



Message from High School Principal



Mr. David Miller

Parents, Students, Colleagues, and Other Friends of Ruamrudee,

As we approach the holiday season it's sometimes a good idea to reflect a bit on where we have come from as a HS section in recent years, as well as to give sense of where we are going in the near term. Here are a few examples (and exemplars). I apologize in advance for the length. As Mark Twain said, "...I didn't have time to make it shorter."

● I'm thinking of our Robotics attempts with Philip Cutlan leading the way, helped on by Chuan Lee through to the recent success in the Singapore competition. Next we're hoping, with the help of our colleagues at AIT to perhaps get involved with a national level initiative.

● I'm thinking of our section's successes in Science with the Data Logging equipment and the corresponding enrichment of our students' experimental opportunities (and of course, the recent renovation of our 10 science laboratories). We are now just beginning to enhance our Environmental Science and Geography courses (thanks to Barbara Bilgre) with GPS equipment and hope to

move into the area of GIS (Global Information Systems) software. Again, AIT has promised to help us here as they have a state-of-art program in GIS.

● Most of you already know of our successes in Mathematics – world champions in the Atlantic-Pacific Competition last year, for instance. Ed Kemp runs a cohesive department of exceptional teachers. Mr. Kemp recently was invited by the International Baccalaureate (IB) organization to help write the new IB Mathematics syllabus. This is quite an honor for us.

● The Fathers, together with the HS faculty, have founded one of the leading Southeast Asia programs with laptop computers and associated digital projectors. Teachers and students now have "just in time" computer and internet access, no longer having to wait in line for a computer lab spot.

● I must also mention the Visual and Performing Arts. Adam Rogers started our Ceramics program, which has become quite popular with our students. One of our students, Sheana Yu, was awarded first prize in the

Young Artist of Thailand contest resulting in a trip to London to present her work along with a 100,000 baht cash prize. Michelle Anderson was her mentor (and the other five semi-finalists). In fact, the entire Visual Arts program is overflowing with student requests.

● We have added to the MS and HS staff two world-class drama teachers – Susan McQuaker-Kajiwara and Darren Scully. Mr. Scully is in a top leadership position with the International School Theater Arts group (ISTA), and with his supervision we intend to host a large ISTA festival next year. You know, of course, about the amazing Wizard of Oz production, directed by Ms. McQuaker-Kajiwara.

● The Stage and Wind Ensemble and the Jeremiah choral group remain at a very high standard, due largely to the efforts of Hyesun Chung and Jose Librodo. With instrumental music we now hope to bring in some new opportunities, beginning next semester, for our students with string instruments, as well as further developing our relatively new Jazz Ensemble, directed by Nikolas Trebesh and Robert Boer at the MS,

but represented by both MS and HS students. Certainly, the remodel of Godbout Hall has added to our range of first class facilities for performing arts and sports, especially.

● Speaking of sports, David Bass continues to manage the seemingly impossible – finding facilities and excellent coaches for our huge af-



ter-school sports program. One recent count showed 320+ RIS students, ES to HS, involved in sports. We are now approaching some 60 teams participating during our three sports seasons in both the Bangkok leagues (BISAC) and regionally throughout South East Asia (SEASAC).

● As you can see even this partial list is growing too large for a short article. So, as I approach a closing, I want to draw your attention to languages. We offer six, with English, of course, being our language of instruction. I encourage you to check out IB results on the school website <http://www1.rism.ac.th/2005/hs.asp> (4th and 5th links down) for English and other subjects. With Clynt Whitaker's leadership, our students continue to score above the world averages, even while in competition with the high percentage of native English speakers. Our Theory of Knowledge (TOK) scores were considerably higher than world averages (directed by Michael Wilson), like virtually all of our IB (and AP) subjects.

● Our Japanese and Mandarin enrollments continue to grow, even when a second (or third) language is not required for graduation. We are now beginning to see students in their fourth or fifth year of language study. I can attribute a good part of this to the added language emphasis at the MS and also to our wonderful modern language and Thai teachers at HS. They all are among the best in the profession.

In fact, and I've said this before at other times and in other venues (and without exaggeration), the HS teachers at Ruamrudee International School are exceptional. In the notes above,

I wasn't able to mention everyone, nor all of our initiatives (Naviance counseling software, for example). As Dr. Seuss says in one of his books, "That's not all." Values, Religion, Physical Education, Social Studies, Special Needs, Clubs, Community Service, Technology (watch for an on-line, web-based Information Technology class offering this summer) among others, are also groups on the move with new ideas to do better and add value for our students.

Our greatest challenge now at the administrative level is to maintain this

foundation of excellence, improving a little each year. To do this we will need to maintain our presence in the international community, to include our student and teacher recruiting efforts. To continue, and perhaps to expand, these endeavors will be crucial, I imagine, to maintaining our current well-earned school reputation, while continuing to provide our students' world-class opportunities for learning and personal growth. We must not allow ourselves to become complacent.

In conclusion, I want to give a genuine and hearty word of "Thanks!" to the persistent efforts and thoughtful creativity of our various teaching teams, and to the Fathers for the financial and visionary support that have allowed, even propelled, us to enter the truly international, world-class stage. To reiterate our school motto: "Ad Astra!"

