

JAUNPIEBALGA

NEWBALGA

SEARCHING FOR
OUR HAPPY PLACE

***NEWLY BUILT
GROCERY STORE***

"Every foot you put
on the ground
touches a great past"

"HIS MUSIC SOUNDED LIKE A
GIFT TO PEOPLE CREATED BY
GOD"

Žetonvakars



Since we are in the last grade - grade 12, we had a Žetonvakars, if I translate it literally, I could say a Token evening. This is an evening in which the grade 12 students receive a school's token, in our case, -a ring. Usually in this evening the 12 grade students also prepare a performance. In Jaunpiebalga's Secondary school we have a tradition to prepare a theater play.

First, we had to decide which play we will perform, this was a difficult decision, because in total we are 18 students, and we needed a play, that most of the class would agree on. We chose the play "Sprīdītis".

"Sprīdītis" by Anna Brigadere is one of the most popular children's plays. It is a fairy tale, which was created in the early stages of Latvian dramaturgy. The plot is about a little boy named Sprīdītis who lives with his Grandmother, Lienīte and Stepmother. As the conflict with Stepmother escalates, Sprīdītis decides to leave home and search for his happy place. Along the way he meets all kinds of creatures - a giant, mother of the wind, mother of the forest, the devil and others.





Since the original play was too long, I took it in my hands to become a screenwriter. We started preparing for this in autumn. There were often some misunderstandings with classmates about the stage layout or song choices, but we got through it. With the help of my classmates, we came up with a few plot twists. We made the shortest person in our class to play the giant and the tallest person to play the little boy. It was quite funny. We also danced and sang in the play to show all of our different talents. Since the play was themed on finding happiness then our evening's festive part was also about happiness. We also thanked our theater plays director Ineta Elksne by giving her very cool earrings, she was quite happy, at least it looked like it.

Students from the grade 11 also had presents for us, they gave us each "Devil's potion", which was a small bottle of balsam, and also "Sprīdiša drink", which was an energy drink (everyone in our class is an adult). In my opinion, the evening had succeeded. And after it we had a party. The party's musician didn't have the best music choices, but we still had a lot of fun remembering our play and the things that maybe didn't go as planned. This day was probably one of the most meaningful days in my high school years,

Written by Ance Rutka



Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day generally is celebrated on February 14th. It is a commercial celebration of romance and love in many regions around the world. Mainly this day celebrates romantic love. Lovers give each other gifts and try to surprise them in some way. Recently, during Valentine's people have been celebrating all the other types of love that are around us like love for friends, parents, siblings, grandparents, animals, and others.

How we celebrate Valentine's Day at our school.

The student parliament that I am a part of created a photo booth, people could go and take pictures with who they wanted and post them on their social media or just to remember this day. The dress code was red and pink. At the end of the day, we interviewed students and teachers about Valentine's Day and how they celebrate it. We posted the video on our school's Instagram and TikTok accounts. We were successful because a lot of people participated.

Personally, I did not celebrate Valentine's Day this year. My parents and I drank a bit of champagne. But I did not watch any romantic Valentine's movies like "Titanic" or "The Notebook" Instead I watched "The Society of Snow". It is a movie about a football team that survives a plane crash. I know it was not a very Valentine's Day-themed movie, but it was educational and I really enjoyed it.

Written by Gerda Johansone





School 2024

On the 23rd of February our class went on an excursion. First we went to Latvia University (LU) and after that we went to the exhibition. We went to LU first because they usually have an event on the same day. This year they had study festival for students called "L-Universss". The idea of it was to help high school students by answering their questions about studies in university, to see the building and to have fun! Students could play games, explore the library, and not only talk to the teachers but also the students themselves. This event was very grand. There even was a concert going on. I was a little disappointed because the program that I want to study was nowhere to be found, I heard that some of my other classmates had the same complaint.



After that we went to the "School" exhibition where anyone who wants to study can get acquainted with educational opportunities in Latvia and find the most suitable educational institution. In the exhibition there are state and private universities, colleges, training centers, secondary schools, etc. At the same time, there are events and demonstrations that provide a wider understanding of career choices. We even met a few of our former schoolmates.

Along the exhibition there were multiple stands selling books. I bought five books (oops!). There were boxes of very discounted books, some of them were only 1 euro, but you had to dig through the boxes.

All and all it's great to go on a trip with your class every once in a while.



Written by Līga Kīne

Festival of Mask Traditions

One of the most exciting events in Latvia the XXV International Festival of Mask Traditions took place this year in Viļāni from the 9th to the 11th of February. This festival brings together mask groups from different regions and aims to preserve and revive traditional expressions of mask and image culture also known as “ķekatnieki” or “ķekatas”. This year, our collective also dressed up in masks. We prepared horns, and clothes and prepared a performance.

We went to this festival on the second day. In the first part of the day, we went to different houses, where for 30 minutes we danced, sang, and wished the farmers a good harvest by performing various rituals. Owners treated us with snacks and their special drinks, which warmed us in the cold weather.

During the evening, we mostly rested and watched the opening performances of the festival. Then it was our time to perform. We had to wait quite a long time for our performance as we were one of the last. The performance lasted a few minutes, during which we demonstrated the traditions of Piebalga. We danced, taught children to read, told old beliefs, and in the end, we also scattered ashes. Right after our performance, we went home, because it was a very tiring day, and we didn't stay for the party.





This festival will remain in my memory, because I experienced something like this for the first time. It was a very spontaneous idea to apply for this and at that moment I didn't even really know what I was singing up for. I remember the first time I went to the rehearsal; I was very confused. There were people already making costumes and they were so into it that I was a little bit scared. When it comes to the festival itself, I have a bit of mixed feelings, because I liked the first part of the day, where we walked house to house, but then there was a long wait, which was tiring.

I really liked our own performance because it was different and interesting. I also liked that the band "Dzilna", who was with us all day, was part of our performance. They played live music which made the whole performance livelier. I have always heard stories about ķekatnieki, in various Latvian beliefs and stories. But experiencing it is something else and sharing this feeling with others is impossible.

Written by Zanda Loginova





Student scholarship



VITOLU
FONDS

The Vitola Foundation was founded on April 4, 2002, to help capable, diligent, and underprivileged young people to study in a Latvian university. It was founded by Vilis and Marta Vitoli.

Every year between February 1st and March 1st, 12th grade students apply to it, hoping to receive a scholarship. This year I also applied. To apply you must meet at least one of the criteria: good learning outcomes (average mark 7.5 or above), difficult social and material conditions, being an orphan, being raised by one parent, living in a family with 3 or more children, success in contests.

To apply for a scholarship, you must fill out a form. The fund council meeting examines the applications and selects the candidates, they are interviewed, and after that, the fund council meeting decides on granting the scholarship. Rejected candidates receive a rejection letter, the others remain on the list of candidates for one academic year.

I think this is a great opportunity for young people. Of course, working for this form takes time, but if you get this scholarship, it pays off. As a student from a small town, this would help me settle into a new environment, so I hope that I will get this scholarship.



Written by Zanda Loginova



From mini to large

In Jaunpiebalga 2013 a grocery store “mini top!” opened its doors in the first floor of an apartment building. A decade later the newly built “top!” grocery store was opened on February 15th. The store cost around 1,5 million euros to build and furnish.

To celebrate the opening our class decided to go on a little trip to the store. We all carpoled during a break when we didn't have any lessons.

There was quite a crowd when we got there. People were filming the event and people interviewing customers. Later, on the 1st of March, a segment of a well-known TV show “Slavenības. Bez filtra” (Celebrities. Without a filter) was filmed at the new store. In it Magone went grocery shopping with a personal trainer.



I personally like the baked goods that are freshly cooked in the store itself. Even though there's a much bigger choice of products, there's a small complaint most people have. The fresh meat and salad refrigerator is right in front of the alcohol, so people have to ask the store employees and it makes their purchases more public and perhaps embarrassing. I am happy that the meat refrigerator is not in front of the large wine selection. :)

Vietējais

top!

top!

Written by Līga Kīne



Second on the podium



One of the most popular winter sports is biathlon. In the annual competitions every year Latvia is also represented. It must be admitted that often without any big success. But this year Latvia got a place on the podium.



At the world championship in the Czech Republic, Andrejs Rastorgujevs won a silver medal in the 15-kilometer mass start. With perfect accuracy in shooting and the 6th fastest step in the distance, he set a great result. The winner was Norwegian biathlete Johannes Thingnes Bø, who finished the race in 34 minutes and 50.2 seconds. Andrejs Rastorgujevs was just 15.1 seconds behind.

Before now, Rastorgujevs's highest achievement in the mass start was last year when he finished fifth. This is his first World Championship medal, which is at the same time the highest achievement in Latvian biathlon history. Moreover, it is the first medal for Latvia in 19 years, since the last time Ilmārs Bricis stepped on the third step of the World Championship podium, which was in 2005.

Written by Zanda Loginova



SUPERNOVA

Supernova is the Latvian national selection for the international song contest "Eurovision". It is created by the Latvian television channel LTV1. This year the jury picked 15 best songs from 108 songs. A few weeks before the event all of the contestants and their songs that got picked are made public. In the semi-final, all contestants perform their songs and the audience votes for their favourite. A week later in the final show, we find out the winner who represents us in Eurovision that year. The winner is chosen only by the audience votes. In the end, the winner performs in Eurovision. This year the winner of Supernova was known almost instantly as the participants were made public. Most of the artists that participated were new musicians or had bad songs. The only one that sounded like a Eurovision-worthy entry was the song "Hollow" performed by Dons. He is very popular in Latvia.

This year we had really exciting guest performances. In the semifinal, Alikea from our neighbour country Estonia performed. She represented Estonia last year in Eurovision. For finals, we had a really special guest Eurovision star Duncan Laurence who sang "Arcade" and won in Eurovision 2019. I hope we do well in this year's Eurovision.

Written by Gerda Johansone



Award ceremonies



KINO AWARD "LIELAIS KRISTAPS"

This is the main award in the kino industry in Latvia. It is a special event so it is broadcasted live on television and everyone can watch it. There are 17 professional nominees and one audience voted nominee. The ceremony itself is formal, but in the last few years it has been modernized and I don't like it. I believe formal and important ceremonies should stay as standardized as they can. Of course some new elements can be included but not as it was done in this ceremony. I think this is the time to use the quote "you do not need to reinvent the wheel".

CULTURE AWARD "KILOGRAMS KULTŪRAS"

This award is not as important as the previous one but it is also meaningful. There are 10 nominations in different cultural branches like music, theater, kino, art, pop culture and others. It also looks different from a standard ceremony but I believe in this case it is done correctly. Firstly, it is less important and it is quite new so it can be interpreted differently. Secondly it was not changed that much; it still has the main elements of an award ceremony.

Written by Gerda Johansone



People we lost



Inguna Bauere (23.07.1960 - 20.01.2024) was a Latvian writer, engineer and teacher. Author of more than 20 novels. In her works, she showed the lives of historical figures, accurately depicting the scenes of the era and using the language characteristic of the era.

Most of Inguna's books are about Piebalga. "In Vecpiebalga, every foot you put on the ground touches a great past." It was the rich cultural history of Piebalga that fascinated Inguna.

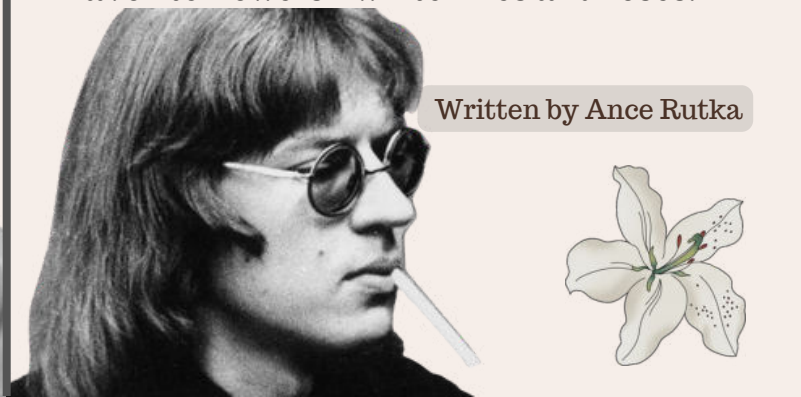
She did everything from the heart, with passion. A wonderful, bright, sincere person. Her sparkling joy rubbed off on everyone around her. She will be dearly missed.



Juris Kulakovs (20.05.1958 - 12.02.2024) was a Latvian musician and composer, multi-instrumentalist and the leader of the band "Pērkons". His contribution to Latvian rock music is very broad and diverse, he was a freethinker, a deep and extraordinary person.

"He was an extremely passionate and crazy person, but his great wisdom and great mind was in his infinite love for people. Through him, music sounded like a gift to people created by God" - this is what singer Ieva Akuratere, Jura Kulakova associate in music, says about his work.

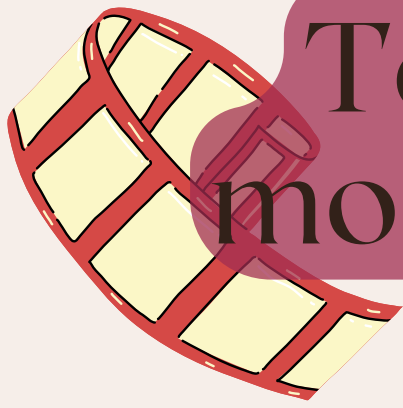
Farewell to the outstanding Latvian composer Juris Kulakovs, took place on February 17, in the Saint Mary Magdalene Church of Riga. Friends and admirers were asked to honor Kulakovs with his favorite flowers - white lilies and roses.



Written by Ance Rutka



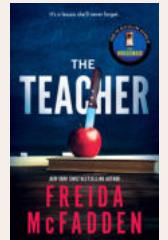
Top 5 books and movies of February 2024



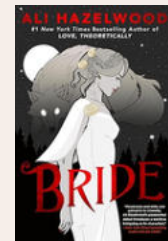
The Women
by Kristin Hannah



The Teacher
by Freida McFadden



Bride
by Ali Hazelwood



A Fate Inked in Blood
by Danielle L. Jensen



If Only I Had Told Her
by Laura Nowlin



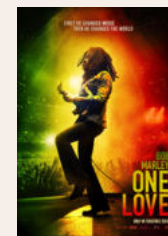
Madame Web



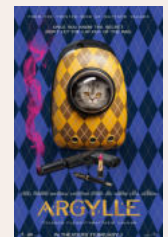
Lisa Frankenstein



Bob Marley: One Love



Argylle



Drive-Away Dolls



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