

June 2018 Newsletter

Rawdat El-Zuhur

Dear Friends: Another academic year has come to an end full of lovely memories that are bound to draw a smile on the faces of those young children, their parents and teachers. Despite the tension encompassing the whole region, Rawdat El-Zuhur remains a safe haven for those children who look forward to the summer holidays with their parents. A time to charge the spirit and energy so as to be ready with enthusiasm for another school year in September. We want to wish you all a pleasant summer holiday and to thank you for your support, with the hope that you will enjoy our news, which you can see is full of educational activities, events and entertainment that always aim to inspire and develop moral and social values for our children.

With warm greetings and deep appreciation, and we hope you will be able to visit us when it is possible for you to be in Jerusalem.

Abla Nasir
President

Raeda Jasser
School Principal

Honoring Students:

Students with an average of 90 and above in the first semester were honored on the third of February, and a special recognition was given to the students who made a positive change in their behavioral and academic performances.





The Fire Brigade: The English lesson for grades five and six on combating fire and the role of the Fire brigade was translated into action. On the 10th of February the school invited the Palestinian Fire Brigade in East Jerusalem to demonstrate to the children in a practical way how to fight a fire.



The children were very attentive as the Team demonstrated the process of rescuing people and buildings and all the safety measures that need to be taken. The team also provided the children with general guidelines for combating a fire and they were also introduced to the different parts of the Fire Engine and the tools used in the process. This activity was a unique experience for the children as well as the teachers.



Good Deeds: With the cooperation of the Mothers' council, all the family of Rawdat El-Zuhur, teachers, students and parents participated in a Charity Bazaar for two days on February 20, and 21. What made the Bazaar unique was that it also aimed to support organizations working with people with special needs. So

most of the products that were on sale were provided by those organizations, and the people with disabilities were there to sell their own products, such as soaps and candles. The students and their parents also contributed some items that helped make the bazaar a great success. This function proved that with cooperation, even little things can make a difference.

The proceeds of the Bazaar went to the Creche in Bethlehem, and at the end of the school year, some of the students along with their teachers and the school principal visited the Creche to deliver their gift.





To raise awareness about individuals with special needs and to integrate them into the society, Rawdat El-Zuhur will host a young student with special needs to do her training with the Kindergarten at the beginning of the new year.

Reading Competition: As part of the Faisal Hussein Foundation, *Comprehensive Education Upgrading Project for fifteen Palestinian schools in Jerusalem*, which is funded by the European Union and the Arab Bank,



73 students of Rawdat El-Zuhur from grades 3-6 participated in a Reading Competition. Rawdat- El-Zuhur ranked first amongst the schools, while six students won the first and second prize. They were honored by the Faisal Hussein Foundation representative, Ms.

Fadwa Al-Husseini, in the presence of the

parents of the winners, and the school staff. Winners received cash prizes as well as certificates of honor.



Ordinary certificates were granted to all the students who participated in the competition.



Science Research Competition: Under the supervision of their teacher, Ms. Mervet Elleyan, the students of grade five won first prize in a science research competition for the Palestinian Jerusalem schools, organized by the Faisal Hussein Foundation on 7 May 2018



Love is an act of caring, empathy, and giving. God is love.

Our children are a gift from God, so we help them to learn how to love one another and to be tolerant. On February 14 several activities took place to enhance the value of love. Also, the



teachers gave their students symbolic gifts as an expression of their loving care.



A Day without school bags: On February 24, 2018 the students went home without their school bags. In the meantime, they did all their homework in the classroom on that day. This was a gesture to break the daily routine to be able to enjoy the week end with their parents. For sure the parents would appreciate more week ends free of school bags.



Healthy Food Week: “Think, Eat, and Save” was the theme for The Healthy Food Week conducted at the school during the month of April. This activity had a two-fold purpose: to teach the students to develop good eating habits of healthy food, and not to waste food, thinking of the many people and hungry children who are deprived of basic food and suffer from mal-nutrition.



During that week, the children were served a healthy drink Sahlab (a warm milk drink) and a healthy breakfast. The Kindergarten children had a fruit salad for their healthy meal.



Nature Museum: On 13 February 2018, fifth and sixth graders and their class teachers paid a visit to the Museum of Nature during the school hours. The children had a tour of the museum where they watched the exhibit of the distinctive birds and reptiles. They also participated in a workshop at the biology section and were introduced to real animals and learned guidelines for taking care of them.



Mother's Day: Giving, loving, caring are all characteristics of a mother, whoever she may be - a teacher, a home-maker, an engineer, a doctor, or a farmer. With the beginning of Spring and the celebration of Mother's Day, held in the Arab world on the 21st of March, the mothers of all the children were invited to celebrate this special day with their children at school. Kindergarten children performed a variety of activities such as songs, dances, and speeches. This celebration was concluded by many bouquets of flowers

which the children gave to their mothers and teachers with special greeting cards.



Another initiative took place on that day. With the cooperation of the school administration, the fifth graders reached out to mothers who are a symbol of sacrifice and steadfastness in the Palestinian community and who are part of the Jerusalem landscape. Those women who sell home grown vegetables that are watered with their own sweat of hard work and who show up every morning on the streets of the Old City and on Salah Eddin Street. The students gave those women flowers and small gifts as a token of respect and appreciation for their steadfastness. (Sumud)





Sing for Jerusalem: The yearly song competition “Sing for Jerusalem” which has been conducted by the Frère school for the private schools of Jerusalem for the last eight years, was held this year under the Title “Summit Competition for Singing”. Duna Ayyad, a sixth grader, represented Rawdat El-Zuhur in this singing competition.

“**Jerusalemites who made History**” is the title of the Arabic book written by Mr. Aziz Al-Assa, and Dr. Imad El-Khatib, and published by the Palestinian Ministry of culture. The book basically focuses on a number of personalities who left their mark on the city. One of the personalities in the book is Elizabeth Nasir, the founder of Rawdat El-Zuhur, and the story of its beginnings as a home for destitute girls using her own home to shelter those girls. One of the authors Aziz Al-Assa, who is the chair of the Cultural committee of the Club of the Employees, took a great interest in the story of Rawdat El-Zuhur, and he wanted the younger generation to be acquainted with such initiatives. He gave a lecture at Al-Tour school for girls about Miss Nasir and her project and he accompanied the girls and their teachers to visit Rawdat El-Zuhur on March 20, 2018. They were welcomed by the school principal Mrs. Raeda Jasser, and former Principal Mrs. Salwa Zananiri who had served with Miss Nasir for many years and shared a lot about the spirit with which Ms. Nasir served that sector of the community and the role she played at that time in order to provide care for those girls, and restore their dignity. The Kindergarten children welcomed the visitors with a “Dabkeh” folk dance, and the visit was concluded with a tour of the school.





Wanted: Flights of fancy, for an imprisoned world. This was the theme of the Reading Campaign which was implemented in cooperation with Tamer Institute for Community Education during the week of 11-19 April 2018. Rawdat El-Zuhur students participated in the Open Day held at Burj Al-Laqlaq where many meaningful activities took place, such as story-telling, cultural competitions and wall paintings. In addition, 3rd and 5th graders visited the St. George's school and conducted a variety of story-telling in an interesting

way. Also, As-Saraya Society joined the Reading Week Campaign by conducting several cultural activities for students. On another matter, Ahmad Ayyad, from the fourth grade, won the second prize in a Qur'an competition organized by the Palestinian Ministry of Education for the schools of Jerusalem.



"Creative Learning" was the theme of our annual exhibit for Educational Tools and handicrafts on April 21, 2018. The Exhibition included all the work that was done by the students throughout the current scholastic year with the assistance of their teachers. The educational tools on display were all related to the subjects of the curriculum. However, the English language and science had the biggest share in this year's exhibit.



Registration: Thirty-two boys and girls have been accepted and registered in the Kindergarten for the coming school year 2018/2019.



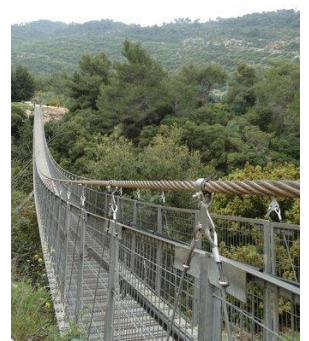
Music Day: April 28, was a special day at the school as parents were invited to the Song Festival. Students of all grades performed a variety of songs in groups, and there were solo performances as well. Samer Rashed, the music teacher is a Rawdat El-Zuhur alumnus. He accompanies the children with his viola and they all seem to have a great time.



Dabkeh Competition: On April 28, 2018, the school's "Dabkeh" (folk dancing) group participated in the yearly Dabkeh Competition organized by the Frere Secondary school for the Jerusalem private schools, and won 3rd prize.



Recreational Trips: On 5 May 2018 all the school was out on recreational trips. With cheerful faces and smiles expressing the joy of riding the bus to spend the day out of school, the lower classes went to a Strawberry farm where they enjoyed picking strawberries and feeding domestic animals. The upper classes visited the Mediterranean coastal city of Haifa, whose vast majority of its Palestinian population were evicted or fled in fear in 1948. The children enjoyed a visit to the Bahai Gardens and the walking trail on the Hanging Bridges there. After that, they continued to the city of Acre where they enjoyed a walk in the Old City which has maintained its Palestinian life style. They also enjoyed a sea tour, and a visit to one of the most remarkable and historical places in Acre known as Al-Jazzar Mosque named after the Ottoman Governor Ahmad Basha Al-Jazzar who built it in 1782.



Children's Birthdays were celebrated with their class teachers at the end of each month. Cakes and cookies were provided by the children and shared in an atmosphere of joy and fun!



Graduation Ceremony:

Eight years ago, the 47th batch of graduates took their first step into the school. On the 10th of May, their journey came to an end as twenty-one of them graduated in the presence of their parents, teachers and some guests.



The ceremony included a variety of items including the National anthem, the school song, and other songs by the school choir, the Dabkeh group, a short skit in English by grade two, and a reflection in English by one of the

graduates, Noor Barakat. A young girl Sadeen Abu Kaff from grade five was an amazing MC. Hala Barbar and Zeina Sayyed represented the graduating class and addressed the audience in Arabic and English respectively. Hala expressed appreciation to her teachers, the school administration, and to the parents who have always been very supportive. And she expressed apologies as well on behalf of the class to the teachers for being naughty and irresponsible at certain times. Zeina also expressed appreciation to her teachers, and emphasized the importance of education especially during those crucial times when this young generation needs to be well equipped with the necessary tools to enable them to face the challenges and the forces that are working against their survival in their Holy city of Jerusalem. They both expressed the lovely memories they had at the school which they will carry with them, with a commitment to stay loyal to the school and to its message regarding the importance of education as well as the need to stay on their land. (Sumud)

Mr. Abdel Aziz Kutteineh spoke on behalf of the parents expressing thanks and appreciation to the school staff, the administration and the board. He emphasized the pioneering role of Rawdat El-Zuhur in providing quality education to the

children and the importance of the elementary section in setting the foundation for their secondary education. He also thanked the parents for their supportive role and congratulated the children wishing them all the best in achieving their dreams and goals.

In her address, Ms. Raeda Jasser, the School principal, confirmed the school's philosophy in providing a nurturing learning process to the students. A process that equips the students with the needed skills, and the capabilities to discover and be creative and be socially aware. She stressed on an approach that combines formal and non-formal education, to enrich the learning process throughout their school years.

In her address, she emphasized the importance of the parents' role as partners in their children's educational and learning processes. She invited them to continue to be the inspirational force to encourage their children and



instill in them the values of dialogue and acceptance of each other's differences. She ended with a word of thanks and gratitude to staff members and all friends and partners of RZ, whose love and commitment mark a distinguished strength in the school's persistence.

Mrs. Abla Nasir, the president of Rawdat El-Zuhur joined the school principal and Ms. Mervet Elleyan, the class teacher in handing out the diplomas to the new batch of the sixth-grade graduates. With a lot of clapping and smiles with group photos and selfies, the ceremony came to an end.

School Guests and Visitors:

The school had the pleasure of welcoming the following guests during the second semester:

17 February 2018, Bishop Joe Satoris Group, USA

16 April 2018, Mr. Peter Larson, Canada

18 April 2018, Linda Barnes, USA

7 May 2018, Jeff and Janet Wright Group, USA

19 May 2018, John Scott, UK

Donations:

Special thanks go to our friends who have made a donation during the second semester, and after our last list was published.

Mr. Maxine Bruhns, through ANERA

Jerusalem Cigarettes Company

Sami, Dima, and Ruba Khoury

Global Ministries (UCC), USA

Bishop Joe Satoris Group, USA

Mr. Heribert Kleber, Mrs. Pauline Bergsma, Mrs. Gabriele Bergsma, through the German Association of the Holy Land, Germany

Mr. Thomas Hermann

Embrace the Middle East, UK

Siraj Center

Jeff And Janet Wright Group, USA

Mrs. Samia Khoury

Mrs. Fadwa (Abla) Nasser

PALCRAFT AID, UK

Mrs. Rima Bordcosh

Mennonite Central Committee

Basem and Muna Hishmeh Foundation, USA

In the meantime, we would like to remind all our friends in the USA, that the easiest way to send a gift is through **Embrace the children of Palestine** at the following address. Donations are exempt from federal income tax

Lana Kurtz
Embrace The Children of Palestine, Inc.
3410 Wisteria Court
Birmingham, AL 35216

While in the UK you may send your gifts through:

The Treasurer

Palcrafts UK

123 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4JN

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