

# The Weekly

News from the International School of Havana

## From the Director

Michael Lees | Director



### Learning Conversations

It was great to see the high turnout for the learning conversation last week. While the school organizes two formal sessions during the year when conversations about student learning takes place, we have the expectation that parents should be frequently talking to their children about their learning. Not only do you learn about your child's day but by making engaging conversation, you are sending the important message that you value and support the teaching and learning process. And this ultimately has an impact on student performance. Instead of asking your child, "How was your day?," try more strategic questions like, "What good questions did you ask today?" Effective question posing is an acquired skill that can be reinforced. It, too, improves performance.

### Tennis Tournament

Thanks go out to Mr. Luis and the PE staff for once again organizing an excellent tennis tournament on Saturday. There

was some inspiring competition and we were pleased to see such support from all the parents. Congratulations to all the participants! Results will be shared in the Weekly and awards presented in an upcoming assembly.

### Calle 18 Library

Even before the Grand Opening of Calle 22 recently, we had already been well under way on the renovation of the new library building on Calle 18. A representative of the British design company who is contracted to do the work will be visiting ISH next week to take some important measurements for the furniture and other equipment that will be made in the UK in the next few months. We are very excited about the project and we look forward to finally having the grand opening of that beautiful facility when it is completed.

## Events Calendar

### Monday, February 11

PTSA Executive Meeting 3:45 pm

### February 18 to February 24

School Closed (Mid term break)

### Saturday, March 9

Annual Garage Sale

### Please note

Last week's weekly had the starting date for the upcoming mid term break incorrect. The school is open as normal on Friday, February 15. We apologize for any confusion.

## From the Lower School

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### Georgina Schofield | Principal, Lower School



Our assembly this week will be led by the Kinder Owls, with a performance from the EC Choir. This week we welcome Josh Hughes, from FG Library & Learning, who is visiting us to confirm final details with our exciting Library renovation.

Last week, Grade Three enjoyed a visit to Belview Café and we want to extend our thanks to the staff for their timely preparation and welcoming service with our students.

Kinder Two are celebrating the 100th Day of School with some hilarious images of what they might look like when they are 100 – take a look at the board in their playground for a giggle!

Next week is the half-term break and so we look forward to seeing you again on Monday, February 25.

## From the Secondary School

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### Anna Brunskill | Principal, Secondary School



Last Tuesday's Learning Conversations were an immensely productive and enjoyable day for the Secondary teaching team, who felt that their conversations with parents and students have laid the foundations for the learning that will happen in our second reporting period. As we approach the February break, I hope that our staff and students enjoy a well-deserved rest and time spent with family and friends.

Our continued thanks go to all those who have donated to the tornado relief drive at ISH. In last Thursday's assembly we were lucky to hear from Tania, an expat living locally who has been helping with the relief effort and who shared with us some of the stories of the work being done to support those whose homes were in the tornado's path. Juliet and Maya from Grade 11 are continuing to coordinate Secondary staff and students in supporting the relief effort run by Fabrica del Arte and we hope this support will continue for the foreseeable future. Thank you to all those who really are making a difference to the local community.

For students in Grades 10 and 12, there are just seven weeks until their study leave begins, with their last formal day in

school being Friday, April 12. We strongly recommend that you and your child take time in the coming months to create a really robust study plan – do talk to your Coordinator if you would like help with getting that underway.

We have a lot happening in the fortnight after the February break including a Service Learning event with Iglesia Milagrosa (which you can read about below), the Grade 12 Art Exhibition, and a Student Council party on March 8. In particular, on Wednesday, February 27 students in Grade 11 will be sharing their Work Experience learning with our community and I leave you with some of their feedback from the week:

*I learnt a lot about how many different jobs all play a role in a construction company, and how they all need to work together in unison to come up with a solid plan. (Sukhvinder Singh Bains)*

*I can say that it helped me a lot to learn about the marketing, business and finance world. During the working experience, I met every single one of the staff members of the Air France office, who were all very kind to us, explaining with every detail*

*they could. (Yara Mayya)*

*Through extensive problem-solving opportunities, I felt that this week was one of merit as everyday was a learning experience. (Juliet Machado)*

*On Day 5, which was my last day I interviewed tour-guides that the company considered employing. I was allowed to evaluate their skills in German and in English and write a report about each one of them and submit it to the manager. It was a great experience and I made a lot of good new friends. (Leonard-Alexander Groth)*

## Winner Grade 6-8 First Page Story Contest

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Before Christmas, the Secondary English department ran a story writing contest for all students. Students had to select a current world issue, and imagine its impact 150 years in the future, writing the first page of a novel which would bring the reader into their imagined world.

We are please to announce that the overall winner in Middle school is Ida

### *Invasion*

#### *Ida Nossun*

*I wake up from the sound of metal intersecting against metal, and I'm deciding if I am awake or still asleep. My eyes fly open when my brother yells, "Wake up O! You will not believe this!" I don't notice that it is still the middle of the night before I am already in a sitting position. Getting out of the bed and putting on my ragged jacket I can hear people in the village panicking; running, yelling and then whispering to each other. I haven't experienced this kind of tension in my neighborhood since the commander died.*

*I jog slowly out to see a big crowd in front of a huge metal thing I don't recognize, I've never seen anything like it. Gossip overheard from random people from my village informs me that it is some king of a Drop Ship.*

*Before I get to think over what that really means, a man I don't know steps out of the crowd and up onto a rock so that everyone can see.*

Nossun Grade 8, with her story 'Invasion' (below) and the runner up is Maximillian Pickles for his story 'What's on the Other Side?' from Grade 7

Congratulations to all who participated! The IGCSE winners will be published next week.

*With a loud and clear voice he yells; "I saw it! It came from above; they are here to take over!" he repeats it several times to make sure everyone hears.*

*I lean in closer to my brother, "Are there people in that thing?" I ask confused. Now people are talking stressfully and low but then loud again.*

*He hesitates, and answers, "Seems like it." He puts his arms around my neck and squeezes my shoulder. "I guess we'll find out tomorrow Ontario, but for now, we need to go back to sleep." On that note he leads me into the tent.*

*I take off my jacket and shoes and fall back in bed, as does he. But I know that as soon as I fall asleep he will go out to find out more information, because that's how Bellamy is.*

# Tornado Article

## Catalina Hurtado Montesinos

In a lot of instances, disasters can be considered as anti-discriminatory. That is to say catastrophes can, unfortunately, affect anyone at any given time no matter what race, class or nationality you come from. With this, we as part of the ISH community (along with other neighboring schools) have decided to help the Cuban neighborhoods that were most affected by the recent tornado. Last Saturday morning such aid and solidarity was shown as heaps of donations came flooding in. To organize this, teachers and students from all grades were in charge of labelling them as either clothing for babies/teenagers/adult, baby utilities, food, cleaning products or simply miscellaneous. Once done, everything had to be checked and made sure that the bags in which the donations were placed would not be so heavy for future Cuban volunteers to carry.

In a matter of a few hours, bags that filled at least 3 cars were transported to la Fabrica de Arte Cubano to be left off to other local organizations that would make sure that every affected family would be supplied with one of our bags.

Overall, this experience was not only a display of “la fuerza habanera”, rather it was also an example of how communities can come together for a greater cause, no matter how small the contribution.



# Tornado Relief – distribution

Once sorted into categories, our ISH donations were loaded into cars and taken to the collection point at the Fábrica del Arte.

The organization and effort shown by the volunteers there as well as their desire to help those in need was tangible. Working with census information, each of the affected households was specifically targeted with names and ages of the household as well as any specific medical or housing needs. Bags of goods were then prepared, numbered, and loaded onto trucks.

I joined a convoy of about 15 private vehicles and we made our way to Calle C in Regla. In the back, I carried 3 students from the Facultad de Arquitectura CUJAE who had been mobilized to help with the effort.

Residents spoke about their ordeal: possessions flying out through the blown out windows or disappearing into the sky along with their roofs; and in the aftermath: 6 days and counting with no electricity or anywhere to cook or store food. On the horizon, the gigantic metal tanks from the refinery looked like crushed coke cans.

As dusk came and the weary students were finishing their final delivery, I was deeply moved to see one of our 300 Agua y Jabón bags that had started its journey from ISH to FAC that morning, disappearing off into the sunset full of supplies to a family in need.



## PTSA

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We had a great breakfast on Friday, February 1 with all the new parents. Thanks for coming. We had the chance to welcome them with the presence of Ms. Georgie, Mr. Berrin and Mr. Michael. Many thanks as well to the Room Parents who joined us.

If you have any questions or proposals to submit to us please don't hesitate to send an email to : [ptsa@ish.co.cu](mailto:ptsa@ish.co.cu). We will be pleased to help you.

A lot of you have already helped people affected by the tornado.

Don't forget this is the last week to make donations.

You have until Friday, February 15 4:00 pm. The donations can be left at Reception either Calle 18 or Calle 22, marked « tornado relief ».

All donations collected will be delivered on Saturday , February 16 to those in need.

Items being collected :

- non-perishable food
- bottled water (size: 5 liters)
- baby supplies (diapers, baby food, powdered milk, wipes)
- personal hygiene products (toothpaste, toothbrushes, feminine products, soap, shampoo)
- plastic food containers
- toilet paper
- clean-up supplies (e.g. mops, bucket, Clorox, detergent)
- shopping bags, medium sized boxes, and/or lightly used backpacks or duffle bags (to be used to deliver the items collected)
- spare can openers
- bedding & towels

The PTSA wish you a great holiday. Enjoy your time with your children!

## Iglesia Milagrosa

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ISH Students are organizing a 'Friendship Day' for the adults with Down Syndrome of Iglesia Milagrosa.

The group of adults and their teachers will come on Friday, March 1 to our Calle 22 campus.

Together, students and teachers will offer activities ranging from sports to face painting and board games.

Our goal is for the community to build a bond and learn from each other through fun activities. We invite any members of the community who wish to participate and help out to get in contact with Ms. Karen at [karen@ish.co.cu](mailto:karen@ish.co.cu).

The activities are starting at 4:00 pm and will finish at around 6:30 pm. Hope to see you there!