

# The Bear Essentials

## Principal's Monthly Bulletin

April 2002

- March and April are the months when families who will relocate to Greece during the summer months visit Athens to find homes and schools. Much of my day is spent interviewing prospective students and explaining our PYP philosophy and curriculum. We have already secured a number of new enrolments for next year and I am confident we will continue to do so as our reputation for providing a safe and stimulating learning environment continues to grow. Should you know any families who may be interested to know more about our school, please encourage them to attend the **TASIS Open Evening on April 10<sup>th</sup> at the High School campus** when all our programmes will be presented. The Primary Resource Team, Ms Iatropoulou and Ms Polideras, and the PYP Team leaders, Mrs Demopoulos, Mrs Psallidas, Mrs Tagas will all be available that evening to describe our curriculum and answer questions. This is also an opportunity for parents of grade 5 students to learn more about the Middle School program.
- **You are most welcome to come in and view the IB Art student Exhibition on display in the Dining Rom until April 7<sup>th</sup>. The IB examiner will visit on April 8<sup>th</sup> to grade the work of the first TASIS IB Art students. The range of topics, work and media is impressive – don't miss this chance to see real art work by talented TASIS students!**
- Our computers in the Library are now on line! Mrs Psallidas has entered the favorite Internet reference sites and a copy of this list of sites is available from Ms Vicky so that you can encourage further research at home with your child.
- We say goodbye to a second grader, Lucas Ivanovic, and his family who are returning to Belgrade this week. Good luck, Luca!

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**Greek notes:** TASIS was well represented in the Kifissia Parade on March 25<sup>th</sup> when our Primary Students did a fine job. Thank you to Ms Stephanie Vavoulas and the positive response we received from many of our families. Greek classes resumed on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April, under the watchful eye of Ms Sophia Iakomidou, whom many of you may know from the TASIS summer school program. She will be in close contact with Ms Chilakou regarding lesson plans for Native Greeks and students taking Host Language and Culture. Thank you for your patience in this matter and for submitting names of possible candidates.

### Diary Dates for April

- **March 4<sup>th</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup>: second grade field trips**, to the new Athens Airport and to the Airport Museum in Varimbombi as part of unit on Airport systems.
- Tag Day and IB ART Show** at the Auberge
- **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April** at 9.15 a.m.: Parent Coffee Morning. Ms Marina Iatropoulou and Ms Dina Polider of the Primary Resource Center will present an informative and practical seminar on ADD and ADHD.
  - Austrian Airlines will **present "The Joy of Flying"** to 2<sup>nd</sup> graders. You are most welcome to attend this presentation in the Multi Purpose area.

- **Wednesday April 10<sup>th</sup>: TASIS Open Evening at main campus. Please return your sign up slips by Wednesday.**
- **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April at 5.30 p.m.: Lecture by Mrs Thanopoulou, Director of TASIS Center for Counselling and Career Services on "Teasing and Bullying in Children and Adult Lives." Full details on back page of this newsletter.**
- **Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> March: Carnival Day:** students in all grades can wear costumes – but no guns or violent toys, please.
- **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March: no classes for Clean Monday**
- **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March: Karagiozis Puppet Show. Details to follow**
- **Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March: Parent/teacher conferences.** No classes for students. Letters with your appointment times will be sent home this week.
- **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9.30 a.m.: short program for 25<sup>th</sup> March celebration**
- **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March: no classes. Greek National Day**
- **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April: Last day of classes , Spring Vacation begins at 3.30 pm. Classes begin Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May.**

**Reminder: Spring Vacation – school closes on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April and re-opens on Monday May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2002.**

**End of year is June 22<sup>nd</sup> when summer vacation begins.  
Summer School runs July 1<sup>st</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>.**

### **News from the Classrooms . . .**

**ESOL:** 'In/out, over/under, on/off, deep/shallow, full/empty' are just a few of the words PreK & Kgn have been busy exploring through games, songs & activities in ESOL this month. Group grade 1-2 beginners had been working on the unit 'How old are you?' in their SMILE books, finding out each other's **age** and expressing it in English. Now they are working on the structure of the question '**Is it...?**' through communicative games. In group grade 1-2 intermediate, children have been learning about **rooms** of **houses/flats** or **apartments** while drawing and describing theirs.

Grade 3 beginners group is just wrapping up a unit on 'Senses', after **hearing** sounds around the school, **tasting** sweet, salty, sour & bitter things, **touching** hard & soft things, matching spices using the sense of **smell**, and using **sight** to look in a mirror and draw the image. Grade 3 and 4 intermediate have been learning what **adverbs** and **imperative verbs** are, while scavenging for them through an instructions leaflet about a toy. They're now ready to write their own. Grade 5 have written some wonderful spooky stories using **metaphors**, **similes** and **adverbs** and have begun to study **prefixes** and **suffixes**. It's been a very busy and productive time!

**N.**

**Salaounis**

**P.E.**

Spring is here! The good weather we've had this month has made our PE lessons more enjoyable. It was mostly parachute activities and tag games for PreK, Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Both activities help promote basic fitness in which children have made great progress. Next trimester we will continue with basic fitness, through low organized games and also work on target aiming and body balance.

In 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, relays and ball activities were our topics for this month. We used a variety of ball games, with 10 passes and guards being our favorite. For next month we will start working on Track and Field activities and also with soccer exercises.

For grades 4 and 5, it was all about Track and Field and Handball. In Track we learned about sprint races and starting positions and also about throwing events. I must say they did a very good job at both. We will continue with other Track events to the end of the school year. We are also planning to take grade 4 and 5 students on a field trip to a real stadium and practice what we've learned so far. Children also enjoyed learning about the game of handball. It was very nice to see them enjoy playing a sport other than soccer.

As for our after school activities, softball and games were a big hit this trimester. We will send you details and information about the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester activities soon.

**I would also like to congratulate all the children participating in the parade on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. They worked very hard and I am very proud of them. Well done, TAVIS PRIMARY SCHOOL!** Ms. Stephanie

**Art:** After finishing their 'home made' instruments, Pre Kindergarteners started working on their Senses board. Woolly lamb, prickly porcupine, slippery snail and all the other members of the Senses gang have made their way in the Pre-K room and would be more than happy to meet you too! Kindergarteners are now on their 'Waste Watchers' unit, which means it is time of our recycled Art projects. Our Nature Friendly robots have already come to life, along with our Talking Earth puppets. Laila's Recycling robot and Erwan's Vacuuming robot – and many others - will be very busy making our planet a better way to live. We are all very grateful to you for helping us fill up our recycling bins in the Art room. THANK YOU!

In Grade 1 we have just finished working on our Fairy tale dioramas which are now on display by the wooden staircase. Second graders have had a lot of artwork to take home this month after completing their Sculpture unit. Their mobile airplanes are now hanging in their room and as we go into their Rainforest unit a lot of Rainforest animals will be making their appearance in the school. In Grade 3 we worked on still life sketching and painting revolving around the carnival theme. We have just begun gathering information about a number of artists so please send any art books you may have at home. We promise to take very good care of them.

Grade 4 African masks are on display outside the Art room. We are presently learning about famous artists and looking more closely at their styles and techniques.

Last but not least 5<sup>th</sup> graders worked on spatula paintings followed by their plastered masks and pretty soon will begin their art scrap-books which they will take to the Middle School, so their growth as artists can be assessed and reflected upon.

**Mata Bardis**

**Music:** Jingles, orchestras, film music, raps, structure, conducting, composing and singing are just some of the things that we have covered in the last two months. All grades have been busy exploring many different aspects of music.

On Sunday March 9<sup>th</sup> twenty-seven parents and children embarked on a trip to the magnificent Megaron. There we saw a fantastic concert performed by the brass and percussion sections of the Athens State Orchestra who played many different types of music. We also learnt how brass instruments work. It was a wonderful experience for everyone, including me, as I had never been there before! Thank you to everyone who came along and made the whole trip worthwhile. We will definitely do it again in the near future, as soon as there is something appropriate in the program.

Now for some really exciting news... Two weeks ago Mrs. Vlaovic came in to second grade as a guest speaker to answer some questions about songwriting. She is very famous in Croatia and has written many popular songs. She told us that one of her songs was in a competition the following Sunday, if it won then it would represent Croatia in the Eurovision Song contest . . . and guess what, it did win! We were lucky enough to have a sneak preview of the song and we think it's brilliant. So, "Good Luck," Mrs. Vlaovic!

#### **Miss Zoë**

**Library:** Springtime has finally sprung and the **Kindergarteners** have written a collaborative poem about it to complement the Leo Lionni trees they made earlier in the year. Here is a sample verse:

Beautiful butterflies  
staying outside in the fresh air  
flying around yellow flowers,  
So lovely,  
So pretty.....  
Springtime.

You'll need to stop by the library to view the full version!

**First Graders** were excited to write about their Carnival costumes, a day when they "changed their feathers" just like the all-white South American rainforest birds before they were given bright colors by a water snake, according to a legend I read to them.

**Second through Fourth Graders** have been working with call numbers, using the Winnebago Spectrum5 program to find and fill in details on a chart with a minimum of information given. Alphabetical order came in to play yet again and the students alphabetized their own personal call numbers in addition to those they identified on the computer. This introduction, maintenance and mastery of call numbers, depending on grade level, is essential for finding books on the shelves!

**Fifth Graders** researched the non-fiction call numbers for a variety of sports to accompany magazine pictures of the same on a colorful, informative poster. They have also been the first to use the Internet, recently installed in the Library, to find information pertinent to their biographies of famous immigrants who passed through Ellis Island- a direct link with their current unit of inquiry. I would like to remind you that Author Study Projects should be well underway now and to request that you keep your students on track for final presentations in mid-April, exact dates to be announced. Library journals need to be handed in each and every Monday to show steady and significant progress.

All grades will be trying to guess What's in the Box? - a pretty pink affair with mysterious, magical contents- and their ideas will be recorded as poetry. The Intermediate Grades will write the poems on Microsoft Word and insert relevant clipart from Corel Gallery, to be displayed soon for your pleasure.

Once again I would like to thank my library volunteers for their exemplary help- no matter the task they are well equipped to cope with it! Thanks also to Eftichi Kursumis for his birthday book donations and to the Hatch family for their donation of 'out-grown' books to swell our collection. Thank you to Mrs Bear, also, for her birthday book donation, The Trials of Life, by David Attenborough.

**Rosalyn Psallidas (Library – Media Coordinator)**

**J PreK and PreK:** BANG, crash, ting-a-ling, scratch, shake, crack..... Sound familiar? We're sure Mrs. Tagis and Ms. Ploutou will agree! In Pre K we have recently finished our favorite unit so far 'Sound and Music.' We were inquiring into sources of sound and how sound can be changed. Would you believe that Christianna found ten different ways of playing the tambourine!

We learnt how to control sound, how to make sounds louder and quieter and which instruments made short sounds and long sounds. We discovered that metal instruments make long sounds and wooden instruments make short sounds. At the end of our unit we had our celebration assembly to First Grade and parents. We made animal masks with Ms. Mata in art and everyone had to guess which animal we were by the sound that we made with our voices. We then talked about how music makes us feel and how it makes us want to move. We had great fun listening to different types of music and dancing.

We have also been busy learning about the senses. We pretended that we couldn't see so that we could feel what it's like to be blind. We went for a walk outside to find different smells, smells that we liked and smells that we didn't like. We made a feely picture with Ms. Mata and finally we tasted different foods. We invited some friends to have lunch with us on Friday and we each bought in a different food to taste. We were all risk takers and tried lots of new food, well done Pre K! Here's to an even busier month next month when we will be finishing our yearlong 'Friends and Families' unit and starting our 'Minibeast' unit. We're certainly going to carry on being busy bees!

**Ms Zoe  
and Ms Paulina**

**Kindergarten:** As we go to press, Kindergartners are developing competence, another element of Personal and Social Education as set out by the Primary Years Programme. This strand develops an appreciation of the environment. What can we do to improve the environment around us? In Art, adhering to the concept of transdisciplinary work, students made robots from a variety of materials, helping them understand that trash can be transformed into treasures with a bit of time, creativity and strong glue!

Kindergartners were then asked to describe the function of their robots. Here's what they said: **"My robot will...**

**...help clean dirty air."** Anastasios

**...recycle things like toilet paper rolls or milk cartons."** Laila

**...save animals from hunters."** Vassilis

**...water the plants and the trees."** Christine

**...pick up trash from the ground."** Harrison

**...be a special fire robot to put out fires in forests."** Lucie

**...clean the ground."** Erwan

**...plant flowers."** Inbal

**...clean dirty water."** Mario

**...remind people not to throw garbage and will tell them to pick it up."** Jason

**...remind children not to throw trash out the car window."** Alex

**...pick up dirty cigarettes."** Evgenia

**...teach kids to keep nature clean."** Tayler

It is clear from their responses that Kindergartners have a firm grasp of what we humans can do to improve the environment around us! **Julie Demopoulos**

**FirstGrade:** Once upon a time, the first graders entered the magical world of FairyTale Land. There they met kings and queens, princes and princesses, giants, fairies, witches, three bears, Goldilocks, a boy called Jack and many more characters. Some characters were good and caring, but some were evil and some were real risk takers. Students were able to make plenty of connections between our student profile and the actions of some of the Fairy Tale characters We discussed this matter a lot, agreed and disagreed, but in the end we respected each other's opinion. At the end of our journey through Fairy Tale land, first graders were inspired to write their own Fairy Tale. If you would like to read them, come by our classroom where they are on display.

A field trip to the TASTY Food factory was the introduction to our new unit of inquiry, "From

Field to Table." In this unit students will inquire into the different stages of food production, the jobs involved and how these products come into our homes.

If you have some free time, come and visit our garden. Our carrots and beans are growing well and last week we even planted two trees. We would like to thank Mr. Momen, who helped us dig the holes for our almond tree and our walnut tree.

Finally, we would like to say thank you to Mrs Rombotis who is giving some of her free time to help us with our garden.

**Helga Barry**

**Second Grade:** This month the second graders were busy 'getting ready to take-off' into their new unit of inquiry, a study of an airport system. After sharing personal airport experiences, we ventured out to Spata's airport and observed various airport jobs that a number of us predicted we would see. By adding many more jobs to our lists, we returned to class with over 20 jobs.

Our second airport visit helped us to understand what happens 'behind the scenes'. Our tour guide escorted us through the passport control, into the weather station, through the metal detector and into the fire brigade where we were given a live demonstration of how water shoots out several meters from the top of an engine onto the runway.

What great responsibilities people have in an airport! However, our inquiring minds led us to think about whether any one job is more important than any other, and if an airport system is complete without some jobs. With these questions in mind, we cooperated in groups to design our own airport system that considers safety, services needed and convenience for all (for passengers, visitors and the community as well). If you drop by our room you can see for yourselves which airport suits your needs. We think you will have a difficult time selecting one, as they're all great!

To end our unit with a blast, we created our own airport board games that 'send you back to start if you forgot your passport', tell you to lose 5 turns if the metal detector finds you're carrying something you shouldn't be (a dangerous offence) or...send you to the lost and found if you lost your bags. But if you're the lucky one to reach the finish . . . you're ready to take off and have a great trip!

**Louise Kalokerinou**

### **Third Grade**

Students are in an inventive mode and are really thinking like inventors themselves! Since inventors solve problems to meet needs, your children have each come up with a problem of their own which they would like to solve. They are ready to go home and create their inventions over the next three weeks. Just before Easter holidays, they will come back to school prepared to share their invention with the rest of the class. Please look forward to announcements regarding this at home activity.

We are now beginning our 5<sup>th</sup> unit about How the World Works. Our unit title is The Earth and Beyond and its central idea is that the Earth is part of a vast and complex universe. We will be inquiring into the movement of the Earth and the moon as a measure of time (and seasons), and the stars and the solar system. I can say that excitement levels are high and there will be lots for us to inquire into over the next 4 weeks!

**Christina Birbil**

### **Grade 4**

**We Will . . . We Will . . . Rock You . . . Rock You!** As the third trimester begins we will investigate rocks, minerals and crystals. By asking ourselves, "What is under our feet?" The students will inquire into planet earth, different types of minerals, rocks, and crystals, how

they are formed, and their characteristics - specifically their similarities and differences. We will take field trips to the Goulandris museum, the Paenia Caves, and to glass and a marble factories. Growing crystals, making rock candy and establishing a classroom rock collection are only some of the exciting activities the students will be engaging in during this unit.

In the meantime, Mr. Drivas will be continuing his work with the students on the Italian Art form, Commedia de L'arte. Having studied the seven specific characters in a Commedia play, the students are now writing two Cannovaccis as a class, which they will be performing after the spring recess at one of the school assemblies. Hope to see you there!

### **Chrysoula Ploutou**

**Grade 5:** "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free..." is part of the inscription on the base of the Statue of Liberty written by Emma Lazarus. Our current unit of inquiry about immigration has been inspired by these very words. Our central idea is that people migrate for a variety of reasons.

Fifth graders have prepared a trunk of items, which they would take with them if they had to leave their home country. Along with this, they created a writing piece and presented it to the class with the specific reasons for choosing each item. Please visit the bulletin board outside our classroom for this display.

In addition, the fifth graders have researched a famous immigrant and wrote a brief biography of their lives. We were quite fortunate to be able to get "on-line" for the first time with the assistance of Mrs. Psallidas, the Library/Media Coordinator. The children were shown how to get on-line and how to search for their particular immigrant. We will definitely be using this new service on our library computers on a regular basis.

The children's portfolios were sent home along with their report cards for you to experience their learning with them. I hope you have taken this opportunity to sit down with your child and focus on what they have accomplished. Your child has reflected and assessed their own learning through the selections they have made and worked conscientiously on putting this together. They have also written their goals which will drive their learning during the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester.

**Pamela Tagas**