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NEWSLETTER

Dear ISO community,

Welcome to the 2010/2011 academic year, and to this joint issue of our newsletter, which combines the results of the end of the previous year with the beginning of this year.

The end of the 2009-2010 academic year was quite busy for everybody, students and staff alike, with the **Maturita**, university admissions for departing students, preparation for the annual **Orientation Fun Camp** for incoming students, as well as the demanding, general end-of-year tasks for everybody. In June, we celebrated the end of the year at **Skanska's** newly opened **Nordica Building**, an appropriate setting for our **Living Green Art Competition**, as Nordica is the Czech Republic's first certified, environmentally-friendly Green Building. A variety of events took place during the last two months of the year, and the beginning of this year has also seen its share of extra-curricular activities. We are intensely pursuing international cooperation and we're involved in a number of projects, with both the local and international communities.

To start with, we are continuing our long-time traditions of the **ISO Model United Nations (ISO-MUN)**, wonderfully developed and guided by **Ms. Gitana Chunyo**; the local **Cricket Tournament** for expatriates in our community, particularly (but not limited to!) those who hail from former and current Commonwealth countries, masterfully organized by **Mr. Philip Corkill**.

We have also been involved in a number of projects that we hope will continue long into the future. As you can read about later in this newsletter, we enjoyed our first student exchange programme outside of Europe at the beginning of June, building on our experience from the previous year with the **Fullbright Scholarship program**. In the 2008/2009 academic year, **Nikki Johnson** joined us from **Squalicum High School in Bellingham, Washington, USA**, near Seattle and our **Martin Vlček** spent a year at her high school, teaching Geography and Biology.

The **Comenius Project** continues to be a wonderful source of exchanges for us. Over the past few weeks, we have received four students from **France**, who are being hosted here by Czech families for the next several months, as well as groups of **students from Lithuania and Portugal**, as a part of a week-long exchange programme. Thank you to all who are encouraging us and participating in these projects. You have done a wonderful job, and we look forward to more such projects to widen the horizons not only of our students, but of the entire school community. We'll keep you up to date!

Have a great 2010-2011 academic year!



Jan Petrus

Secondary School Principal

ISOMUN TEAM REPRESENTS CUBAN INTERESTS AT BALMUN

After several weeks of preparation with our **ISOMUN Club** organizer, **Gitana Chunyo**, we finally took part in the **BALMUN (Baltic Model United Nations)** conference in Rostock, Germany. The conference brought us fruitful results and many new experiences. As the delegates of Cuba, we discussed environmental issues concerning climate change, and we quickly discovered that it is very hard for Cuba to get support for its ideas at UN conferences! This was clearly visible during the voting procedures, when most of the delegations agreed with western countries, rather than with the socialist way of thinking.

At the very beginning, it was quite difficult for us to use the special fancy words needed while speaking.

However, we got used to it very quickly and finally enjoyed using diplomatic language. Thanks to the conference, we realized that the UN is of great importance, because it connects nations from all over the world – and we felt a part of it.



We met many people from different countries, like the Netherlands, Germany, South Africa, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. On Saturday night, after the lobbying procedures and committee debates, there was a party in the glamorous Bacio Lounge club. The music was great, we felt relaxed and we got to know the other delegates much better. Then, on the final day of the conference, we all attended the General Assembly and debated, amended, and finally passed the resolution we had all worked on in our committees.

After this experience we are sure that we want to continue with the Model UN Club. We will start with MUN meetings again in October and you are all invited to come and join us. It would be even more fun to have more members in the club to debate with and to get ready for more conferences abroad.

See you next year!

Filip Dudys, Jiří Kuběna, Adéla Sobotková

YEAR 6 TAKE ON ENGLAND!



Year 6 in front of Buckingham Palace

It was a very exciting end-of-term for Year 6 students at the International Primary School, as they completed their primary schooling, and prepared to move on to the next stage of their educational journey!

To help our Year 6 graduates celebrate their final primary schooling achievements, we spent an amazing, extraordinary and unforgettable week together exploring England.

We set off bright and early Sunday morning (May 9th) aboard our coach. Somehow, our excitement made the 26-hour journey from Ostrava to Brighton, England, go quite quickly! We spent one full day exploring this beautiful seaside town, where we visited the Royal Pavilion and the Sea Life Centre, collected rocks on the beach, ate fish 'n' chips, and relaxed in the royal gardens.

The next day we visited the town of Winchester, which has the largest cathedral in England. It was spectacular to see! We also explored the old Roman town of Bath, where we could see the only natural hot spring in England. Too bad we couldn't make use of it, though! From here, we drove out to Stonehenge, where the students were very keen to admire the sheep and rabbits that were hanging around! After such a busy day, we were all looking forward to a good night's sleep.

When we awoke the next morning, it was time to say farewell to our beloved host families. For some, it was a time of sadness. For others, it meant we were one day closer to getting back to our own beds, showers, and Mum's cooking! We sped off to Windsor Castle, the home of the Royal family. After spending a couple of hours wandering through the magnificent rooms inside, and a couple of quick photos with some serious guards (they didn't smile!), we boarded our bus bound for the famous university town of Oxford. Here we explored the university gardens and visited Harry Potter's dining hall.

Our last full day of the trip was spent taking in the sights and sounds of London. After visiting the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, the Tower Bridge, Trafalgar Square, the National Portrait Gallery, Buckingham Palace (we were lucky enough to see the changing of the guard ceremony, too), Big Ben, Parliament House, the London Eye and the Greenwich Meridian, our feet were aching! But, it was worth it. We had only a short time for some last minute souvenir shopping before boarding our bus back to Ostrava.

In the end, it was clear that a fantastic week was had by all. Students were immersed in another culture, allowing them to practise their skills in English and form close friendships with each other. It will certainly be a week students and teachers look back on for years to come...

Craig Newton
Year 6 Teacher

INDOOR CRICKET TOURNAMENT



Subhan in action – nice square cut

On April 25th (Anzac Day for Australians and New Zealanders), the **3rd Indoor Cricket Tournament** was held in the Sports Hall of the Free Time Centre. This year six teams competed in what is developing into a merry tradition. There were two teams from India this year as well as Team USA, the UK Barbarians, the Anzacs and the Czech Senior Boy Bruisers. The Czech Boys surprised everyone with their courageous and hard-fought victory over the UK team to advance to the finals. Unfortunately, not every team could advance and Team USA also had to bow out graciously after showing

loads of potential. In the finals, the Czech Boys met their match and were knocked out by the first Indian team who showed their cricketing pedigree. In the other semi, the Anzacs emerged victorious over India A.

In the Grand Finale, India 1 and the Anzacs fought a mighty battle. There can be only one winner, and this year the luck shone on the Anzacs. It was a lot of fun for all the spectators and players and the Primary kids had fun in their demonstration match. A big thank you goes out to the providers of the delicious Indian food. With the money raised from the tournament, we were able to buy directly from England, 14 original "Readers" indoor cricket balls for the ISO cricket kit. (Phil won't need to tape old tennis balls together anymore and let's hope they all don't get lost in the rafters©)



Mr Reeves, Mr Vann and Mr Helebrant with the new balls

π [PI] DAY ON ISO

On Thursday the **27th of May**, **grade 11A & B** had a great mathematical competition during periods 3&4 (so luckily they did not have to have normal lessons). The goal of this particular game was pretty easy – to remember as many decimal digits of the crazy and never-repeating number π as they could.

The only condition was that students had to learn a minimum of 20 digits. Luckily in grade 11A&B there are very intelligent and mathematically-talented people, so everybody scored far better than only 20 digits. In order to memorize as many numbers as they could, students tried different techniques to learn “ π ”. Some students learned it like a poem, others just used brute memorisation.



Unfortunately, most of the students who participated were from grade 11A, because the majority of grade 11B was on an exchange in the USA that day. And despite this, no one from 11A won.

The winner was 11B's **Lenka Čecháková**, who had a most incredible score – 100 digits!

COMENIUS IN PORTUGAL



At the end of April a group of **4 students** from **grade 11** and **2 teachers – Ms. Blahetová** and **Mr. Helebrant**, participating in the Comenius Youth for Europe Programme, headed straight for one destination – Portugal. We were to spend 5 days in a tiny village, **Aguiar da Beira**, hidden among the high peaks of Portugal's mountains, where our partner school is located, and **2 days in** the tourist destination and amazing city of **Porto**.

For us students, it was as though we had died and gone to heaven – a cloudless sky, hot weather, sun, friendly people and the Portuguese way of life: “mañana”. Frankly, we had the time of our lives. Each of us lived at one Portuguese student's house – enjoying their culture, cuisine, mentality and, of course, family. We met every single morning at the school yard, and then followed a certain schedule for each day.

We saw Portuguese classes which do not resemble ours, at all. Some of us made really good friends there. Being in a completely dissimilar world gave us a contrast to what we had back home. No one could resist falling in love with the place, and the way people live their lives.

According to the plan the Portuguese teacher had prepared for us, we visited vineyards that are famous for that region and some of us had an opportunity to taste some delicious Porto wine. Sightseeing in some medieval villages, including castles, was not our cup of tea, though we enjoyed as much as we could. We went to see a nearby spa for curing various skin diseases, but for some, it could have been the curing of their nervous system and with the beautiful landscape and nature surrounding us, everyone had to feel reborn. Finally, we visited historical town Viseu, where we even tried ice skating in one of the biggest commercial centres on the Iberian Peninsula.

After 5 days spent in this incredible place called Aguiar da Beira, we moved to Porto, which is the second biggest city in Portugal, and the total opposite of Aguiar da Beira. A big, hectic and busy tourist destination, it was also a paradise for us.

We were supposed to go to a football match, FC Porto vs. FC Benfica, but, unluckily we did not manage to get tickets, so at least we went to see their gigantic football stadium. Then we went off to discover other beauties of this amazing city and the seaside.

This supercalifragilisticexpialidocious place amazed us all so much, that even teachers did not want to go back to the Czech Republic at all. With a clear mind, we can say that this short week in paradise was one of the most significant experiences in our lives. We wish that we could have stayed there longer...

Patrycja Szusciková, Kristian Csepсар 11A

ECONFERENCE



On Friday, the **28th of May**, our students from II.ISA, **Dominika Davidová** and **Natalie Kubenková**, participated in an Econference. The event took place in Gymnasium Olgy Havlove in Poruba. Students from several schools presented various ecological topics. Dominika and Natalka had a very nice, creative, and bilingual presentation about the forests. Even though they didn't make it to the first three places, they represented our school very well and were given a “special prize”. Congratulations girls!

Martin Vlček

SCHOOL TRIP TO WASHINGTON STATE



Getting ready for take-off. Everyone still had their luggage!

On May 21, 2010, a group of students left Ostrava by train, headed for Prague, which was the first destination on a trip that would take them to the state of Washington, in the American Northwest. Not all of the students were on the train, but those that were, headed for Charles University, in Prague, where they stayed in the dormitories. They met the rest of the group at the Prague airport on Saturday, May 26, where they boarded a plane that would take them to the United States, via Amsterdam. With one stop in Minneapolis, the final destination for the students was Seattle. The total flying time was around fourteen hours. Mrs. Johnson was at the airport to meet the group. Once there, the group was divided in half, and they were split between two cars. One car was chauffeured by **Mr. Petrus**, and the other, by **Ms. Mazurová**. The car trunks were not very full in the beginning, because eight of the students temporarily lost their luggage, which, fortunately, arrived the next day at their destination.

The cars headed to **Bellingham, Washington**, which was a two-and-a-half hour trip, and the destination was the **Squalicum School**, in front of which were waiting the host families for everyone. It was already near midnight, so, after an exhausting journey, everyone simply went to their various houses and went to bed. Bellingham, as it turns out, is a city in the northwest corner of Washington state, with a population of 70,000 people, including around 20,000 students. The city is attractive and virtually unpolluted, and has been recognized in the U.S. as one of the most livable places in the country. The weather is pleasant, and there are many activities offered there, including beach sports, kayaking, fishing, soccer, cycling, and lots of other things to do. Its location near Canada places it close to Vancouver, and Seattle is also a close destination. There are many special activities, such as the Ski-to-Sea race, and mixing seven different sports, forms a 90-mile race from the top of Mt. Baker, and ends at Bellingham Bay. Accompanying it are special events, such as a historical hometown parade. Its large college community adds to the excitement of living there. The city is surrounded by natural beauty, and is closely located to the **Cascade Mountain National Park**.

The first day in Bellingham saw the group going to the Squalicum School with their host brothers and sisters. The name, Squalicum, originates with local Native American tribes. It is a rather large school, with around 1,500 students. Each grade has about the same number of students as there are in our entire secondary school. We found that many students either drive or go by school bus to school each day. Lessons are 80 minutes long, with school starting at 7:45 AM and ending at 2:15 PM. Lunches are served in the school cafeteria, or else the students bring their own. The biggest differences are in the way of teaching in the classroom, where the lessons are more interesting, and the students never ask why or why not. What was to like in the school was that the subject you want to learn changes all the time, from week-to-week. Students sit at desks that are for only one person, and teachers are friendlier to students, so this helps you to have more trust in them.

We also visited a community college in Bellingham. Having visited some universities, this was the first chance for us to see a college. We had trouble finding the place, but when we got there, we found a convenient place to park, which was great because we were too tired to face a long walk. We met our guides in an official building, one a man, and the other a woman, who looked like she was a student, but actually was not. The use of guides seems to be a good way of introducing school to potential students. We listened to a presentation where the speaker talked about the fact that they had a lot of international students from all around the world. The community college seems like a good place for international students to be able to practice learning in English for a couple of years, and becoming more proficient before transferring to a college or university. The college also organizes many activities for the students, such as ski trips. One advantage of starting at a community college is that it is cheaper, around \$8000 per year. It was also a friendly environment, with people smiling at us, which was totally different than in the Czech Republic. This is a good reason for looking to go to school somewhere abroad.

All participating students



Washington State has a lot of beautiful Natural attractions



The Pacific Science Centre was an inspiring location for future university students.

The group visited **the University of Puget Sound, in Tacoma, Washington**, which was established in 1888. It is about two hours from **Bellingham**. There are around 3,000 students there, with about 50 courses of study. The students can also focus on electives such as music, physical education and sports, languages, or other areas of special interest. A student can choose to go to the music building to play the piano, or find instruments in other facilities, such as dormitories, where there are excellent facilities for studying or for free-time activities. Students can also join sports activities, or participate in language studies at special language halls, where students can go to practice speaking with others in that language. The tuition here is set around \$30,000, at least, plus one can figure on an additional \$10,000 with fees, books, dormitories and residences, and other expenses. There is financial aid available, and about 50 percent of the students hold scholarships. Others work on campus or in the area to support their college expenses.

The University of Washington in Seattle was founded in 1961, and has more than 40,000 students studying there, in the over 500 buildings and 20 million square feet of space. There are sixteen separate departments and offices. Their campus is on the waterfront, with excellent views of the Cascade Range, in the east, and the Olympic Mountains, farther west. There is an outstanding view of Mount Rainier, in the southwest, and the university has a mall with a springtime spectacular blooming of cherry trees planted all along it. The location makes it a fine school choice.

Besides visiting colleges, we also got to see the **Pacific Science Center** and the **Space Needle**. These were entertaining, but also educational; however, we found that the Science Center was aimed at a young age group. The Center is a popular destination for Washington schools, and we noticed five different schools attending on the day we were there. Since we only had two or so hours to spend there, we didn't get to see all the experiments. This would take a full day, and then some. There were some interesting experiments that we managed to try out, such as the reaction test, to see how good one's reaction times and eyesight are. The Science Center also contains the Boeing Imax 3D cinema, featuring a 45-minute film on the Hubble telescope, narrated by Leonardo DiCaprio. We learned how difficult it was to get it operational when it was first in orbit. It was in need of repair in 2000, and after much opposition, it was finally repaired in 2003, because it is invaluable and irreplaceable. The Space Needle, built in 1962, is around 200 meters tall and 42 meters wide. We went up to see the view, which gives a 360-degree view of most of Seattle, and the surrounding countryside and water.

We got to visit **the North Cascades National Park**, which contains 648,000 acres, and includes glaciers, forests rivers, and much wildlife, such as bears, wolves, lynx, and moose. We hiked in the park and visited a dam, which was almost 200 meters high. The area seemed to be void of human interference, and we all enjoyed the visit.

Everyone wants to thank **Mr. Petrus, Ms. Mazurová, and Ms. Johnson** for organizing the trip, which was an extremely good experience for all of us, and we all can say that we enjoyed the trip very much.

2010 MATURITA AT ISO

What important thing happened at our school in May? The maturita exam, of course! It is the thing which forces students to study “like crazy”, and means the official ending of their secondary studies. They have matured both in the terms of their age and understanding. Now, they are ready to begin the next phase of their educational career.

Well, what are the highlights of the maturita week? Here we go. The maturita exam took place **from the 17th to the 21st of May. Thirty-two students, twenty-two teachers**, seventeen hours of examining, one hundred and thirty-two grades, three hundreds and sixteen maturita questions, one classroom, eight desks, thirteen chairs, ten liters of coffee, two hundred and one delicious cakes and toasts, and floods encompassed the week. It was really nice to listen to well-prepared students and their knowledge, opinions and plans. Well done!

Finally, we all met on the stage of **Středisko volného času, on Friday, the 21st** and we officially passed the graduation ceremonies out. Students were given their report cards, maturita certificates and beautiful photos from the Graduation Ball. Oh, I forgot about the big and tasty cake, enjoyed by all. Good luck graduates. And thank you for the pig! I have already tasted it.

Ivo Helebrant, Maturita Coordinator



COMENIUS IN ROMANIA



“Multumesc,” (Thank you) was probably the first word that we, as a small group of **4 ISO students**, accompanied by two teachers - **Ms. Blahetová** and **Mr. Svoboda**, learned during our exchange to Romania under the framework of the Comenius Program, which is aimed at bringing students and teachers from different European countries together.

This **six-day trip** started off with a visit to the Romanian capital, **Bucharest**. Despite our hopes for sunny weather, we got heavily poured on as we fought our way through the pools of water in search of a place to eat. But even after such a downpour, we kept our happy-to-be-here attitude, excited for the experiences ahead. Our appetites were then appeased as we entered a traditional Romanian restaurant where we tasted true national delicacies. The next morning, we set out on a six-hour journey by train en route to **Piatra Neamt**, our final destination. On the train, we met up with other Comenius participants, three teachers from Lithuania, and killed time by the occasional singing of national songs. Upon our arrival in Piatra in the late evening, we were warmly greeted by a group of Romanian students holding a sign “BIENVENUE,” (welcome), and the real Romanian experience was about to begin.

On the evening of the following day, we had an international banquet where all of the participating countries made a presentation and some of them shared a piece of their culture; the Romanians triumphed with traditional dance performances and we took a guitar and a clarinet and performed two songs

of Jaromír Nohavica. Then, a common table offered a *mélange* of four national cuisines (French, Czech, Romanian and Portuguese), and hence, plenty of culinary specialties.

The hospitality of the locals was endless; we stayed at a nice hotel, which was part of the school, and saw that they desperately wanted to share with us as much of their culture as possible. Our agenda was tight and perfectly planned and among our other experiences were visiting the high school, attending a recital of one of the best young Romanian pianists, eating a grilled lamb for lunch, learning about the ascetic life of nuns on the grounds of an orthodox convent, and visiting a dam and a large mountain pass.

Before we set back out to our homeland, we were granted a visit to the Ceausescu Palace, deemed to be the second largest building in the world after the Pentagon, and a true emblem of Romanian patrimony. Although we saw only three percent of the edifice, we were astonished by its uniqueness and pomposity. However, we also witnessed some of the downsides of Romania. The mere sight of ubiquitous vagrants and abandoned dogs in the streets was a signal that Romania is truly grappling with poverty. The times are long gone when our parents or grand-parents used to visit Romania to buy goods, the prices of which were trifling. Considering its standard of living, the current prices are outrageous, and no wonder that a country with a GDP half of that of the Czech Republic is suffering economic hardship, especially when the salaries of its civil servants are to be cut by a quarter.

Overall, I am sure we all left Romania full of unforgettable experiences and memories. Reflecting upon the wonderful experiences contrasting starkly with the misery of many Romanians, I personally reaffirmed myself of one important conclusion; we should constantly remind ourselves of how fortunate we are, as students, to be able to travel and we should value and embrace the opportunities that lie ahead of us. Therefore, we look forward to hosting Comenius students next year and welcoming them in our country. Multumesc and Merci Comenius and ISO!!!

Štěpán Ochodek

Graduate 2010

Currently studying at Bates College, U.S.A.

FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT – SENIOR HIGH BOYS TEAM



On Wednesday the 29th of September, the Senior High Boys Team participated in a football tournament for every “gymnasium” in Ostrava. As there are several football players in our school, we decided to join the other four teams and win some matches.

The tournament took place at Gymnasium Olgy Havlové in Poruba and was played on a small outdoor football pitch. There were four players and a goalie on each side. Therefore, the game was quick, full of tackling, passing, and shooting, and many goals were scored.

Our international team – **Christos Chalkias, Václav Chromečka, Thomas Dapkus, Sebastian Sikora, Lukáš Dejčík, Ondřej Mynář and the goalie Jiří Vladař** – played terrific matches, and got better and better as they went along, performing their best and showing that they are real football players. Although the weather was pretty bad (cold and rainy), they controlled the ball and matches and, eventually, won the title! **Our school's first sports title ever!**

Well, what were the matches like then? We won the first match 2:1 [Biskupské Gymnasium Pavla Tigrida], it was a tough one. Our scores got better and better and matches were a pleasure to watch. We won the next three matches, against Gymnasium Olgy Havlové (4:0), Gymnasium Matiční (5:0) and Gymnasium Pavla Tigrida (5:2). That means we had four victories and the title. Amazing!

Thank you very much, boys, and hopefully in May 2011 we'll play as well as now, when a football tournament among all the winning schools from other groups in Ostrava (technical schools and vocational schools) will be held.

Ivo Helebrant, coach

CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – MEETING WITH FOREIGN STUDENTS

On the 28th of April, ISO Executive Director Brett Gray led six of us to the stage of Dům Kultury Akord for an hour-long session with students from other Ostrava schools. As part of a film festival and conference on Sustainable Development, we had the chance to talk about how difficult is it to be a foreigner in a country, meeting new people, accepting new cultures, and so forth. The audience certainly had a lot of interesting questions for the foreign students, and seemed very eager to know certain details. It was a very nice experience, and the students of ISO are truly looking forward to such events taking place in the near future.

Daniel Aranha, grade 11B



Photo by Sgt. Greg Steele

NATO PILOTS VISIT 1ST ISO

On Friday, September 17th, the entire crew of the 93rd bomb squadron from Louisiana, USA, came to visit our school and talk about the work that they do for NATO around the world. In two 40-minute sessions, students from the Primary and Secondary schools had the chance to ask the **B-52 bomber crew members** absolutely everything about how their planes work, the training process for pilots, and even their personal thoughts and feelings about their jobs, which can involve life and death situations. Commander Joseph "Doc" Jones, in particular, spoke eloquently about how exciting it is to apply scientific knowledge gained from high-school in dealing with situations in the air. "When you are trying to land a big metal bird in a cross wind, there is a lot of maths and physics you need to understand to do the job right", Mr. Jones said, as he encouraged the students to strive to apply what they study to real-life situations.