

RAWDAT EL-ZUHUR NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2017

It is hard to believe that another school year 2016/2017 has come to an end and both children and staff are eagerly awaiting the summer break. We want to seize this opportunity to extend to all our friends, and on behalf of the board, staff and children our gratitude and thanks for your continued support. We also wish you an enjoyable summer holidays, and hope to see you at Rawdat El-Zuhur during the coming school year.

Abla Nasir

President

Raeda Jasser

School Principal

We would like to share with you some of the activities that took place during the second semester including educational as well as recreational activities that promote and enhance both effective learning and voluntary humanitarian work.

However the visit in February of the founders of Embrace the children of Palestine, the foundation that was established to facilitate tax-exempt donations to the school was a special occasion. Samia Halaby, the president of the foundation and a longtime friend of



Rawdat El-Zuhur, introduced Lana Kurtz, the secretary-treasurer who was on her first trip to the country and to the school. She spent almost three days going around classes, and engaging with teachers and students to get acquainted with every aspect of the school, while her



camera kept busy taking a large variety of photos. It was such an enjoyable and fruitful visit, and a special experience for both the school and our friends which included business as well as socializing with everybody.

Under the slogan “I deserve life”

A collective initiative was launched on the 27th and 28th of February in coordination with the Mothersø Council, and involving all the stakeholders of Rawdat El-Zuhur. A special effort in fund-raising as



well as the proceeds of a bazaar held at the school enabled the mothers and the children to offer a donation to the Augusta Victoria Hospital towards educational material and electronic tools for the cancer children and those with kidney failure. A group of the school

children visited the hospital later on to deliver the funds and some gifts for the children.



Valentine's Day was a day of love and tolerance, celebrated under the slogan "With love and tolerance we will live up to our moral values". The day included several activities by the sixth and the fourth graders around the values of love and tolerance and their importance in their daily life and their relationships. The Kindergarten children also participated in this event, in their own way, by choosing colors to identify with those values.



18-25 March Healthy Food Week:

As we care for our children's health, the Healthy Food Week has become part of our yearly school calendar. Healthy meals were provided to the school children during that week and a nutritionist, Mariana Peter,



was invited to make a very interesting presentation about the importance of healthy food while identifying the kinds of food and sweets that should be avoided. Also, joining her in the presentation

was Dentist Kareem Abu Libdeh who is an alumnus of

Rawdat El-Zuhur. He explained to the children how to take care of their teeth and



The Week was concluded with a popular market (souk shaqsi) where healthy food and drinks were on sale.



Barbecue Trip:

Accompanied by the teachers and the administrative staff, the sixth graders went on a trip on the 16th of March to Jericho the City of the Moon. They enjoyed a barbecue lunch together

away from the school environment, which made them all feel as one family in that pleasant atmosphere.



Beginning of Spring and Mothers' Day:



Mother's Day, celebrated in the Arab World on March the 21st is always connected with Spring. And Spring means flowers.

So the flowers of Rawdat El-Zuhur (Garden of Flowers) had a great celebration for their mothers on that special occasion. The school organized a

trip to Jericho for both the mothers and the children.



Trip:

Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008) is a renowned Palestinian poet. To commemorate his memory; the fourth, fifth and sixth graders paid a visit to the Mahmoud Darwish museum in Ramallah on the 27th of March. The visit aimed at getting introduced to his literary works, and to learn about the different stages of his life.



The children had the opportunity to have a look at some of the poet's personal belongings. After the visit, they went to Birzeit, the University town, and home also of the Circus school of Palestine where the children participated in several sports activities under the supervision of the circus trainers. Their last stop was at Al-Nayzak, the Science and Technology House in the Old City of Birzeit, where they participated in different scientific activities relevant to their school curriculum.



The whole day was a unique educational experience along with a lot of fun and amusement.



This year the Reading Week was a joint project with other educational and cultural institutions: Al-Saraya Centre for Community



Services, Tamer Institute for Community Education, and Dar El-Tifl Al- Arabi School. During that week, many different activities were held to encourage reading and help integrate it into the students' activities so as to become part of their routine and life style. The activities included:

A Reading Chain with more than 150 children at the garden of Dar El-Tifel El-Arabi School

A Field visit by the sixth graders to AL-Saraya Centre where they interacted with 4th grade students of Al-Nahda school (in the Old City) by reading them stories at the library of the Centre



A visit by the Children's Literature program team of Al-Saraya centre to Rawdat El-Zuhur

where they conducted several activities such as: story-telling, as well as a presentation on the popular Palestinian folk tales and narratives. Each



child was very happy to receive the Children's magazine published by the Centre, which has a unique character known as Nough

to the school with a presentation on the

The participation of the mothers in a discussion about folk stories, and about the importance of reading and how the home could encourage it as well

Teenagers Workshop, 27 April:

A workshop about Teenagers was the fifth to be organized for parents of the students by the Family Planning and Protection Society.

Dabkeh Competition:

The School Dabkeh Group won the second prize during the Dabkeh (folk dancing) competition organized by the Palestinian Ministry of Education for East Jerusalem schools.



taekwondo

Championship:

The school participated in the 30th Spring Taekwondo Championship for the East Jerusalem Schools. Hilmi Obeid (from class four, won first prize and received a gold medal, whereas, Ahmad Najdi and Khaled Zuheikah



from the 5th grade won the second prize. On May 15, ten students graduated after completing 23 training sessions in Taekwondo run at Rawdat El-Zuhur by the Arab Sports Centre. Along with their certificates, a number of



them earned the yellow belt while others earned the green belt.

The Kindergarten Zakat:

The children of the kindergarten paid a visit to the kindergarten of Dar El-Tifl Al- Arabi. The visit was a gesture for the purpose of building relationships and networking between the two schools. The founders of both schools, Hind El-Husseini and Elizabeth Nasir were very good friends. With the Holy Month of Ramadan coming up, the children of Rawdat El-Zuhur offered their hosts their savings box in which they have



... of the school year. This activity was part of the Zakat Project which El Tifl School conducts internally during Ramadan.

Educational Tools Exhibition:

This yearly exhibition was conducted at the school's hall in which all the educational works and products of the students and teachers done throughout the scholastic year were displayed. The event was a success as it included all the educational tools related to the school curriculum.



Street Circus:

On the 20th of May, The Street Circus, a band in East Jerusalem, performed at the school for all the children. It was a very enjoyable and recreational time prior to the final exams, and with a lot of interaction from the children.



Graduation Ceremony:

When the founder of Rawdat El-Zuhur (Garden of Flowers) choose the name (Garden of flowers), she really wanted each one of those children to feel like a special flower in that home. 18 flowers have been growing in the "Garden of Flowers"



for the last eight years. They have flourished and have been nurtured with loving care and a solid education. Today, these flowers have bloomed and will leave the garden to move to wild fields. We know

they will be able to cope, and want to wish them success and a prosperous and bright future in their academic and practical life.



During the ceremony, the children treated their parents and guests

with songs, folk dancing and beautiful poetry. The parent of one of the children Mr. Walid Qawasmeh spoke on behalf of the parents expressing his appreciation for the good education and special care for all the children. The scholarship in the name of the late Dr. Amin Khatib that was established in his memory in appreciation for his humanitarian and voluntary work was awarded to Hanan Quteineh.

osing, and in light of the beginning of the
the staff, students, friends, and families of
the children an enjoyable and refreshing summer break and we look
forward to seeing you next year in September.



School Guests:

It is always a pleasure for both the staff and children to welcome guests. The following guests were at school during the second term:

- 17 January, The Minnesota Conference Group, United Church of Christ, through the Global Ministries office in the USA.
- 21 February, Embrace the Children of Palestine founders, Samia Halaby, and Lana Kurtz. During her visit, Samia put up her art exhibit about the massacre of Kafr Qassem at the Birzeit University Museum.
- 21 March, Donald and Nahida Gordon, the VP of Embrace the Children of Palestine. During her visit, Nahida launched her book Palestine is Our Home: Voices of Loss, Courage and Steadfastness at the Educational Book shop in Jerusalem
- 29 March, Bassem Hishmeh, USA



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Canada

Donations:

Many thanks to all friends who continue to remember Rawdat El-Zuhur in these difficult times. The following list includes donations received from January to June 2017:

Individual Donations:

- Ms. Maha Sarraf
- Dr. Hala Hallac towards the scholarship fund in the name of the late Dr. Amin Al-Khatib
- Ms. Susanne S. Nasir
- Minnesota Conference Group UCC
- Mr. M E Gibbs
- Ms. Jean Hughes
- Ms. Samia Khoury
- Ms. Haifa Baramki
- Mr. Basem and Mrs. Muna Hishmeh
- Mr. Peter Larson

List of Organizations:

- Global Ministries, Middle East Office
- Embrace the Middle East
- Basem & Muna Hishmeh Foundation
- Mennonite Central Committee
- PALCRAFTAID



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- The New York Community Trust Isabelle Bacon Fund
- Maxine E. Bruhns

We wish to take this opportunity to remind all our friends in the US that they can make their tax exempt gifts through:

Embrace The Children of Palestine, Inc.

3410 Wisteria Court

Birmingham, AL 35216

In the United Kingdom, friends who are eligible to have added Gift Aid tax onto the donation to a charity can do so through Palcrafts:

Carol Morton

Director of Development

Palcrafts/Hadeel, 123 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4JN

www.hadeel.org; 01312251922

Palcrafts charity No. SC 033983

Hadeel is an importing and trading member of the British Association for Fair Trade Shops and Suppliers.

And if you are shopping this summer through Amazon we would like to remind you that Embrace the Children of Palestine, the U.S. non-profit foundation that supports Rawdat El- Zuhur, is now part of Amazon's AmazonSmile program. This program donates 0.05 percent of the cost of all purchases to the customer's charity of choice, at no extra cost. If you shop at www.smile.amazon.com and select Embrace the Children of Palestine, Inc., you are helping support Rawdat El -Zuhur.



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Thanks to all who sent contributions to Rawdat El-Zuhur for this period.
Kindly be reminded that we receive donations all through the year.

Please check our website regularly for future updates www.rawdat.org.
Also, check our Facebook page for more school activities and news.



Rawdat El-zuhur School