



MEDITERRANEAN DSO NEWSLETTER

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MISSION: To Provide an Exemplary Education that inspires and prepares All DoDEA Students for Success in a Dynamic, Global Environment.

VISION: The Mediterranean District Office will provide leadership, support, guidance, resources, and quality control to ensure a successful educational environment at each school.

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District Superintendent's Message



Mr. Kent Worford
Superintendent
Mediterranean District

I am convinced that our Mediterranean District and our entire DoDEA school system are the best! About two months before winter recess, a teacher at Sigonella MHS (in Sicily), Shawn McCarthy, asked permission to take twenty of his 8th graders and five of their parents to Washington, D.C., to sightsee and, most of all, to attend the Presidential Inauguration weekend. As soon as permission was received, the students and their families began their fund-raising activities to pay for transportation, accommodations, and other expenses during their excursion.

How did this all materialize? Mr. McCarthy's students had expressed keen interest in the US Government and how it works. They also asked dozens of questions concerning the upcoming Presidential

Inauguration. They asked if they could make such a trip as part of their studies. The teacher agreed. Principal Alice Berard agreed. Once I heard about the plan and all the details, so carefully thought out, I agreed. So did DoDDS-Europe. As well, we notified our Public Relations personnel both in Europe and at DoDEA Headquarters in Alexandria, VA, and from there they helped to make things happen.

The students had opportunities to visit, among other significant locations, the Capitol—where they met some Members of Congress; the Supreme Court—where they chatted with Chief Justice Roberts; the Pentagon; the Smithsonian; the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier—where they presented a wreath under the guidance of DoDEA Director Marilee Fitzgerald and Deputy Director Adrian Talley; and the Inaugural Concert—where they led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. But, of great importance was meeting Ms. Michelle Obama, the wife of the President, and Dr. Jill Biden, the wife of the Vice-President, Joe Biden, both of whom acknowledged the 8th graders from Sigonella MHS and thanked them and their parents for their unwavering contributions to the military and to America.

Congratulations to Mr. McCarthy and his 8th graders for their initiative in undertaking this unique and invaluable learning opportunity! We're proud of them and their efforts!

Kent R. Worford
Superintendent,
Mediterranean District

Students Get Nation's Capital Tour Prior to Inauguration

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Tyrone C. Marshall Jr.
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, Jan. 18, 2013 – Students from Naval Air Station Sigonella traveled from Sicily, Italy, to enjoy the sights of the nation’s capital culminating with the 57th presidential inauguration.

Twenty 8th grade students from the Defense Department’s Sigonella Middle High School, their U.S. history teacher and five parent-chaperones made the trip from Europe to the United States. Jennifer Simpson, a Frederick, Md., native and chaperone, talked about the opportunity to bring the students to Washington, D.C., following a tour of the Pentagon yesterday.

“It’s like a trip of a lifetime for many of the kids,” she said. “It’s very strange to have the kids living in Italy and never [having] visited the United States. They’re U.S. citizens though.”

Simpson said the visiting students “will remember this [trip] their whole lives. Especially this tour because they’re military kids so this is a very special place for them.”

Simpson said the inauguration will be the highlight of the 8th graders’ trip to the U.S.

“I think that’s the climax to our trip here -- seeing the inauguration,” she said. “I mean that’s the purpose of us staying here to see history in the making.”

The rest of the week, Simpson said, will be exciting as the group visits the Supreme Court, and ultimately, every branch of government.

Mason Youberg, a 13-year old from the state of Washington, said his interests motivated him to join his class.

“I’ve never been to Washington D.C., and they were going to do some fun things,” he said. “[It’s been] good. We’ve seen the Capitol building which was very interesting and now the Pentagon.”

Youberg, whose mother is in the Navy, said he most looks forward to visiting the Smithsonian “because [it] has a lot of interesting things.”

Michaela Bowling, a 14 year old from Virginia Beach, Va., wanted to re-visit the nation’s capital to appreciate it now that she is older.

“I really wanted to come on this trip because when I was little I used to come here with my parents,” she said. “But I never really understood some of the stuff we used to see. Now that I’m a little bit older, I feel like I’m going to understand it a lot more.”

After two stops on the trip, Bowling said the trip has already been “memorable.”

“I really liked all of it,” she said. “I really liked coming to the Pentagon and going to the Capitol.”

Bowling, whose father was in the Navy and now serves as a civilian firefighter, noted she really looks forward to seeing the inauguration.

“I think that it’s amazing that we get to see it,” she said. “It’s like we’re a part of history. Not everybody gets to tell somebody that they’ve been to the inauguration and at this young age it’s such a big experience.”

Shawn McCarthy, a U.S. history teacher for the 8th graders, said he is pleased his students have this opportunity after a collaborative effort to make it happen.

While watching a CNN student news broadcast on Election Day, he explained, the students voiced an interest in visiting Washington, D.C.

“During that time the kids actually started asking some deep questions about the nation’s capital, its monuments and also about inauguration day,” McCarthy said.

McCarthy, who has been a teacher for 14 years and was a 12-year DOD school student himself, said the request resonated with him.

“It was the fact here we are -- we have American kids living overseas on military bases and their families are serving our nation. All they wanted to do was go to the states,” he said.

“Not just anywhere in the states -- they wanted to go to the nation’s capital, and they wanted to go to the White House,” McCarthy said. “It wasn’t an amusement park; it wasn’t a fast food chain. It was the White House.”

McCarthy said some of the students hadn’t been back to the U.S. in as long as five years.

“When they come back for the summer, usually, they don’t tour monuments,” he said. “They go see family and then they go back overseas.”

Another point McCarthy emphasized was how hard the students worked to pay for this trip.

“The U.S. government did not spend a single penny on this,” he said.

Still, there were plenty of obstacles to overcome, but McCarthy said people and organizations like Deanie Dempsey, wife of Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Military Child Education Coalition and even the vice president’s office stepped in to help.

“I’ve been very fortunate for the last two months to work with people in many different offices whether they [are] military, civilian or either political party,” he said.

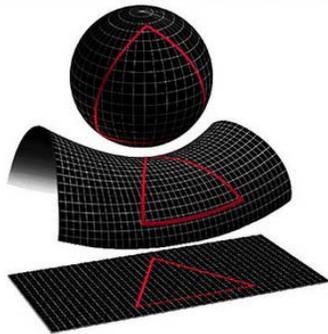
“It has showed me, once again, what is great about America -- that people step up,” McCarthy said. “It’s been a great life lesson for our students and also for me as a person.”



Mrs. Biden with Sigonella 8th Graders.
Photo: @obamainaugural

Universal Talks in Ankara, Turkey

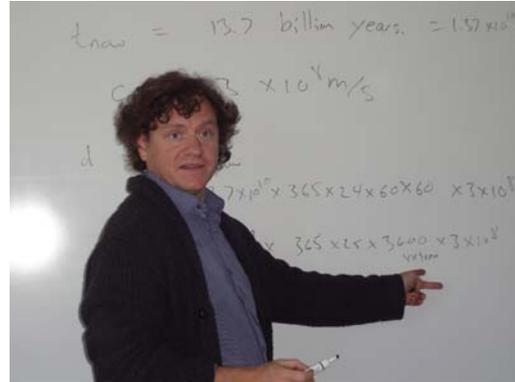
Ankara Middle School and High School students were riveted by the presentation about the origin of the universe presented by Doctor Neil Lambert, Professor of Mathematics at King's College in London, England, in the autumn. Dr. Lambert has also worked as a theoretical physicist at CERN in Switzerland. The presentation started off with a Prezi Presentation on the Big Bang Theory by Ankara ES/HS 8th Grader, Justin Keller. Dr. Lambert used one of Justin's slides to discuss the possibility of "multiverses" and how this is theoretically explained.



Proposed Shapes of the Universe
Fascinatingly, he also demonstrated what our universe would have looked like at its "surface of last scattering" when it was a young 300,000 years old. Students were engaged for Dr. Lambert's entire presentation and took the opportunity to ask many relevant questions following the talk.



Ankara ES/HS 8th Grader, Justin Keller, Opens Universe Presentation with a Bang



Guest Speaker, CERN Physicist and Mathematics Professor Dr. Neil Lambert



Students Riveted by Dr. Lambert's Presentation on the Origin of the Universe



Ankara ES/HS Science Teacher, Penelope Ahearn Er with Dr. Neil Lambert

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January's Best Practice: Engaging Students at the Beginning of Class

By Mediterranean District ISS
Lourdes Alonso



Michal Turner, VMS: Cooking With Fractions

Suppose one day you walked into class and instead of your teacher you found Betty Crocker with an apron, baking products and measuring cups and spoons on the table. Suppose your homework was to make a specific amount of cookies and bring one back to the teacher for documentation? You had to first figure out how many batches you could make with the ingredients on the table, (flour, sugar, chocolate candy), then you had to figure out what part of a batch of cookies you could make with the remaining ingredients because everything had to be used. Finally you had to divide this by 4, because

there were 4 to a group. The funny thing is you had to do this, using pictures because you had not yet been taught the division algorithm for fractions. Now, how is it that I can divide something and come up with a bigger number than I started off with? So much fun and so many challenges! I am sure this is an activity these students will never forget. Their comprehension of fractions will make giant leaps. Way to go Ms. Turner, I mean Ms. Crocker!

Sylvia Fabiani, VMS: Slope using the Motion Sensor



Have your students ever had difficulty understanding the concept of slope as rate of change? Figuring out the slope of a ramp is a concrete experience, but rate of change is one of those abstract concepts that is not that intuitive to understand. How about the

concept of no slope or 0 slope? What does that look like in real life? It can definitely be very confusing. As soon as Ms Fabiani's 8th Grade Algebra I students came into class, they were faced with the challenge: Can you match the graph on the Smartboard by walking? Before explaining slope, Ms. Fabiani's students in VMS explored rate of change as the Motion sensor picked up their own rate of walking. If at first they didn't get it right, they wanted to try and try again. Positive and negative slopes became easy to understand. The same thing happened with horizontal lines with 0 slope. That just meant the walker stood still as time passed! They were then given motion sensor graphs and asked to tell the story of what was happening. When a vertical line was presented they had to figure out if it was possible to be in many different places in one specific instant of time. The motion sensor made the theoretical concrete and relevant to real life. It was definitely lots of fun, and students were engaged from the beginning. Plus...the stage is set for the coming attractions...systems of equations with the motion sensor!

Bahrain Elementary School National Geography Bee

The National Geographic Bee Championships were held at Bahrain School on January 10th. Each year, thousands of schools in the United States participate in this event using materials provided by the National Geographic Society. Students in grades four through eight are eligible to participate. First students took an in-class qualifying test. Then two finalists and one alternate from each grade level moved on to the championship competition level.

Bonnie Higbee, who is a gifted education teacher at Bahrain Elementary, was this year's sponsor for the geography bee. Educational technologist Jack Higbee was the moderator. Bonnie Krajeski, wife of the American ambassador to Bahrain, was a special guest at the event. Judges included Linda Berger, who is the IB coordinator at Bahrain Middle/High School, and Patrick de Groot, Managing Director of CHIC & Unique Hotels Group.

The winner of this year's National Geographic Bee was seventh grader Jos van Vliet. Runner up was eighth grader Luke Snyder. Carlos Vasquez took third place.



Competitors begin the first round of questions



Fifth grader Warren King receives a certificate of participation from Mrs. Krajeski



Finalists prepare for competition



Winners Luke Snyder (2nd place), Jos van Vliet (1st place), and Carlos Vasquez (3rd place)

Bahrain Elementary School After School Clubs and Sports

Learning continues AFTER the school day is over at Bahrain Elementary School! A new round of clubs started after the winter recess. Whereas some clubs focus on academic skills, others include creative pursuits. Some of the clubs this round include: Recorder Karate, Elementary Choir, Science Club, Cooking Club, Girls' Reading Club, Reading Counts Club, Art Club, Friendship Club, and more. In addition, the PTSO is coordinating a Chess Club.

Parents have organized after school sports leagues for elementary students this year. These include baseball, basketball, and soccer. Students use school sports facilities for these programs. Parent, military, and community volunteers serve as coaches. The basketball program is run as a skills clinic. Soccer and baseball teams have weekly practices and then play games on the weekends.



Bahrain Soccer League participants enjoy their first practice.



Students work together to learn a song in the Recorder Karate club.



Rocco Salata is ready for baseball.



Basketball clinic kids pose after playing a game.



4th grade students learn how to play chess.

Bahrain Elementary School Box Tops Winner

Students at Bahrain Elementary School were challenged to collect as many box tops as possible during the month of December as part of the Box Tops for Education program. The winner, kindergarten student Emily Geiser, enjoyed a story and lunch with school principal Christy Blevins. Emily collected 288



The Best Christmas Pageant Ever at Rota MHS

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever was an ambitious project coordinated by Rota Middle/High School drama teacher, Matthew Lamb. A cast and crew of more than 40 included students and faculty members from the elementary, middle and high school who worked together for many weeks preparing for the performances on 15-16 December. The cast was complemented by Mr. Fox's choral group, whose close harmonies added heart-warming Christmas spirit. The production presented many obstacles as it developed. However, the team pulled together and dealt with all problems in due course. One big setback was the failure of the lighting console just days before the performances. Luckily, Mr. Fox was able to use an iPad app to enable the team to masterfully control the huge, complicated lighting system! The production was a great success and the performances were well-attended a testimony to the hard-work, determination, and team-work at the Rota schools.



Luke Driscoll, Rota Senior Accepted to Harvard

The 13th of December turned out to be a lucky date for Rota High School senior, Luke Driscoll, when he discovered he had been accepted to Harvard next year. This news came shortly after his telephone interview at the beginning of December. "I felt that my telephone interview helped my application," said Luke, "but I was still extremely surprised to hear the news." All of a sudden, August 2013 seems a lot closer than it did, and Luke is busily preparing himself for this exciting transition.

"Rota HS could not be more proud of Luke!" exclaimed Rota Middle/High School Counselor, Marcy Bond. "He is an all-around great kid, who works hard and deserves every accolade bestowed upon him. What an accomplishment!" Such sentiments are shared by students and faculty alike at Rota Middle/High School, where so many of our students go on to do great things.



1st Annual Academic Vocabulary Bowl Game at Bahrain High School

Students at Bahrain High School competed for top honors in the first annual Academic Vocabulary Bowl Game.



The senior class representatives edged out the junior class representatives by a score of 20 to 17 at the first annual Academic Vocabulary Bowl game on 20 December, just before the winter break. IB coordinator, Linda Berger, handed out prizes.



2013 Vicenza Elementary School PTSA Spelling Bee

The 2013 VES PTSA Spelling Bee was a huge success! It lasted 15 rounds and the contestants spelled a variety of difficult words! The contestants are all highly commended for a job well done!

The top 10 winners participated in next the 23 January Spelling Bee Finals in the MPR.

The winners are as follows:

1st place – Selomi Dayaprema – 5th grade – Ms. Mancino’s class

2nd place – Delaney Edger – 5th grade – Mr. Leavitt’s class

3rd place – Mary Pflaum – 3rd grade – Ms. Maryland’s class



A BIG THANKS to Dr. Hoag, Dr. Reinhardt, and Mr. Taylor for being our fabulous judges, and to Mr. Tramm for being a fantastic Master of Ceremonies!

Thank you, Mr. Denmon, for being so wonderful in helping us set up the chairs and tables for this year’s Spelling Bee!

And a special thanks to all the classroom teachers who supported your students in this year’s Spelling Bee!

Ms. Trina Downey
Spelling Bee Coordinator



6th Grade Students Studies Ancient Greece

For the last two weeks 6th graders have been studying Ancient Greece. They each had do research and a report about a Greek God or Goddess. The culminating activity was a Greek breakfast. The breakfast included feta cheese, Greek olives, Greek yogurt, grapes, cucumbers, tomatoes, bread and honey. Some 6th graders dressed up on this day as their researched Greek God or Goddess and presented their reports to the younger students.



6th grade student Alex Garcia portrays the Greek Goddess Atlanta.



6th grade student Maurice Sutherland portrays the Greek God Hermes



6th grade student Emma Meehan portrays the Greek Goddess Nike.



A group of sixth grade students prepare to present their reports to third graders.

Students Travels to Downtown Catania on Study Trip

The AP Italian, Economic, and Street Law students went on a field trip to Catania Monday, 14 January. All of the students got to go to the market and experience typical Italian life on a Monday morning. We split into groups and had the possibility to walk around the market and buy many things at good prices. After having fun at the market, we went to Piazza Duomo, the center of Catania, and got to hear many interesting facts about the history of Catania. We also had the possibility to enter the Church and learn about Sant'Agata. Then we all went to the fish market, which was one of the best parts of the trip. The fish was so fresh they were still alive. The next stop was at the Porte di Catania where all the students had an assignment to compare market prices with mall prices; it was amazing to see how some products had huge differences in price. We had a great time and look forward to more study trips in the future.



Geography Bee at Sigonella

Sigonella Middle/High School participated in the 25th annual National Geography Bee for students in sixth through eighth grades. The winner of the Sigonella Bee, Gregory Peterson, will advance to the next level of competition—a written examination to determine state competitors. Sigonella students had their geographic knowledge put to the test, competing to secure one of the finalist positions. The following students achieved third, second, and first places respectively: Zachary Desanto, Isabel Somavilla, and Gregory Peterson. Gregory and Zachary share their experiences. Zachary stated “I never thought I would make it to the top 10 finals at our school for the Geobee, but when I found out I was in it, I was proud of myself. On the day of the Geobee, I think everyone was nervous and excited at the same time. When I was asked my first question, I think my heart stopped, because I was so nervous. My first question I answered incorrectly and I was disappointed in myself because I knew the answer. I did well in the next few rounds, but answered a second question incorrectly. I was unable to get first or second place, but I was able to answer more questions for the 3rd place spot. So it was me and two others. The two others got their questions wrong and all I had to do was get it right and I did! I think overall it was a good experience for all the kids to learn about the world’s geographic features. This is my experience of the Geobee.” Gregory said. “The geography Bee was a very fun event. I was excited to learn that I was in the top ten people that would compete in the school event. Right before it started, when everyone was sitting in front of the stage, I felt a little nervous. I didn’t want to lose in front of the entire school. Once it got down to the final two competitors, I was happy to know that I got to at least second place. To me it was hilarious when we both got a question right or wrong at the same time for a while. When I won, I felt proud and triumphant that I won this event.”



Lajes ES Celebrating the Celebrations

First Grade Music Students of Lajes Elementary School, led by Music and PE teacher, Janeen Teixeira, studied the traditions of Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa. They performed a song from each Holiday Celebration and celebrated with their parents with traditional snacks from each.



Lajes Unit School On-base support for ASPEN's Grade Book pilot.

Lajes Unit School took a different approach in supporting parents who wish to access their students' academic information. For many parents, sneaking away from their busy duty day to run off-base to Lajes Unit School is often difficult. To ease the burden, the Education Technologist, Mr. Russ Conn, teamed up with the School Liason Officer, Ms. Laurie Salafia to spend time with parents and walk them through accessing the My Data Portal. Lajes Unit School is currently one of many schools within the district taking part in a pilot program that provides students, parents, and teachers access to grades and more, using the My Data Portal. This new program supports the President's initiative for transparency within the government, providing parents immediate visibility into student academics. Parents are able to look at past student performance, where the student stands academically today, and what assignments or credits are required in the future. The potential for the new Grade Book is incredible in terms of the information it can provide students, parents and teachers. While the event lasted just one day at the Airman Family Readiness Center, parents were encouraged to contact either the school or the Education Technologist with any questions or concerns.



Russ Conn & Larie Salafia at the Airman Family Readiness Center

Neighborhood Connections and Aviano Elementary School

When it comes to making connections to people and places, students in Grade 3 at Aviano Elementary School do just that. The Social Studies Content Standards address the topic of Continuity and Change in Communities. Students learn how individuals contribute to the development of the community and describe examples of goods and services provided in the local community to meet the needs and wants of the people. On a recent study trip, students were able to interact with key people who play an active role in helping to establish economic reasoning through active participation. A trip to the base library shed light on services offered to students and the Aviano community. The library personnel entertained many questions, especially with regard to construction of the future library for the Aviano community, which is scheduled for completion in two years. Students were amazed to learn about the number of books and materials housed in the library. The visit also resulted in a renewed sense of appreciation for the work of library personnel, as well as a desire to return to the base library. In this way the trip served as a catalyst for students to ask their parents to bring them on base to visit the library. This is time well spent.



A trip to the Buon Appetito dining facility was of interest as students learned about the function and services offered to dorm residents and others. A briefing was held by the food service managers and a tour of the dining facility was conducted. Who knew that there was a storage area in the basement where food supplies are kept? The highlight for the children was the opportunity to walk into the huge freezer units. That was “cool.” Students brought their own sack lunch; however, they were able to purchase a fountain drink from the serving line, much to their delight.



(Continued from page 12)

So, this is how Social Studies connections are made. Aviano Elementary students voice what they already know about the dining facility and library, ask questions, and learn from people who are part of the school and our base partnership. What could be better than that!



Third Grade Classes from Colegio Marianistas visit Rota ES

Four 3rd grade classes from Colegio Marianistas (Jerez de la Frontera) came to visit DGF Elementary School on 21 and 28 November. The Principal, Mr. Walter Wilhoit, welcomed them at the media center and gave a presentation about our school. He highlighted the school's history and its namesake, ADM David Glasgow Farragut, a Spanish-born American. He also showed them the school mascot, Senor Toro. The students could identify with the toro in this part of Spain. Then, Ms Camacho, Host Nation teacher, and four 6th grade students toured the visitors around the school facilities. The Spanish guests really enjoyed coming into the classrooms and watching DGF students while they were involved in classroom activities. Two of the classes exchanged

Christmas cards with our students, sharing their Christmas spirit with us.



Mr. Wilhoit gives information on the school's namesake, ADM David Glasgow Farragut.



Mr. Wilhoit shows off the school mascot.



The Spanish students and teachers visit the Nurse's Office.



Mr. Wilhoit and Ms. Camacho (4th from left), welcomed the visiting Spanish teachers.

Mentors Matter at Aviano Elementary School

Most days are good and some days are great. What makes a day great is the addition of a mentor in the educational life of a child. A mentor is someone who serves as a teacher and/or support person to another. In Greek mythology, a *mentor* was a tutor to Telemachus. At Aviano Elementary, the primary purpose of the mentoring process is the growth of the student. It also results in personal and professional growth of the mentor. Students in grade 3 at Aviano Elementary School are fortunate to have the opportunity to work with two mentors. Danielle Colberg and Josh Blackburn work with students in third grade. They spend an hour filled with intense focus. The first half hour is spent in the all-important conversation time and reading with the students. Why is this important? It is this building of relationships between individuals that builds trust. Trust in each other paves the way for a stronger and better working relationship. Students also find that there is another significant and caring adult in their lives. The mentors show interest in the students as they talk to each other, read together, and share a critical learning experience. The next half hour is spent assisting students in the computer lab and /or in the classroom, working at centers. Technology is part of everyone's lives, so it makes sense that the mentor-student relationship continues. The conversation continues and emphasis is shifted to using their expertise in helping students navigate their way around the keyboard using *Type to Learn*—a keyboarding program.



Back in the classroom, the mentors lend their expertise, assisting the children in various arenas.

The mentors may, for example, engage the children in a math activity through observations and asking clarifying questions. Who wouldn't want to have a mentor by his or her side to guide learning? Both students and mentors build the rapport needed in sustaining meaningful dialog and discourse as a life skill.



What do students say about their work with mentors? Students have definite opinions about who they work with and what their impressions are about their experiences. Some say they like reading in the library where it is quiet. Others say they like it when their mentors help them solve math problems because they work in small groups. See the students want their own time with the mentors and wish they could work in the classrooms, more often. Danielle and Josh are airmen with the American Forces Network (AFN). Their volunteer service with young people makes a positive difference to children. Despite a busy work schedule to cover military news in and around Aviano Air Force Base in their military job, Danielle and Josh commit to supporting the mentorship program. This exemplifies the highest example of the school and base partnership at work.

The Jingle Jog 5k Fun Run at Ankara Unit School

On Saturday, 15 December, the first annual Jingle Jog 5K Fun Run and 1 mile Winter Walk were held at ASF. This charity event to support the student groups at Ankara Unit School and the Yenimahalle Animal Rescue Shelter was the brainchild of two eighth grade students, Alexandra Wiederock and Kalisse Hoach-Owens, and their sponsor, Mrs. Alicia Sexton. Both girls attended the Junior Leadership Seminar (JLS) in Germany in October and were tasked with completing a service project at their school. Many parents, students, teachers, and community members came out to enjoy the beautiful day with a run around the base or walk around the track.



The Yenimahalle Animal Rescue Shelter had several dogs adopted and raised funds to build dog houses, a roof for the shelter, and feeding troughs. The event raised a total of \$1,343.00 for the dog shelter. Several student groups, such as the Senior Class, the Junior Class, the Middle/High School Student Council, the Elementary Student Council, and the National Honor Society participated by selling Frito Pies, Drinks, Hot Dogs, and baked goods. These funds will go towards their various projects for the year, such as Graduation and Prom. The PTSO chipped in with some delicious baked goods, festive music, and Santa passed out candy canes. The winners of the 5K Fun Run are listed below. We are looking forward to continuing this event in the future with next year's JLS participants.

Over Age 18 Winners were:
1st Place **Duane Thompson**
2nd Place **Leigh Carignan**
3rd Place **Jess Bailey**

Under Age 18 Winners were:

1st Place **Niko Root**

2nd Place **D'Michael Thompson**

3rd place **Kathleen "Dakota" Saunders**



Students participated in the GEO Bee at Rota ES

Students in 4th to 6th grades, were able to participate in this year's Geo Bee. Each class in these grades held mini Geo Bees in their classrooms in December, and then the top two winners in their individual classes got to move on to the school wide finals. All finalists had time to study geography facts prior to the Geo Bee finals held on 10 January 2013. The competition was tough and it took over an hour for a school-wide winner to be selected. That honor went to Xavier Williams, a 5th grade student from Mr. Payne's class. He now gets to compete against other DoDEA school winners in Germany. Coming in second was Niccijush Rodriquez, and third was Jayson Thomas. All of us here at DGF Elementary wish Xavier the best of luck as he competes in Germany.



Learning While Playing at the Middle School: Another Continuous School Improvement Moment

How often do middle school students get an opportunity to laugh, to play, to cheer each other and learn at the same time? Well, if you're not sure, read on to discover how the middle school team teachers shared a teaching moment in a fun way. Middle school students Alex Bautista and Katie Graham attended the Junior Leadership Seminar in October 2012, and brought back some fun and rewarding *team-building* games and ideas. The ideas are intended to assist students in building better rapport and working relationships while learning. Alex and Katie lead a team-building activity—Cup Stacking—earlier in January. Who'd imagine that this simple game would teach students the art of working together.

Mr. Black's Seminar Class and Ms. McKenzie's Seminar Class was a mixed group of Seminar students "What a fun way to learn how to increase my critical thinking," Alyssa Alvarez stated as she walked back to class. "We need more fun activities like that." Students did not realize that they were actually increasing their critical thinking skills, which is part of *Lajes School's Continuous School Improvement Goal #1*. All students had to go by were the instructions.

"It was tough. After a while, I stopped trying to force my group to be the first ones finished and just work with them to get the job done," Tamaan Ruffin said. "When we all teamed together, we got it done, and we won."

All students had fun while teachers stood by to make sure they followed the instructions. However, some teachers had to help just a little bit. After all, it's what we do – teach!



Ms. Hawkins' Seminar Class



Dr. Humphrey's/Mr. Bennett's Classes



Mr. Ramey's Seminar Class



The Grand Bazaar comes to Pumastan at Vicenza Middle School

Beginning in November 2012, each of Mr. Hanby's 7th grade World Geography students chose a country from the regions studied (Middle East, Russia and Asia) to research background history, geography, culture, and local products made by the people of the respective countries. Students were encouraged to use their imagination and creativity when designing and making their products to be sold at the Grand Bazaar. In order to create an authentic Bazaar, there needed to be the feeling of being under a tent of some type—like maybe a couple of parachutes? Mr. Hanby contacted 1SG Tim Jensen at HHC HQ 173ABCT and asked about borrowing some used parachutes.



In early January 2013, three huge, olive green “Bazaar ceiling tents” were installed in the 7th grade wing of Vicenza Middle School. Finally, it was the day of the 7th grade Grand Bazaar and more than 70 seventh graders spread out their blankets and rugs to display their wares for sale. Students were dressed in the costumes of their countries: China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Mongolia.

The Grand Bazaar was officially opened by Sheikh al-Hanbibi who welcomed the entire 6th grade class of VMS, along with teachers and parents. The Sheikh generously handed everyone 100 “weros” to spend while shopping in the crowded, noisy, swirling mass

of people at the First Annual Grand Bazaar of Pumastan. A special guest stopped by to do some last minute shopping before returning to Afghanistan. Shoppers were surprised to see the Sheikh and Haminimi Karzai smiling for the photo journalists who attended the Grand Bazaar. The memories of this exciting experience were filmed by Vicenza AFN TV...so maybe there's a miniseries in the future?



VHS students travel to Prague to participate in Model United Nations

On 9 January 2013, seventeen Vicenza High School students traveled to the historic city of Prague, where they participated in the 6th annual PRAMUN (Prague Model United Nations) Conference. The conference attendees consisted of about 300 young adults from countries around the world, including Egypt, France, America, Canada, and the Czech Republic. The students from Vicenza high school represented the countries of Togo, South Korea, South Africa, Egypt, and Israel. Throughout the week, students participated in heated debates on topics such as cyber-terrorism, social networking privacy, food prices, and natural resources. They wrote and presented ideas for resolving these issues from their countries' point of view, working together with other members of their committees to create resolutions that were presented and voted upon by the whole conference.



When the students weren't working together to produce plans and goals for the issues facing today's world, the participant's spent the day exploring Prague, learning about the Velvet Revolution and listening to speeches from important political and historic figures, including individuals involved in the International Criminal Court, as well as influential participants in the Egyptian and Czech revolutions. What did the students gain from this experience? Many of them said they were introduced to new cultures and ideas. Others enjoyed touring and viewing the many beautiful sites and attractions of Prague, but if asked, most of the students will reply

that their favorite part of the trip was meeting new people. Natasha Santos—one of the students enrolled in the Model United Nations course at the high school—said, "I Enjoyed the whole experience, I was inspired and I was able to create friendships with people from all over." That is the whole purpose of the conference, the cultures and countries of our world for a common purpose. Theresa Martin—the Model United Nations teacher at Vicenza—said, "If there is anything I hope our students gained from this experience is building relationships with others." Student participants included Darius Cade, Hope Cobbledick, Dale Howell, Rylee Jacobsen, Tia Juliano, Liam Manville, Kaitlyn Martin, Katie McKeever, Ashley Neill, Nicolo Novek, Kate Panian, Marshall Perfetti, Natasha Santos, Leeza Snyder, Will Tramm, Ronnie Wilcox, Carl Wilkerson. Ms. Martin is the sponsor of MUN at VHS, and Ms. Wilcox accompanied the group as a chaperone.

PTSA Winter Concert at Incirlik Unit School



On 19 December, 2012 the Incirlik Unit School 2nd-5th Grade Chorus, under the direction of Mr. Shannon Daniels, presented the songs *White Christmas*, *Here We Come A-Wassailing*, *In The Bleak Midwinter*, and *All Through The Night*. The Kindergarten and first graders then joined the choir and entertained the crowd with their great bilingual singing on Feliz Navidad had the crowd moving along with them with their choreography on songs like *Jingle Bell Rock* and *Here Comes Santa Clause*. Toward the end of the concert there was a very moving "Home for the holidays" moment. The choir finished up the concert by wishing the standing room only crowd a *Holly Jolly Christmas*.

Understanding the AVID Tutorial Process at VHS

“The AVID tutorial process provides an excellent way for students to realize that they actually do know the answer to their questions, can develop critical thinking skills, and will receive assistance in classes in which they may be struggling” (Will Tramm, VHS Sophomore). AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, and the AVID tutorial process exemplifies this ideal of self-promoted growth and development. The students go home with a question or concept that they are struggling to understand and identify the general process or main idea; through this inquiry, they find the actual point where confusion arises from their question, and, sometimes, even discover that they know the answer already. When they get to class, the students are divided into small groups by subject, and then, in a student-led discussion, they ask probing questions of one another, designed to cause the student with the problem to think more critically about his or her question. Through tutorials, students work through math problems step-by-step, make connections between historical abstractions, improve their understanding of their coursework, and gain the increased confidence and self-respect which comes from standing up in front of a group, admitting that you have a problem, and then solving that problem. “Tutorials have helped me to understand test questions that I need help with. Even if I got the answer wrong on the test, the tutorials help me realize that I actually DO know the answer... I just have to think about it a little more” (Gabby Moore, VHS junior).



American Heroes come to Ankara Unit School

Have you ever met an American Hero? A third grade class at Ankara Unit School was able to meet American Heroes like Rosa Parks, George C. Marshall, Martin Luther King, Jr., and many others.



The students were to research an American Hero who took risks to secure our freedoms. Once the written report was complete, the students were to give a presentation on their American Hero, but they had to “be” the person their report was about. This project helped the students work on their writing, research skills, and oral communication skills. Not only did this process help the third graders learn valuable lessons, but it also helped a couple of high students. Two high school students who are taking speak this semester helped the third graders prepare for their presentations. The high school students spent one class period explaining how to deliver a good speech. The next class period the high school students helped the students come up with a “hook” or introduction for their speech. On the day of the presentations, the high school students came back to the class, where they graded the speech using a rubric they had created.



Ankara's Adventure in Reading Night

On 24 January, the Ankara PTSO presented the community with a night to remember. The evening started off with the 'International Café,' with food from around the world served to a large group of hungry and appreciative diners. Children were issued 'passports' to use as they went to reading groups where guest readers would read to them. Guest readers included teachers, parents, and community guests. Some of the exciting stories from around the world were from Poland, Pennsylvania Dutch Country, Germany, Kazakhstan, Hawaii, outer space, Africa, England and Finland. In the kindergarten room, the teacher dressed as The Cat in the Hat and read Cat in the Hat. In another classroom, students heard the story Paper Dolls and then created their own paper dolls. Judging by the enthusiasm of the children, as they moved from venue to venue, the evening was a great success.



Three jazz vocalists selected from VHS to participate in European Jazz Seminar

Three VHS students were chosen to participate in the vocal jazz section for this year's All DoDDS European Jazz Seminar. The students were selected from a blind audition, competing with students from other DoDDS Europe schools and are pictured below. The main event was Thursday, 17 January, at the *Stadthalle* in Landstuhl, Germany, with performances by the jazz choir and the DoDDS All European Jazz Seminar Big Band.

The students spent a week in Germany rehearsing and then presented three concerts at the end of the week. Guest clinician, world-famous trombonist Jiggs Whigham, worked with the students along with other talented teachers. Mr. Gary Marvel, VHS music director, accompanied the students and also acted as trumpet instructor for the jazz band.



Alley Ulmer, Mackenzie Roche, Veronica Borja



Invention Convention at Naples Elementary School

The Invention Convention was wonderful, and home to many great ideas by the students at Naples Elementary School. The Stir n' Sip, a great invention by Jodie Urbanski, is a straw with a spoon attached to it, so if you are having a drink like hot chocolate you can stir it with the reusable spoon, and then drink it with the reusable straw. One invention is The Weightless Backpack, which is a backpack where we counter-balanced the weight of the backpack by attaching fishing weights to the front so that you did not feel all of the weight on the back.

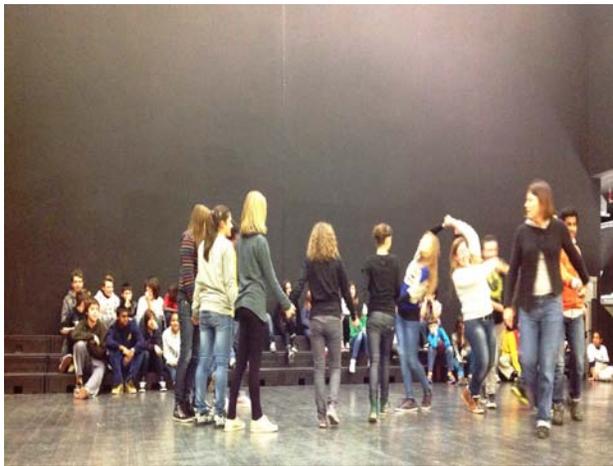
Another great invention is this amazing idea for a hat that is long enough to cover your eyes so that you can sleep in it. It also has spots for your head phones so that you don't have to worry about them falling out while you sleep. It also includes a spot on the back for you to put your iPod, MP3Player, etc. The Invention Convention meant a chance for us to showcase our ideas to other people. It also was a chance for us to meet other inventors and see what they came up with. It was interesting to see all of the other inventors' brilliant ideas. The Invention Convention was a fun event, and we hope they continue to host it for years to come.



Anika Mustard, John Lucci, Jamie Record

School Exchange Program at Vicenza Middle School

On Tuesday, 15 January, 22 students and 3 teachers from a middle school in Malo, Italy, visited our complex here in Vicenza. The Italian students spent the day with their assigned American student sponsors, going from class to class with them and participating in lessons. Isabella Pani, who is the coordinator of the school exchange program, was instrumental in arranging the visit with Allison Hay, Cristina Manea, and Laura Tescari (visiting teachers from the Malo Middle School).



Italian exchange students participate in a theater game that builds cooperation and teamwork skills, lead by Ms. West, the VMS school's drama teacher.

The students were very excited about their visit and the chance to make new friends and practice their English skills. The teachers were impressed with the huge and reader-friendly library, and hi-tech classrooms that incorporate technology into lessons. "This is a great cultural and learning opportunity for both the American and Italian students," quoted Ms. Pani.

The Italian students ended their day in the MPR on the stage, participating with the members of the VMS drama club in theater games. "I think it's wonderful that students can participate together in drama and not even speak each others' languages," said Ms. West, the drama teacher. "They were so enthusiastic to get up and give it a try!"

4th & 5th Graders Study The Renaissance at Livorno EMS

Livorno Middle School students are delving into the world of the Renaissance – the beginning of our "modern" age. Through this enrichment project, they are actively engaged in learning about the amazing period of growth in culture, art, literature, and exploration called the Renaissance. The project started with an exploration of the major points in the history of the Renaissance. Now, the students are researching the dynamic artists of the Renaissance, such as sculptors Donatello and Lorenzo Ghiberti, the master architect Filippo Brunelleschi, and the many painters of the Renaissance. In researching the artwork, students must be able to explain how the artist and his/her work demonstrated the characteristics and contributed to the achievements of the Renaissance. In the process, students have also created a modernized version of a painting by their artist. The next area the students will explore is Leonardo Da Vinci and his creations. The students are looking forward to a culminating field trip to Florence. They will visit the spring show at the Palazzo Strozzi Museum. It is a Renaissance theme exhibit that illustrates the origin of the "miracle" of the Renaissance in Florence through master pieces of sculpture.



Kiva Brazier discussing the Italian Renaissance Master Michelangelo's work the *Last Judgement* fresco in the Sistine Chapel.



Chris Ford pointing out the mysterious young Mary in Michelangelo's *The Pieta*

Cookies and Milk and Big Books Too—Leslie Revis, Incirlik Unit School

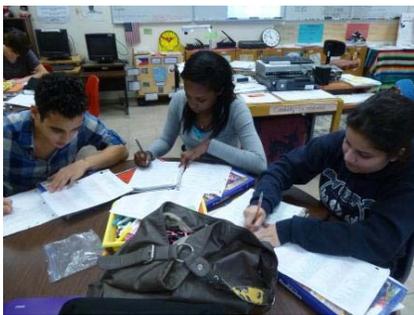


Somewhere we know, either from a delightful childhood memory or after having been reminded by Robert Fulgham, in “All I Ever Really Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten,” that cookies and milk make everything a little nicer, a little more fun, and a lot cozier. Such was my reflection as I looked forward to the opening day of our Spanish II students



reading from their Big Book creations. When students walked in, they were surprised by a table filled with tasty cookies, cups for milk, and—for those who love chocolate—why chocolate milk, of course! Students rapidly settled in with their tasty treats by their side, in full semi-circle to imitate what they remembered best from their early grade years, at Big Book reading time.

But, these were not ordinary Big Books that they had already been exposed to from their Kinder years. These were books that they had created in none other than their target language: Spanish. During opening days of the project, students had to first write their script and begin designing their illustrations to support their script.



They carefully designed attractive covers and title pages, too.

After several days of hard work, the projects were ready to be presented. Each student took turns reading the Big Book out loud to the eager audience of peers. These books depicted ten pages of student illustrated events that were occurring



outside the classroom while they were in the Spanish class. Each expressive sentence was supported by the imperfect tense and the vocabulary and expressions from their *Realidades* Spanish II text, chapters 4A & 4B. The integration of the material that focused on childhood memories, toys, and games came to life with every read page.



Students laughed gleefully and clapped with each turned page, as they began to recall their own lives as kids or enjoyed the creative illustrations that their peers had carefully designed to support the readings. Thus, students slurped on their milk and crunched their cookies while they leaned forward, listening to the stories, with obvious contentment.



Later that week, the Big Book readings went across the way to the elementary building, where the Spanish II student volunteers happily read to groups of students from Kindergarten to 6th grade. Reports back from both students and teachers were positively exciting, as each had discovered the joy of sharing Big Books between the ages and in different languages. The Spanish II students were amazed by how many younger students knew quite a bit of Spanish and eagerly tried to explain what had been read to them. Surprisingly, a number of the elementary grade students excitedly took turns reading parts of the Big Book to their listening audience.

Without a doubt, the Big Book project was a true success. What Robert Fulgham wrote was indeed very true—that there is nothing like cookies and milk, and, we might add, especially while being read to from a Big Book!

Anyone interested in the lesson plan and supportive material to accompany the Big Book Project for Spanish II is welcome to write me at: leslie.revis@eu.dodea.edu.

Sharing Differences and Similarities through ESL in Ankara



The Elementary English as a Second Language Club has been holding meetings every Wednesday since the beginning of school. Thirty students have participated each week. The students select which of two “committees” to participate in during the meetings, with each session running thirty minutes. The committee choices are reading/writing, math, plays and puppets, art, clay, and games. Each year the students are thrilled to attend. The purpose of the club is to allow students, grades 1st – 5th, from different countries and cultures the opportunity to get together in a more relaxed setting and practice their English. “Sharing differences and similarities helps them find an appreciation for one another,” says Ms. Tafoya, the club sponsor.



Music Club at Aviano Elementary School

'One Day in December,' the students at Aviano Elementary School had anything but a 'Blue Christmas' before the winter break. The after-school music club presented A Rockin' Christmas Party, and as the students were 'Rockin' Around the Jingle Bells' they were having a good time. There were eighty-five students in grades 1 – 5 that helped to spread the holiday spirit with 'My Favorite Things' and 'Silver Bells.' The students reminded everyone to 'Believe' while wishing for 'Seven Feet of Snow.'



Music Club students performing one of the songs from "A Rockin' Christmas Party."



Choir members hoping for "Seven Feet of Snow."



Introducing the songs

Tone Chimes

The fourth and fifth grade students who participated in the after school music club had the opportunity to learn a new instrument this December. The students learned how to play the tone chimes. Tone chimes are similar to hand bells, but have a different shape and a slightly different tone. The students stayed after school on Friday afternoons and came to a Saturday rehearsal in order to prepare for their big debut in the musical presentation. The students did a great job performing with only five rehearsals.



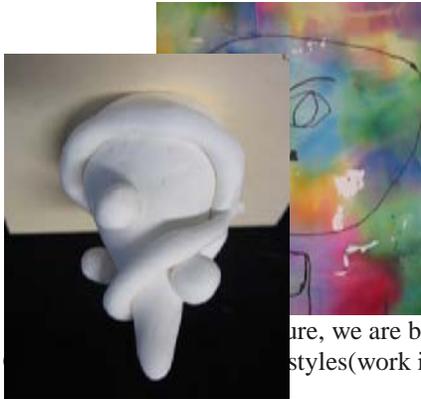
4th & 5th Grade students preparing to play the Tone Chimes



Watching to make sure we play the notes together.

What we're up to in the Art Room at Livorno EMS

Kinder: We identified what *abstract* means in art, using the work of artist Paul Klee. Working in a similar style, we created Klee-like portraits. Now we are welcoming winter by constructing snowmen (works in progress).



ure, we are building styles(work in progress).



2nd Grade: We explored secondary color mixing in painting with our tropical birds.



3rd Grade: Exploring the medium of clay, we have sculpted snowmen.**4/5 Grade:** After discussing the origins of Southern folk art ceramic face jars (or “Ugly Jars” as they are also known), we are in the process of constructing our own from clay.

6-8th Grades: are exploring CONTOUR LINE, PATTERN, CONTRAST, and EMPHASIS as they complete their DESIGN of their ultimate shoe.



Clay Animation / Video Class 7/8th: Are busy “shooting” their clay animation fables. They are realizing just how tedious production work can be— especially when working with polymer clay.



Humanities 6-8th: Almost finished with our exploration of Ben Mikaelson’s powerful children’s novel *Touching*, we are focusing on the themes of justice, truth, and self through final projects, which will illustrate experience with the novel through a variety of media.

LEMS Artists Online ~ Find Us Here:

Our virtual gallery on **Artsonia.com**:
<http://www.artsonia.com/schools/school.asp?id=105920>
Our virtual video gallery on **Schooltube.com**:
<http://www.schooltube.com/organization/223688/>
Our podcasts on **Podbean.com**: <http://lems.podbean.com/> (which can be subscribed to via iTunes)
Our middle school class website on **Edmodo.com**:
www.edmodo.com/mssperl (Parents you are welcome to join Edmodo as a parent and you will be able to view our class site and keep tabs on work that is assigned)

Holiday Activities at Bahrain Elementary School

Holiday cheer was spread through Bahrain Elementary School in December during a variety of festive activities. Elementary students attended a holiday concert performed by musicians in the Bahrain Middle/High School chorus and band. The PTSO sponsored a Santa's Market shopping extravaganza so that elementary students could purchase gifts for their family members. Volunteers even wrapped the gifts! A holiday movie was shown during an all-school pajama day. Hot chocolate and candy canes were served during the event. The last hour before vacation was spent enjoying a holiday sing-along.



Mrs. Finocciario prepared hot chocolate for the entire school.



Elementary students attended a holiday concert in the Great Hall.



Students watched a holiday movie on pajama day.



Fourth graders shopped at Santa's Market.



Plenty of Rudolphs danced for the school sing-along.



Second graders dance the Merry Hula.



Kanin Shull and Owen Flannery help Santa Brayden prepare for his dancing debut.

It Takes a Village at Aviano Sure Start

Aviano Sure Start is fortunate to have a musical expert who is willing to share her musical passion and talent with the Sure Start class. Every Thursday, Ms. Shelly Downey visits Sure Start to teach about music. The first quarter students learned about their voice and body as instruments. Second quarter they began learning about beat, rhythm, and how to play instruments. Ms. Shelly teaches how constructed, musical vocabulary, experiences with instruments, and, above all, participation for everyone to make the love of music a glowing passion in Aviano Sure Start. The saying, "It takes a village" rings so true in Aviano. We are so thankful that Ms. Shelly is so dedicated to helping the students in our Aviano Village.



Students at Naples ES learned all about Hanukkah

Mrs. Cornette visited our Kindergarten class to teach us about Hanukkah. We learned about the menorah and how the oil lasted for 8 days. Thank you for coming to our class! Afterwards, we made menorahs to show our families what we learned.



Mrs. Lambertson's and Mrs. Roundy's Class

