

Monthly Newsletter: November 2015

IMPORTANT DATES

16 - 20 Nov	Math & Science Week (P)
7 - 11 Dec.	End Semester Exams (M/H)
14 - 17 Dec.	English Week (M/H)
14 - 18 Dec.	Parent Teacher Meetings
18 Dec.	Christmas celebration
18 Dec.	End of Semester 1
21 Dec - 8 Jan.	School Holiday



Message from the Principal

Whilst the haze may not have left us entirely, we can see clearly enough to witness so many subtly meaningful aspects of our living curriculum here at HWA. This month we highlight activities and events, which make connections within and beyond the school.

The campus has come alive, with different sets of students involved in playing, sharing and learning right across the campus. The eco pond has captured the attention of students, and while interaction with the pond's life is still mostly informal, I see teachers engaging students in conversations about what they are seeing.

I hope that you were able to take a look at the Kindergarten to Grade 2 UOI exhibition. The visual interpretations of what inquiry really means have stimulated some vivid discussions. Inquiry in an IB classroom means so much more than just a few well directed questions.

Congratulations to our new Primary Student Council representatives. This opportunity for student leadership is to be highly valued. Our emphasis within the classroom and the curriculum on leadership and developing independent learners is at the core of our approaches to teaching and learning.

Outside the campus, it is fulfilling to hear of so many community connections; field trips, community service, Model UN involvement, university visits and inter-school sport are all headlined in this month's newsletter. And every co-curricular experience enriches and opens minds. On that note, please be aware that we will always welcome input from our own school community. If you have something you would like to share with us, or if you have friends and colleagues who have an expertise or an experience which would contribute to and broaden our curriculum, then please do be in touch with us.

Without wishing to scare you, I remind that Christmas marks the end of the first semester. Yes, we are heading for the school year's half way mark, but it is the shorter half if you can have such a thing. Planning and preparation for the Christmas Celebration is well underway, in a very busy assessment and report writing time for many of us.

Stephen Keegan
Principal



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HWA students in the community

Our students have shown great initiative getting involved in the community, benefiting the people they engage with as well as their own personal development. Some students have made considerable efforts to help those vulnerable in Singapore and elsewhere.



In late October, Grade 1 held a mini-fair and raised over \$300 to help Indonesian children in Kalimantan struggling due to the haze. Students sold toys and baked goods to raise money for those less fortunate.



A group of Middle and High school students went to volunteer at **All Saints Elderly Home** in Hougang on 7 November. The students danced, sang and spent some time talking to the elderly.

Eric Renzo Larrea Guija (G11) performed *El Condor Pasa* at the **Positive Schools Conference** at UWCSEA East Campus on 6 November. We are so proud that Eric represented HWA at this event. Everyone at the event very much enjoyed and appreciated the performance.

Primary School Student Council

Primary school has elected Student Council representatives for 2016. The student leaders will enhance the student community as they help with peer behaviour support and encourage other students to voice concerns, feedback and encouragement. The student representatives are as follows:

Co-presidents Mario Mancini and Annie Jakes-McKay from Grade 6, Anthony Selvadory (Grade 5), Vittoria Mancini (Grade 4), and Gabriella Paul (Grade 3).

Fitness 4 All (including you!)

For parents interested in free group fitness sessions, join high school students and staff for fitness training (cardio video - 30 min., strength training - 20 min., and stretching) on Thursdays at 3 p.m. in the small hall above the teacher office. We need weights; if you have any that are no longer being used, let Sonja know (sonjab@hwa.edu.sg).

HWA and Sports

Hillside is trying to get more involved in sporting events in Singapore. Well done to all the students participating in the Athletic Conference of Singaporean International Schools (ACSIS) in November. Congratulations to Jude who placed 3rd in the group for 9-year-old boys. Many parents and teachers were also impressed to see older primary kids running alongside and cheering on the younger runners from Kindergarten!

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The HWA Football Team took part in the ACSIS (under 9) competition in late October. The team was unbeaten in the competition and HWA only missed out on a top ranking on goal differences. Students showed great courage and teamwork. Many thanks to Mr. Joshua who has done a fantastic job of mentoring this team.



Field trips

Grade 2 visited the Land Transport Authority in late October to learn how societies organise transport systems. Prior to the visit, students had researched transportation systems in different places.



Grade 4 visited the Singapore Police Headquarters to inquire about Singaporean heroes and history. They learned about the Singaporean police system. They also learned how to salute properly!



Grade 6 visited Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum and the Asian Civilisations Museums in late October. The trip linked to the current unit looking at archaeological excavations and how they help us understand the past and the present.

Kindergarten and Primary UOI Exhibition

The UOI Exhibition, held last 9 to 13 November in the Town Hall, was a great opportunity for the HWA community to see how inquiry happens in different classes. The children reflected on their learning and took great pride in their work.

Having learned “how celebrations mark important events in our lives”, nursery set up a booth looking at celebrations. K1 students focused on “how people live in different ways in different countries” through different foods, clothes, sports and dances. Grade 1 students shared their personal thoughts on whether “nature or nurture shapes us” and Grade 2 students displayed a road map out of recycled material showing how “moving people around requires planning and organization.”

Grade 7 and 8 students visited the **Chinese Garden**, bringing Chinese and Mathematics learning to an external environment. In Chinese, the unit relates to Traditional Chinese Architecture and students did an expository piece of writing and oral presentation inspired by traditional Chinese architecture. The

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Mathematics focus was Measurements and students carried out tasks within the beautiful setting.



Laos CAS trip

G11 students and two teachers, Ms. Wu Dan and Mr. Max, travelled to Laos in October. The objective of the trip was to do service at Napho Primary School, located in a rural area. The students worked together to build a substantial fence around the school, wholly funded by the students themselves.



They dug holes, mixed cement, and withstood testing weather conditions in order to get the work down. In addition, students designed a garden by digging and growing flowering plants. They also fixed the flagpole, relocated a notice board, and spent time with the primary 1 class.

Students fulfilled the intended learning outcomes during the trip and worked collaboratively, with perseverance and commitment. They recognized their own strengths and areas for growth.



Model United Nations Conference

A group of Middle and High School students have been put forward for participation in the NUS-Yale Model United Nations Conference in Singapore on January 22-24. Five full delegates and four observers will participate in the Conference. Teachers are working closely with the students who will represent the school in such a high-calibre event.

Yale-NUS & University of Toronto visit

We hosted two university events over the last month and had visits by Yale-NUS as well as the University of Toronto. University representatives focused on both application criteria and process and highlighted the types of courses, schools and facilities available for students.

