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NEWSLETTER No. 9

April – June 2022

During the month of April, the Ramadan period, the association closed its doors as it does every year given the rhythm of school, family life and the desire of employees to take their leave at that time.

Beneficiaries

ALL PEOPLE

French courses / DELF

The two beginners' groups (12), the A2-B1 conversation group (4), and the Delf B2 preparation group (2) ended their sessions in mid-June.

4 students took the Delf tests at the end of June.

CHILDREN

*Library

The cooperation with the Tamer Institute continued intensively in May with workshops for librarians, including Razan, a French and English speaker, newly recruited to the Association. She was able to attend a 3-day training course in Ramallah and workshops in Hebron for the children's library network. Shadow theatre, children's rights, moderating a debate after a reading, the use of puppets, how to imagine a story were the themes of the various days.

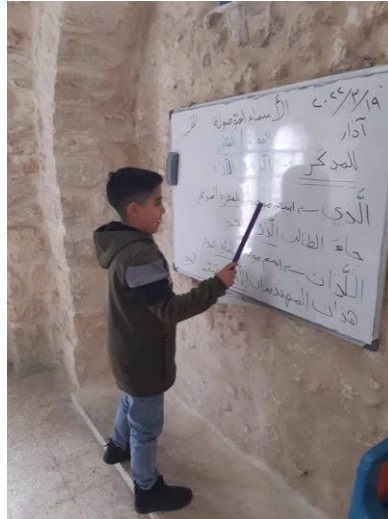
107 children participated simultaneously in the activities led by Razan in our library in the old town.

The Tamer Institute also donated us 4 books.



***School support**

Tutoring (Mathematics, Arabic, English) is always a hit with parents, teachers, and children! It took place every Saturday, except for two weeks when schools had to make up lessons following a partial teachers' strike that lasted two months.



This strike, added to the periods of lockdown last year, have a serious impact on the pupils' academic level. level of the students. Many parents are asking for a refresher session to be organised in August before the start of the school year, which is already threatened by the teachers' strike. We are doing our best to meet their wishes by seeking funds to pay the teachers who provide these support/upgrading courses.

A party closed the 2021-2022 session.



***Handicraft**

During a week dedicated to the environment, the children read, listened, and drew on the theme

of dreams and plants. Their work is to be put together to produce a story. They also made mini books out of crepe paper and foam, animal head masks and wooden key rings. About 160 children participated in the various activities. Together with the Palestinian Environmental Engineering Society, recycling workshops were held in the old town (recycling plastic bottles, cardboard and anti-covid masks).



WOMEN / SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

The social workers organised various sessions and meetings with local associations: Ministry of Health on violence, the Federation of Women's Committees on parent-child relations, the Union of Social Workers on the values and rules of the local society. 40 children and 37 mothers participated in these activities, together or separately. In addition, 28 people were received individually by the social workers. At their request, a group of a dozen women followed crochet courses for 4 weeks, given by a volunteer from the Federation of Women's Committees.



PATRIMONY AND TOURISM

The **French Biblical and Archaeological School of Jerusalem** organised a visit for 80 people on May the 21st. The Association guided them through the old city, to the craftsmen, to the site of Mambré and welcomed them for a lunch in its premises. A further 180 visitors have come in the last 3 months, either in groups or as individuals, accompanied by our local guides.



On June the 22nd, the **French Archaeological Mission of the Mambré Oak** arrived to continue its excavation campaign started in 2016. The 2022 project focuses on the eastern area of the sacred enclosure, densely occupied in the Byzantine, medieval and Mamluk periods, as previous campaigns have shown it.



ENVIRONMENT

Anwar mobilised some 300 people with the Association where preparatory meetings were held with local associations, the Prefecture, the relevant ministries and the town halls of Hebron, Tarqumia, Beit Kahel, and Halhoul for the **second clean-up campaign** of a part of the **Wadi el Qouf Forest** on May the 13th. All generations participated in this awareness-raising day, which also allowed many participants to discover the impressive As-Safa cave.

This forest, the only one in the vicinity of Hebron, and the largest protected area in the West Bank, is a favourite place for family picnics. Despite some signs asking to keep the place clean, rubbish piles up and there are some illegal dumpsites.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

On May the 9th, a TV5 Monde team met with the association and filmed some of the activities as part of an upcoming episode of the "Destination Francophonie" program, which is due to be broadcasted next winter.

From June the 11th to June the 14th, we had the pleasure of welcoming two representatives of the municipality of Arcueil: Lydia Mohamed Bouteben, deputy mayor of Arcueil, in charge of youth and international relations, and Josiane Arberet, director of the cultural centre of Arcueil and in charge of international relations. Cooperation projects with the AECHF on the one hand and the Hebron municipality on the other hand were discussed.

We also organised a meeting with some young Hebronite artists in order to organise an exhibition of their work during Autumn. One of them is currently at the the Cité des Arts for a 2-month residency.



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Project with e-Hikaye

In view of Marie-Laure Mangin's project (drawing and writing workshops for 11- to 14-year-old children) to be carried out in August at the Al Rowwad association (Aida camp) and at the AECHF, a meeting with the Tamer Institute took place in Ramallah to present the project and the possible avenues of cooperation.

SASH

The association Soutien à Solidarité Hébron held its general assembly on May the 3rd. The board was re-elected except for Aline Charron, who is leaving for Mayotte as a judge. She is replaced by Sarah Nardone, a former trainee (like Aline) at the AECHF. SASH will be present at the **Fête de l'Humanité from September the 9th to the 11th** at the Village du Monde, hosted by Salam Glass & Pottery, a glassblower and ceramist. We hope to see you there!

LIFE OF THE HEBRON-FRANCE ASSOCIATION

Aziza M., librarian, following her marriage and relocation, is replaced by Razan Hreiz. Aya, a social worker, is currently working full time during the maternity leave of her colleague Aziza A.

Our financial situation is in crisis due to the discontinuation of some grants because of covid, change of priorities, closure, and the very unfavourable euro/shekels exchange rate (1 € = 3.45 ILS). Indeed, our subsidies come from French sources and are paid in euros...

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have reduced the working hours of the employees by 50% and therefore their salary as well. We are fortunate that the team is still in place under these conditions, but we are in danger of losing some key staff soon. The cost of living in Palestine has increased a lot recently, as it has elsewhere. It is essential for us to be able to operate at full capacity again and increase salaries that have been frozen, since 2013 for some...

For example, the gas cost has risen to 7.05 ILS per litre (2 €), considerably increasing the transport costs of employees, while the minimum wage is 1600 ILS a month (about 460 €).

SASH, having recorded sales of Topoly, was able to make a transfer to Hébron-France but the situation remains critical. Our efforts to find possible local donors have been in vain. We are continuing our search in all directions! Do not hesitate if you have ideas and contacts.