket is a dark green hooded coat, with arresting lime green lining and a huge “PREM” in lime letters that hint at the American “Letterman” jackets so popular in many US colleges. The Prem Panthers will continue to be a force to be reckoned with in the Chiang Mai Athletics Conference – but the old blues have been replaced by striking Prem outfits in lime green and black. Gone are the blues – and welcome the greens!

There will be a transition period when blues and greens will both be seen … but gradually the new uniforms will become a well-known and welcome addition to the school fashion scene in Chiang Mai.

Prem enjoys a sensational, tree-filled campus north of Chiang Mai’s historic Old City. The green of nature is reflected in the greens and ochres of all the buildings on campus – and in the greens featured in the new uniforms. A vivid lime green, a deep bottle green, and black and white are the dominant colours in the new uniforms. A new school logo, also using greens and ochres, is a proud part of most items in the school’s new wardrobe. The new uniforms were the work of many people and committees, but student designers Julian, Grace, Kiki and Noa deserve special thanks for their ideas and contributions.
In 2011, John Joseph visited Prem and ran a series of workshops for staff and students, and a public seminar for adults. The results of each were impressive as people found they were able to think about their brains and the processes of learning in a new and challenging manner.

This year Prem entered a three-year plan with Joseph to provide a long-term project to help students at the international VFKRRO7KHWRSLFVKHSUHVHQWVDUHDJHVSHFL¿FDQGGHVLJQHG to challenge students of all ages – and equally to challenge their parents. The seminars include topics such as “Mind Your Brain: How to become a more effective learner”, “Parenting with the Brain in Mind: Raising Great Families” and “Developing Critical, Creative and Curious Thinkers”.

John Joseph has presented keynote addresses, conferences and workshop sessions to more than 300,000 people representing more than 3,000 education institutions across twenty-six countries. Week after week, he facilitates full-day workshops for student groups where he challenges young people to learn about learning, behaviour and emotions. He 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”!

He has presented to principals, teachers, students, parents, judges, business leaders, accountants, the medical profession, community service organizations, government departments and tertiary education staff. He is the father of two children and lives in Adelaide, South Australia.

In his workshops, Joseph encourages students to ask more interesting questions at home and at school, to be more curious about things at home and in nature, to develop a risk taking, challenging and curious mindset, to offer creative ideas to solve simple, practical problems, to be more cautious and objective in making choices, to learn the thinking skills necessary for success in learning beyond school classrooms and to improve their self esteem as learners and thinkers.

During his week-long visit to Chiang Mai, John Joseph conducted three days of workshops with Prem staff and students, a special seminar for parents of children in Grades 6, 7 and 8, and a well-attended public seminar.

The feelings of PTIS teachers, staff and students mirror those expressed by David Chojnacki of NESA in Greece: “Dear John, you are a superstar: keynoter and presenter extraordinaire. Our teachers cannot get enough of you. You must come back!” We will certainly be looking forward to John Joseph’s next visit to Chiang Mai.
Behind the Scenes during the Summer Holidays

During the long summer school vacation, many Thailand residents, school parents and students, and other visitors to the Kingdom enjoyed the sights and tastes of remote corners of this country or more far-flung destinations. If they thought about schools for just a second during this time – and who thinks of schools when on holidays? – they may have thought that all the classrooms would be silent, the grounds empty of chatting and cheering and chasing students – and that campus would have been enjoying a rest.

However, as the last Prem students left the campus in June, the summer activities began.

Housekeepers, relieved of classroom duties, turned their attention to the big Summer Clean. All furniture was removed and washed, carpets and equipment were cleaned, and windows made to sparkle. The gardening department worked tirelessly to trim trees, re-pot all of the indoor pot plants with fresh soil and to create a new play space in the Junior School. The maintenance men were busy repainting residential buildings, repairing and relaying tiled pathways, cleaning air conditioning units and repairing furniture. The list goes on.

In addition to the scurrying insect-like hive of activity during the Summer Clean, over 200 students attended a week or more of summer camps. Students participating in the Visiting Schools programs came to Prem from UK, USA, Malaysia and Australia and enjoyed their trips in and around Chiang Mai. The tennis and golf academies had athletes from several nations working up a sweat on the tennis courts and golf driving ranges ... and through it all the cooks, cafeteria staff and housekeepers happily kept our guests fed, laundered and with clean, inviting surroundings.

The summer holidays also allowed training time for many Traidhos staff. Twenty-two staff members, drawn from all departments, travelled together to Bangkok. They lived on the Traidhos Three-Generation Barge as it explored the provinces along Chao Phraya River between Ayutthaya and Bangkok.

The three-day adventure was filled with group games to promote different aspects of teamwork, activities concerning thinking sustainably, and visits to riverside sites. Staff departed from the Barge excited by their new experiences, with a feeling of togetherness across the departments and renewed commitment to Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning. It was a little step towards our vision that Traidhos be an international community of learners across all generations, working together for a sustainable future.

School is once again in full swing and the housekeepers are again making sure that classrooms are clean, and those chatting, chasing, cheering students are once again to be found reclaiming their favourite parts of the campus.

Traidhos Staff training on the barge
My Country – UK

Prem International School has approximately sixty staff and students who are from the United Kingdom. Some of them are recent arrivals in Chiang Mai – others are more long-term residents. For all of them, however, the enduring sense of family and friends “back home” is an important draw to what used to be known as “the old country”. This is their story.

UK is a place where the patchwork fields, historic village churches and hedgerows are so unlike the rice fields of Asia. Medieval cities with ancient protective walls are part of everyday 21st Century life and the superb ‘New’ Forest is now over 1000 years old. The UK is a place of thatched cottages and stately castles and manor houses. It is where that rare vegetable, rhubarb, is a popular form of dessert following, perhaps, a pint or two or real ale drawn from the barrel under the pub’s stained oak counter. It is the place where Yorkshire pudding is not a pudding, “bubble and squeak” is silent and the height of culinary art is represented by fish’n’chips doused in vinegar.

The British people at Prem come from many different counties in Wales, England, Ireland or Scotland so their backgrounds are as diverse and as similar as we find in South East Asia where people from the ancient Kingdom of Lanna are similar to – but also very different from – near-by residents of Myanmar, Lao or Cambodia. A special feature of Britons is their diversity, humour, and friendliness even experienced in London during the Olympics!

When our Britons return to their country there is no shortage of attractions for them. Huge theme parks such as Alton Towers in Staffordshire, seal colonies off the coast of Norfolk, the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester, and Go Ape! - a zip line / forest canopy high-wire adventure attraction in Thetford Forest, the largest lowland pine forest in Britain. There is also football … and Prem fanatics cheer the achievements of Manchester United, Port Vale or Stoke City football clubs.

But this summer was a special time, especially in London, home to Hamley’s Toy Shop (the largest toy shop in the world), dozens of live theatres featuring smash musicals, Shakespearian productions and the world’s longest-running theatre production, Agatha Christie’s The Mousetrap and so much more. As Samuel Johnson famously said, “When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life.”

This summer it was not possible to be “tired of life” as the Olympics Games drew thousands of spectators and the city was dressed for the biggest party. Union Jack flags were flown everywhere - outside houses, in pedestrian and shopping malls and at the Olympic venues. Team GB performed well but for many the highlight was the Opening Ceremony and the part that Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, played.

The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee was an important part of the summer and of the Games. She came to the throne on 6 February 1952 and in 2012 played a role with 007 James Bond as she apparently skydived into the London Olympics’ Opening Ceremony.

As one contributor commented, “It was a very nice summer to be in England and be English.”

Contributors include Sarah H, Stuart C, Piers M, Amy V, Christopher H and Lynda R
Most schools worldwide that follow their own national curriculum are checked and regulated by the governments of their country. Various Departments of Education regularly check the Higher Level Maths being taught in Tasmanian schools, or that the GCSE Social Studies program in Liverpool meet the required standards; and that in Pakistan, USA, France and other countries, the physics classes, the Spanish lessons, the works of Molière and Stravinsky are meeting national standards.

For international schools, however, the process is more complex. Many students from these schools have come from different countries and will probably subsequently attend universities from around the world. So University College, London, for example, will want to know that if a student is recommended to it by a school in Chiang Mai, then both that student and her school are of sufficient standing that the student has a good chance of future success for the student when she arrives, cold and shivering, in central London.

An international process of accreditation solves this potential problem.

In Thailand, it is common to see schools with different logos and mysterious acronyms shown on their marketing and publicity documents: IBO, CIS, WASC, ONESQA, ECIS, NCCT, ISAT and many others. What do these mean, and how may they help or hinder parents’ selection of the right school for their children?

A glib marketing tool?

A process of accreditation takes many years for initial accreditation, and then a vast amount of time, energy and resources when the re-accreditation process begins five years later. Is that little logo, those mysterious initials all worth it, or are they simply a curse, and glib marketing tools?

In the words of Lucy Kyte, Accreditation Co-ordinator at Prem Tinsulanonda International School (PTIS) in Chiang Mai, “Organisations like the CIS ensure that schools examine very carefully what they are doing against their own Mission Statements or guiding principles and also against the standards seen as common to the best educational institutions in the world. The necessary self-study process is one of self-appraisal, and one that continually asks the sorts of questions of a school’s performance that need to be asked.”

It would be easy for a school to develop an elaborate and high-flying Mission Statement … but unless it delivers on what it promises, then the statement is just words. Accreditation processes help schools to stay honest with themselves.

With so many different organisations around the world offering accreditation for different programs, how can a school choose the most meaningful body? Kyte continued, “For international schools, CIS is the big one; one which operates in over one hundred countries with almost four hundred schools accredited by it.”
The Council of International Schools, CIS, has headquarters in The Netherlands and in New York, and claims that its central purpose is to enable its schools and other educational establishments to achieve and deliver the highest standards in international education and to improve the outcome of student learning.

This is the secret. Parents can be assured that if a school has been accredited by CIS it will be delivering outstanding educational programs and that its standards will be regularly monitored to ensure that they remain at a high level, and that they also seek to improve their performance and their offerings.

Another “big one” is the International Baccalaureate Organisation – an organisation with headquarters in Switzerland. The IBO was created in 1969 to provide consistent quality education for children whose parents moved around the world. It now offers special programs (PYP, MYP, DP and the new IB Career-related Certificate) for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Currently there are over 900,000 students following an IB program in over 140 countries worldwide. PTIS is the first school in South-East Asia authorised to offer all four of these programs.

An accredited IB World School is one that parents know will offer a true international education, one that will focus on conceptual understanding and inquiry-based teaching and learning, as well as requiring service to the community. An IB World School is one that will be building global citizens.

In industry it is common to see ISO 9000 or other ISO codes proudly displayed. The International Organisation for Standardisation provides certification for over a million businesses worldwide, ensuring that they are safe, reliable and of good quality. In education, accreditation by CIS, the IBO, NEASC and others does a very similar task of quality control.

Kyte added, “With suitable accreditation, parents are able to trust the school they have chosen for their children, the schools are able to trust that the body with whom they have chosen to be accredited will continue to make valuable recommendations, and also trust that their programs will be equal to the best offered around the world.”

Quis custodiet ipsos custodies?

Since accreditation is a challenging but rewarding recognition of a school’s programs, its finances, its governance and its forward planning, it is important to know that those conducting the accreditation are people with the required knowledge and experience to be able to make the right recommendations. So who is guarding the guards?

In an accreditation period, the review panels usually consist of highly-experienced and talented education practitioners who have been specially trained to help in the evaluation process: current classroom teachers, examiners or experienced school administrators. Here the teachers are indeed teaching other teachers, leading by example and making sure that the guards do not need another bastion of security hastily erected around them.

So is it all worth it?

“Certainly,” replies Lucy Kyte at Prem (above). “As we will be visited in February 2013 by representatives of CIS, IBO and NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges – USA) as part of our continuing accreditation by these organisations, one of my tasks will be to see that the school is maintaining its focus on our practices and our standards, and working with my colleagues to improve the school. That is a really worthwhile aim. It comes down to our students – what they are learning, how they are learning it and how they are making a contribution to the wider world.”

In Thailand there are thirty schools accredited by CIS, with another eighteen in neighbouring countries: fifty schools for parents to choose from, knowing that these schools’ long-term educational and financial planning is secure. If a school is accredited by the leading accreditation bodies parents can relax – a little – knowing that they have made the right choice – and that the rest is up to the kids.

www.cois.org
www.ibo.org
www.iso.org
www.ptis.ac.th
Can U Kick It Soccer Academy (CUKI) was formed in 1998 by Darren Jackson, an ex-English professional who represented his country in the U21s team, and has played professional football at Reading FC and Oxford United. Darren and his experienced team of coaches all hold British Football Association Coaching Licenses.

The CUKI organization is aimed at bringing football to children aged 5-12 years of age as an after-school activity in schools and at weekends. The Can U Kick It Soccer Academy has positioned itself at the forefront of soccer education through professionalism and innovative approaches.

In September CUKI opened a Chang Mai Academy headed by coach David Jervis (above).

David works on a simple structure so that each player will receive technical, tactical, physical and mental development as well as having great fun. His aim for each student is to improve technically, to improve confidence, to think independently, to improve cardiovascular and core fitness, to develop a desire to learn and to have fun in a safe and enjoyable environment.

**Saturday training**

Age groups are split up and all players are monitored closely. The U5 – U11 children have Foundation Work – which is a lot of fun. This is the golden period for development of players. Children will be coached into being able to master the ball.

Deliberate practice will focus on passing, receiving, shooting, dribbling and turning - in an environment where all players have the freedom to express themselves.

The U12 – U14 children have a more advanced level of training with Technical and Tactical Development. Players will be allowed to try and use their skills to affect the game. Opposed training and being able to make decisions and solve football problems are encouraged in training sessions.

The oldest students – the U15 – U18s - focus on becoming team players. Players learn Team Principles, roles and responsibilities. Coaching sessions are based on players having awareness of space, teammates and opposition.

For more information on how to join the CUKI Soccer Academy contact Darren Jackson on 081 833 4432.
**Rimping Supermarket**

The market of choice

Rimping Supermarket is a locally owned premium supermarket chain serving Chiang Mai, the largest city in Northern Thailand. The Management has been involved in retail for more than 60 years, and the company takes its name from the first branch which opened on the east banks of the Ping River, which flows through the city centre. For over six decades since, Rimping has focused on providing a wide selection of quality consumer product at fair prices.

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We are more than a supermarket. We are part of life.

We stock over 20,000 locally produced and imported items.

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**Saturday Soccer Academy Opens This September**

**PACKAGE**

- Training Shirt
- Training Shorts
- Return Transportation
- 10 week Training Program
- 20hrs of Professional Coaching from a certified “A License Coach”

Cost: 6,000bht incl. transportation, 5,000bht without transportation.

Venue: Traidhos Three Generation Community (home of Prem Tinsulanonda International School)

**SCHEDULE**

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**TRANSPORTATION**

Meeting point Big C Extra (next to Index)

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Register online: www.canukickit.net/changmai | Payment: Bank Transfer | For More Information contact David Jervis: david@canukickit.net - 0899445332
Pirom Chinkham, a groundsman at the Traidhos Three-Generation cricket field, has been selected to be a part of the team preparing and caring for the grounds to be used for the September 2012 Cricket 20–20 World Cup in Sri Lanka. The distinction includes not only learning, working and collaborating with the best grounds staff in the world, but opens the door for Pirom to see cricket at its finest and to witness the passion that people have for cricket when it is played in a world-class arena. Pirom left Northern Thailand on 13 September and his skilled services used for almost three weeks before, during and after the competition.

This great honour comes to a man of humble beginnings.

Pirom, 42-years old, is married with two children, and lives in a village near the school. His wife and family are happy he will have the chance to explore a country so far away as none of them has ever left Thailand before. Although Mrs P has not given him a shopping list for his Sri Lankan journey, Pirom said that he would surprise them by buying something special for her and the children.

Pirom owns two small rice fields in nearby Huay Sai – just enough for him and his family – and says that the skills used in those fields were very helpful when making the new cricket pitch. Pirom was selected from the Traidhos gardening department and transferred to the cricket grounds under the tutelage of Three-Generation Cricket Academy Director, David Buck. With David’s Level 1 groundsman’s qualification from England and with the help of six workers from Myanmar, the makeshift team slowly and steadily built the ground that today is known as the Three-Generation Oval.

Over the subsequent ten months, and without any professional cricket grounds machinery, the ground was developed by hand - one blade of grass at a time. Grass for the ten-strip turf wicket was imported from Perth, Western Australia, so there is forever a corner of Thailand that is linked to the famous WACA. This was probably first time in cricket history that a ground has been built using traditional Thai “paddy field” techniques. Under David’s and Pirom’s supervision, the ground was ready to host its first cricket tournament on 14 December 2006 – an Asian cricket tournament that played to glowing reviews.

In more recent years, the ground has established a reputation as being one of the finest grounds in Asia - and certainly the best cricket field in Thailand. Pirom has earned his reputation through diligence and hard work and is now regarded amongst players and coaches as the best groundsman in Thailand.

Pirom’s achievements and the recognition he has gained in the world of Asian cricket are well-deserved for his outstanding contribution to Traidhos and the promotion of cricket in Thailand. On his return from Sri Lanka he hopes to bring new ideas to make the Three-Generation Oval even better.
Early history

It is said that Newton discovered the theory of gravity when an apple fell on his head. Many centuries earlier, in approximately 2700 BCE, gravity had played an important part in another discovery. Chinese Empress Lei Tzu was enjoying a morning cup of the nation’s finest oolong, when a small bauble dropped from the mulberry tree above her into her cup. She found, when trying to pull it out, that a single strand of what she called “silk” came from the cocoon … and so the silk industry was created.

Lei Tzu subsequently became known as Si Long Chi, or ‘Lady of the Silk Worm’ and although the secrets of the luxurious material were closely guarded for many years, they gradually spread throughout Asia. In Thailand, Lanna and Isaan became important centres of silk production. At Udon Thani, 3000-year-old fragments of silk have been found amid other Bronze Age relics.

The silk cycle

The cycle starts with the domesticated silk moth, Bombyx mori, laying eggs that gradually become silkworms. Mulberry leaves are the preferred diet of the worms that finally spin cocoons to protect themselves as they slowly change from worm to moth to start the whole process once again.

Except they don’t. If the moth is allowed to develop, the fine silk thread of the cocoon – up to 1500 metres in length – is destroyed. To preserve the long threads, the cocoon is boiled and the moth is killed – but it is also sometimes looked upon a tasty delicacy in its own right. The boiling also loosens the threads making it easier to draw several at a time into a strong, supple, single silk thread ready for weaving. Shorter threads may have to be spun together before the weaving can take place.

After washing, dyeing and drying, approximately eighty threads per inch or 2700 per metre are prepared as the warp of the proposed fabric – the threads that run from top to bottom. The weaver then uses shuttles – hand shuttles or ‘fly shuttles’ in the larger looms – to weave the weft threads in the chosen colours and patterns over and under the warp strands. A simple one-ply piece of fabric will usually have just two shafts or heddles to separate the warp strands, but in a more elaborate piece there may be many scores of shafts to separate the threads allowing the shuttle safe passage. The weaver’s feet will be as busy as a concert organist’s, stamping on the many pedals to change patterns.

The production of silken fabrics really has not changed very much over the millennia. A Ban Chiang weaver who was able to jump aboard a time travelling machine and visit Chiang Mai would still find that the essentials of spinning and weaving are the same.

A Royal Contribution

Chiang Mai province has played host to many important developments in the sericulture industry. HRH Princess Dara Rassamee, daughter of a Chiang Mai king and later wife to HRH King Rama V, returned to her native Chiang Mai in 1915 and spent her remaining years reviving traditional performing arts and textiles.
Despite all her efforts, however, traditional weaving of silk fabrics gradually became little more than a slowly fading cottage industry, with the products reserved almost exclusively for home life in the villages.

American Jim Thompson, who had adopted Thailand as his new home following World War II, saw huge potential for Thai silk. To the horror of traditionalists, he introduced chemical dyes and mechanisation and so the new Thai silks were more colourfast than those using traditional vegetable dyes, had a greater range of colours, and were produced more quickly. He sent samples of the new fabric to the USA where it caused a sensation. Thai silk was later used for costumes in the 1956 musical film, *The King and I*, based loosely on Anna Leonowen’s book *Anna and the King of Siam*.

Thompson’s contribution to the silk industry in Thailand cannot be overestimated, and it would have been interesting to see what initiatives he may introduced had he not mysteriously disappeared in Malaysia’s Cameroon Highlands in 1967.

Thailand’s Queen Sirikit has also played a significant role in exposing Thai silk to the world, featuring Jim Thompson silks in many of the items she wore on a 1960s tour to the USA. She has continued her exemplary royal work in the area of promoting hand-spun and hand-woven Thai silk, following visits to the Lanna and Isaan areas in the early 1970s.

Queen Sirikit encouraged local women to produce hand-woven silk fabrics which became a distinctive form of national dress for women with elegant silk and cotton sarongs decorated with bands of finely-woven ‘Yok Dok’, ‘Teen Chok’ or ‘Khit’ embroidery along the lower edges of the garment. Her continuing passion for Thai silk has seen the creation of the Queen Sirikit Museum of Textiles inside the Grand Palace in Bangkok and the Queen Sirikit Silk Centre in Isaan’s Surin.

Today hand-woven and machine-woven Chiang Mai and Isaan silks are among the finest in the world and used for almost everything – from elegant garments for men and women, to furniture upholstery and curtains, lampshades and exceptional pieces of art.

Patricia Cheesman, who established Chiang Mai’s Naenna Studio in 1988, is following in Her Majesty’s footsteps, encouraging her teams of weavers under Master Weaver Viroy Nanthapoom to build on the centuries of tradition the province enjoys. Her studio, now directed by daughter Lamorna, is located in the foothills of Doi Suthep and produces traditional pieces in local silks and cottons, as well as stunning contemporary artworks. Some of the superb wall hangings will, like the elaborate embroidered pieces for traditional costumes, take up to six months to produce.

Thai silks from Studio Naenna, Shinawatra Thai Silk, Pankusol Silk Farm or many of the others in Chiang Mai share features that have enabled local silk to claim world fame. The unique lustre of silk, the generations of knowledge and passion evident in our local designers and weavers, the versatility of silk from fine “through the wedding ring” suppleness and transparency to the thicker, coarser versions of silk used in some high fashion garments or upholstery fabrics, the unique qualities of silk that allow it to stretch and regain its original shape: these are all contributing factors to the beauty that is Chiang Mai silk.

A splash in a Chinese lady’s teacup almost five thousand years ago was certainly no storm in a teacup or tempest in a teapot! This small and humble beginning has lead to a worldwide industry employing tens of thousands of people – and giving pleasure to so many more. And Chiang Mai silk? It holds a very special part in that worldwide phenomenon.
Moving to Thailand Checklist

Pre-move Countdown

- Have a complete physical check-up and receive the required inoculations a month before departure. Hepatitis B and typhoid inoculations are recommended for Bangkok.
- Complete host country resource reading and company orientation material.
- Consider making arrangements for Power of Attorney.
- Make any necessary adjustments in insurance policies.
- Notify local charge accounts of address change – or close the accounts.
- Notify the local post office of mailing address changes and provide six to eight weeks’ notice of change to any magazines you subscribe to.
- Once your departure date is known, notify home delivery services, utilities etc.
- Secure and become familiar with samples of Thai currency.
- Arrange for your home country to send pertinent publications to you on a timely basis.
- Communicate with your Thailand office and relocation service with exact details of arrival dates and times.
- Receive tax counselling from an experienced international tax expert.
- Obtain medical and dental records for you and your family.
- Make arrangements for support obligations of family members remaining at home.
- For children, choose a legal guardian: In the event of the unexpected deaths of both parents, the legal guardian will be the only one permitted to take your children back to your home country.

Welcome to Thailand!

We have all made some moves in our lives. Some went well; others did not! In everything you do, you have to plan according to your employment contract, your budget and your timelines. An important part of the plan is making a checklist of what to do.

To implement the plan I recommend that you get professional help with your move: don’t believe you can handle everything yourself! Relocating includes personal income tax advice and advice on health, liability and household goods insurance, cultural awareness training to avoid making the most elementary mistakes, advice for selecting the right moving company, and arranging an orientation tour to familiarise yourself with your new city and support with a housing and school search. This alone is very time-consuming and will probably be the most critical part of your move.

Your company will arrange your Work Permit and visa applications but you need to understand the process and timeline to fit into your overall program. Once you have arrived, you will need support with setting up Internet and cable TV, opening a bank account, getting a driver’s license, registering your family with a hospital and getting the hospital’s emergency contact details.

It is preferable to have one centre co-ordinating all of this for you. By combining your own plan with professional relocation expertise, the chance is that your move will be a successful and happy one.

Welcome to Thailand!
Moving to Thailand Checklist

Documentation etc

Vital documents should be recorded on a checklist with a separate record kept of them. Give a copy of the record to a home country resident, relative or friend, and place a copy in your safe-deposit box with the originals. Bring all legal documents with you in your personal luggage – do not send them with your shipment. The following informal checklist may be used as a guide.

- Passports – one per member of family
- A written record of all immunisations and vaccinations with dates and physicians’ signatures
- Birth certificate(s) and marriage certificate
- Signed and notarised Power of Attorney executed by each spouse on behalf of the other
- Joint cheque account details
- Current copy of will(s)
- List of family members’ social security numbers, insurance policy details, passport numbers and dates of issue
- List of home country doctor, dentist, lawyer and other professionals
- Mortgage records, deeds, bonds
- Children’s school records
- High school certificates and transcript, university transcript, diplomas and employee letters of recommendation
- Past tax records and information required for completing future tax returns
- Letter of credit, reference and competence
- Globally-accepted credit cards such as American Express, Master Card or Visa
- Traveller’s cheques in home and host country currency
- Cash available for settling-in period
- Letter from current automobile insurer referring to driving record and insurance history
- An account with a bank that has a Thailand branch or an open transactional relationship with a Thai bank
- List of current assets and liabilities
- Large safe-deposit box
- Copy of your most recent prescriptions for spectacles or contact lenses and medicines, and a spare pair of glasses / lenses
- An adequate supply of prescription medicines to last until local medical contacts can be established
- Updated business and personal address books
- A detailed household inventory (with photographs for proper coverage) for the insurance company

Adapted from an article written by Leo Alexandersen, Owner of Pacific Orientation Relocation Services Co Ltd, Thailand, and originally published in Thai Property Guide by Thai Swedish Chamber of Commerce.

Images:
http://www.utahburden.com
www.realtyexecutivesintegrity.com
www.provident-movers.com
Did you know that 2012 is the International Year of Alternative Energy?

Curious to know what The International Year of Alternative Energy, an eco-friendly campaign, really means to an individual, the community and the broader world in an applicable way, the Traidhos Visiting Schools Program (VSP) sought to find a project to put it to the test. It had to be a project that could serve the hill tribes and other low-income communities that VSP works with throughout the year.

A community service project was organised with visiting students from King’s Academy, Jordan, to see the effects of MyShelter Foundation’s “Litre of Light” initiative, that was taking place in the Philippines. Could they prove that water and a simple plastic bottle produce daytime lighting equivalent to a 55W electric bulb and could MyShelter Foundation’s lofty goals of lighting over one million homes in 2012 come from such a simple solution?

Before we started out, we looked at the project’s website:

Isang Litrong Liwanag (A Liter of Light) is a sustainable lighting project which aims to bring the eco-friendly Solar Bottle Bulb to disprivileged communities nationwide. Designed and developed by students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the Solar Bottle Bulb is based on the principles of Appropriate Technologies – a concept that provides simple and easily replicable technologies that address basic needs in developing communities.

A Solar Bottle Bulb is a clear water or soda bottle filled with tap water and a little bleach. This bottle is embedded into house roofs, with part of the bottle outside and part of it inside the roof. There is sealant around the hole to keep the roof weather-proof. When the sun hits the outside part of the bottle, a lot of light reaches the inside part of the bottle. The water inside the bottle makes the light omni-directional, mimicking an electric light bulb. The bleach keeps the water clear for years. Without the bleach, the water would quickly turn green with algae. Without the water, there would be a bright spot on the floor, surrounded by relative darkness.

The solar bottle bulb is really as simple as it sounds. It provides an innovative minimal-cost, carbon-free daytime lighting solution made from discarded 1.5 litre plastic bottles. The only other ingredient needed is sunshine!

This was a fun task that made non-believers into believers: the King’s Academy students were delighted to find the solar light bottle to be a very safe, inexpensive, efficient and sustainable lighting project providing natural daytime light in dark homes or buildings that have few or no windows or no electricity. As a “green” solution it also promotes reuse and recycling. As new advocates to the solar bottle bulb, VSP is determined to continue spreading this sustainable method of lighting to rural communities throughout Northern Thailand.

Let there be light!

Robert Thaprom
VSP
Natacha R (2010)

Since leaving Prem, I went back to Switzerland, graduated there and returned to Chiang Mai for a six-month internship with the Four Seasons Resort. Time has gone by so quickly. After that I hope to get accepted at the Ecole Hotelière de Lausanne, the most famous hospitality school in the world. As the classes start in September, I might come back to Chiang Mai to take Thai classes, as I have never had a chance to do so. In the photograph I am with my team at the Four Seasons, where I was the only “farang” but we all got along really well and the internship was better than everything I could have imagined.

Lilly L (2012) and Kien T (2006)

“Hey, Lilly!” Kien calls over to me one morning in the Prem gymnasium, “Come look at this!”

I glance over curiously and decide to follow, thankful to get a rest from the exhausting running game the girls were teaching me during the second week of the Prem Summer Camps. Kien and I are leading the group of forty campers in various gym sports this morning. I walk to where he is pointing.


“That was my year,” Kien smiles proudly.

I know the banners well. Four years ago, I spent a semester at Prem with my twin brother Joe, taking time away from our American high schools to study in another part of the world. We packed our bags in Texas and unpacked them again in Vietnam, as a thirteen-year old, Quien did the same, packing his bags in one country and unpacking them in another. He arrived at Prem as a quiet Grade 8 boy named Quien and left some years later as a confident and successful Grade 12 student known as Kien.

Our memories of this campus are still vivid and warm. Kien and PTIS literally grew up together, Prem opening its doors the year Kien enrolled. Kien was the first to call the boarding clusters home, the first to walk the halls and write on the boards and break-in the desks. Years later, we both remember the small things: circling the outdoor hallways, cross-crossing the Senior School courtyard, and making the endless trips from classrooms to cluster, cluster to cafeteria, classrooms to sports fields. We remember running to the Chum Shop after lunch and hiding out in the library during free periods, and we smile when we think about our favourite TOK instructors. Both of us did pretty well: Kien attended university in Switzerland for a degree in hotel and tourism management, while I attend the University of Chicago to study anthropology and environmental science. That’s all well and good, but what are we doing here this hot morning in June, so many years after saying our supposedly final goodbyes to the school?

Staffing Prem’s Summer Camps, of course. A few years after graduation, Kien accepted a full-time job working at Prem’s Visiting Schools Program, which annually allows many kids to experience Thailand and the wonderful Prem campus. Studies at university have lead me back to Thailand to research innovative architecture and sustainable farming — two things that Prem does not lack. Meanwhile, we are both lending our hands — and legs, and backs, and shoulders — to Summer Camps, where we run happily around our old grounds.

What drew us back to Prem? Many of the same things that attracted us as students: innovative programming, state-of-the-art facilities, and a visionary staff challenging the definition of education today. We are thrilled to have joined arms with the same people who once opened our eyes to the world. Now we dedicate our time at Prem to helping other kids have the same experience we did, and we work professionally to spell out the mission that we came to embody as students. So to those who think you’ve left, be forewarned: with its students, Prem’s weakest spot may be its goodbyes.
Discover the World of Wonders at Hansa Minigolf in the Park

Hansa Minigolf

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