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JAUNPIEBALGA

NEWBALGA

Don't be silent!

ST. MARTIN'S
DAY

AND IT'S
TRADITIONS

NIGHT OF ACTORS

"WE HAVE TO WORK
TOGETHER AND MAKE OUR
LATVIA BETTER"

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Latvia 105

November 18th is an important day for every Latvian. On this day, the Republic of Latvia was proclaimed, which meant that Latvia was declared an independent territory. This day is a symbol of Latvian independence and freedom, and every Latvian feels deep in their heart, both in joy and sorrow because the fight for freedom was not easy. For the fact that we live in a free and independent country, we can be grateful to our patriotic ancestors who, with hope, dreams, and their blood, made Latvia free.

Nowadays, November 18th is an official national holiday, all over the country citizens are invited to events such as concerts, balls, performances, exhibitions, lectures, or creative workshops. In the capital Riga, the celebrations begin with the laying of flowers at the Freedom Monument, in which the president and other officials participate. Then there is a parade of the National Armed Forces and military equipment, and everyone can go see it. In the evening, the President gives a speech in front of the Freedom Monument.

Since both Lāčplēsis Day and the day of the proclamation of the Republic of Latvia are celebrated in November, the month of November is considered a celebration month in Latvia. At this time, a red and white ribbon is pinned to the chest to express our love for Latvia.

How do I celebrate Latvia's birthday?

I went to Riga with my family to see the parade of the National Armed Forces. You can see this parade live on television but this year we wanted to be there and see it with our own eyes. The last time we were at the parade was long ago, so I enjoyed seeing it again. We also went to visit my cousin because it was also her birthday. At her house, we listened to the president's speech. It was personal and heartwarming. He highlighted that the country is our home. Not always it is perfect, but home is and stays our home, and it must be kept in order. Everyone has to do their bit to keep everything together, no one else will do it for us.

Written by Gerda Johansone

"And we do, we succeed and we overcome all obstacles. Even now, we have to work together and make our Latvia better,"
- Edgars Rinkēvičs, the president.



Patriotic song contest



One important tradition of our school is the patriotic song contest. It is held in honour of Latvia's birthday, and it is always anticipated and everyone's happily excited. Performing is not easy at all - people are shy nervous and timid, however, the satisfaction after the concert does not leave for a long time.

Each class has to prepare a song according to a theme. The teachers choose it and every year it is different. This year the theme was "Our land Latvia". It was influenced by Latvia's sports achievements in hockey and basketball.

This year the song that our class sang was "Mūsu Mīlestība" (Our Love). The song is about two lovers who are forced to separate but they know that they will meet again someday.

Personally, I liked how different each class understood this theme. Of course, there were songs related to sports, but also songs about nature, Latvian people, and the love of our land. This shows how different and beautiful Latvian songs can be. They each have a different meaning and every class showed it. The most interesting and exciting performance was by the 10th grade. The song started out pretty normal, students had black folders in their hands with the lyrics in them. Then when the song became more energetic, they threw away the folders and sang much more enthusiastically with choreography. This definitely was the most exciting performance this year. The teachers also perform and it's always a surprise. Students and colleagues love to hear their beautiful voices, and it's quite unusual to see so many of your teachers singing together.



Written by Zanda Loginova



Mārtiņi

Mārtiņi or Mārtiņdiena (St. Martin's Day) is an ancient Latvian winter welcoming holiday. According to a solar calendar, St. Martin's Day marks the midpoint between the autumnal solstice (Mikēļi) and winter solstice (Ziemassvētki), and is celebrated in the middle of November. St. Martin's Day ended Veļu laiks (Time of the Dead) and started Ledus laiks (Time of Ice), when the swamp became passable. The celebration of St. Martin's Day was introduced already in 650 by order of Pope Martin.



Some beliefs:

- Do not knit on St. Martin's Day evening, because then horned lambs are born.
- If the Mārtiņbērni give whippings to the housemates, then you should not run under the bed, because then you will be afraid for the rest of your life.
- On St. Martin's Day night, when going to bed, daughters have to leave their skirts in the middle of the room - whoever comes to pick them up in their dreams will become their husbands.

Here's a few traditions:

- If the Mārtiņbērni (people who have dressed up) come on St. Martin's Day Eve, then the first ones are not allowed in, because they are not the real ones.
- On the evening of St. Martin's Day, the men put their coats on the other side, girded them with plaited straw belts and went around the village to scare the children so that they would listen to their parents.
- On St. Martin's Day people dress up and go around to show themselves and also to see the houses where it might not be possible to get to otherwise.



St. Martin's Day feast

1st step:

Cut the plums into pieces, pour over the calvados and leave to infuse.

Peel and cut the apples, onions and garlic.

On a pan fry the onions in hot oil or butter, then add the garlic and a little later the apples, a little sugar and salt. Bake until the apples become a little soft, then add the plums and mix everything into a smooth mass.

2nd step:

Turn on the oven to 200 °C.

Wash and dry the broiler.

Fill it with the fried mixture and close it with toothpicks.

3rd step:

Rub with salt, pepper and crushed garlic.

4th step:

Peel carrots and potatoes, cut into slices.

Add peeled and chopped garlic, a little chopped rosemary, salt, and oil.

5th step:

Cut a thread long enough, tie the legs and wings of the broiler, starting with the legs, criss-crossing the threads so that the wings and legs do not burn during frying.

Place the broiler on a baking sheet and arrange the potatoes and carrots around it.

Place in the preheated oven and bake for one hour.

Just before the Rooster is ready, boil cut broccoli in salted water for 10 minutes.

6st step:

You can check if it's ready by inserting a toothpick. When the meat juice is transparent, the rooster is ready. Take out the wooden chopsticks and the thread. Cheers!



You will need:

1 broiler
wooden chopsticks
strong cotton thread

For filling:

2 - 3 sour apples
some prunes
a few tablespoons of calvados,
brandy or black tea
1 onion
2 cloves of garlic
a little oil or butter for frying
salt, sugar, ground black pepper to
taste

Toppings:

2 - 3 large carrots
8 potatoes
1 head of broccoli
4 - 5 cloves of garlic
sprig of rosemary
a little oil
salt

For presentation:

Pickled pumpkins with quinces

St. Martin's Day market at school

What is Mārtiņi or Mārtiņdiena (St. Martin's Day)? It is an ancient Latvian winter welcoming holiday. You can read more about this holiday in the article above this one.

There are markets often to celebrate this Holiday because it is a harvest celebration. In our school there also was a St. Martin's Day market. In it, the younger students offered the market visitors autumn gifts and treats prepared by them and their parents.

There was a lot to choose from. Over 70 people participated. And that is how it should be in a real St. Martin's Day's market. Our class decided to support this event so we all went to the market and bought something. It was very fun and the variety was impressive. You could buy little real cactuses, cupcakes, waffles, toast, and many different things. We also talked and caught up with the teachers who used to teach us when we were little because we hadn't seen them for a while. We sat in our old classroom and remembered childhood.

Written by Gerda Johansone



Beet get together



Then we discussed the benefits of beets. This part was quite complicated because older deaf people who were further away couldn't hear what the hosts were saying and were complaining. After that, Ance played the guitar, and we all sang some well-known Latvian songs. As a thank you for the music, she got a poetry book written by one of the hosts. We also did a few hand exercises to improve circulation and memory. In the end, we all played a history game and our group won! As a prize, we got a pack of alcohol-filled sweets that we shared. This evening was quite an interesting experience for all of us. Hopefully, we will have time to participate again in this tradition.

Our local library hosts an event every month, where mostly elderly people get together to discuss traditions, and generally have a good time. A few of us went there to support Ance because she was asked to play a few songs on the guitar. Each month there is a different theme. This month's get-together happened on the 14th of November and the theme was beetroots. There were many different foods made from this vegetable, some I did not expect to be good, but I was pleasantly surprised. We ate beet soup, salads, sweets, and many other foods.

Written by Līga Kīne



School parliament meeting

It is very important to maintain communication with parents, students, and school management. Therefore, a meeting was held with the school management, the parent parliament, and the student parliament.

There were only four people representing the student parliament: the president of the student parliament, the consultant, me, and another girl. We took turns telling everyone about what projects we participate in, the events we organize, and generally about the different activities we do at the student parliament. We also organized some fun games, in which everyone was involved. Our student parliament's consultant told a little about the project "Neklusē" (Don't be silent), in which our school is involved this year. This project is related to mobbing and stopping it, so it is important to talk about it with the parents as well.



The school management talked about the school's achievements, problems, questions, and generally about the school's events this school year. The Elementary school's principal gave a presentation and talked about the school's renovation. She was kind enough to give us a tour since the meeting was held in the newly renovated building.

It was strange for me to see how much this building has changed since I studied here as a child. Walking around the building was a bit odd because every hall and classroom seemed much smaller than I remember. I am truly happy and grateful that children, now, have all these new opportunities that I could only dream of experiencing as a kid. I'm hopeful that we have helped our school's students with the support of the student parliament.



Written by Zanda Loginova

Student parliament get together

Since I am the president of the student parliament, I thought that it is necessary to organize a little get together evening, so that the new members feel more comfortable among us. I thought that a great building for this event would be my sauna house. So I made an invitation and sent it to all of our members, and started to tidy up the place. I left some decorations from my birthday party there to give the room a nicer aura. And i was ready to receive guests.

That day had come. Of course not everyone agreed to come, since my sauna house is quite far from our school. We needed drivers. Luckily, most of the participants are from the 12th grade, and most of us have a driver's license. I was also one of the drivers and I took 3 of my friends to our destination.

It was very awkward at first, but it didn't affect me because in the meantime I was trying very hard to light the fireplace so that we could all feel warm and cozy. Our parliament consultant was late and arrived an hour later. So we teased her about it.



And then the fun began. There was good music playing in the background (because I was in charge of the music hehe). We played a game called Mafia, where each of us have a given role (mafia, doctor, police and others), but we don't know other people roles, only the ones who have the same as ours. We have to collect information by discussing with each other in the "day" time about what happened in the "night". Then we have to make a decision about who we suspect is the evil one and vote them out in hopes of them not being innocent. The game goes on until the mafias are voted out or have "murdered" the biggest part of villagers. It was really fun, because there was a lot of arguing going on and not knowing who to trust.

We also did a DISC personality test, for which my friend Gerda had prepared information about the meaning of the test results.

We also had a lot of conversations, and discussions about our opinions and future plans.

Then everyone went home pretty quickly. But I think that the evening was successful, for the most part and i had lots of fun!

Written by Ance Rutka

"Spēlmaņu nakts"

"Spēlmaņu nakts" (Night of actors) is an annual theatre award ceremony organized by the Latvian Theatre Employees Union. This award honours the previous year's best achievements in professional theatres.

The first award ceremonies were held in June 1994, but in 1999 the ceremony was moved to November 23, the birthday of theatre director Eduards Smiļģis, since then, the ceremony has taken place every year on this date. The award ceremony is shown live by Latvian Television and broadcast by Latvian Radio.

"Spēlmaņu nakts" celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. Awards were divided into 21 categories, which were chosen by a professional jury, but 3 categories were judged according to the likes of the audience.

This was the first year I watched it and I was a little bit surprised. My first thoughts were that this ceremony is very serious, but the atmosphere was mostly upbeat and full of humour. Even though it wasn't what I expected I enjoyed it. Some moments were devoted to more serious reflections. Such as when Kristīne Brīniņa receiving the award, she made the audience think about cutting down forests in Latvia and repeatedly emphasized that it should not be taken as a joke. Also, Elmārs Senkovs when he received the award reminded that war is not over and that he as a director wants to change it. Overall, the ceremony was thoughtful and fun to watch. I will be watching it next year too!

Written by Zanda Loginova





Lāčplēša day

November is the month of Latvia's most important holidays. It all starts with "Lāčplēša" day which is celebrated on November 11th. It is a national holiday in which we remember the soldiers of the Latvian army and allies who fell in the War of Independence, and who won a victory over Bermont's troops on November 11th, 1919, in Riga.

The Lāčplēšis itself is a symbol of a hero in Latvian culture, shown in literature, cinema, as well as fine arts. It is most known from Andreja Pumpura epos and rock opera, with the same name - Lāčplēšis. In Latvian literature, Lāčplēša fight with the Black Knight symbolizes not only the eternal battle between good and evil but also the Latvian people's struggle for freedom and independence.

On this day, commemorative events are usually held in the graves and memorials of fallen soldiers. But Lāčplēšis day is unthinkable without a torchlight march and lighting of candles.

This tradition happens all around Latvia. In Jaunpiebalga also we have this tradition. People gather at the culture house lighting their torches. Patriotic songs are also sung throughout the whole march. The march ends at the church, followed by remembrance which is held at the monument in the front. After this, a concert in the church follows. In recent years, it has been a great tradition that Piebalgas men's and boys' choir including music school students perform at the concert.


And this concert is powerful. To hear all those boys and men of different ages sing meaningful and beautiful Latvian songs really is something. The torchlight march, the speeches filled with inspiration at the monument, and this concert makes me think about why I celebrate this day and why it is so meaningful not only to me but also to other Latvians.





Top 5 books and movies of November 2023



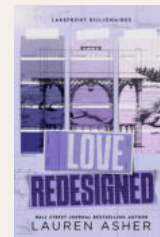
 **Iron Flame (The Emphyrean, #2)**
by Rebecca Yarros




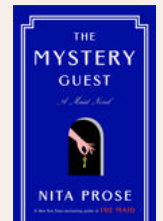
 **Check & Mate**
by Ali Hazelwood




 **Love Redesigned**
by Lauren Asher



 **The Mystery Guest (Molly the Maid, #2)**
by Nita Prose



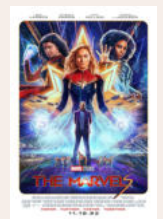
 **Bookshops & Bonedust**
by Travis Baldree



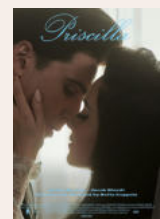
 **The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes**



 **The Marvels**



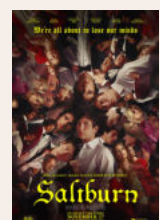
 **Priscilla**



 **Thanksgiving**



 **Saltburn**



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