

ALL THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE LIVSLUST FOUNDATION'S HOME AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR ORPHANS IN LATVIA

School's out for the seventh time

In June, Sewing pupils took their final exams dressed in their own creations. Behind the girls, are three Building pupils, also ready to leave school. All pupils are moving on to either practical work experience, employment or further studies. In September, the vacant places were filled with new pupils.



Scholarships pave the way for further studies

Oriflame's scholarship fund supports pupils wishing to continue their studies after Livslust or who need to build on their basic education during their time at the school. Eight pupils are currently being supported by the fund.

Latvian ministries form working group

13 September was an important day for Livslust. A meeting was held at the school attended by the Minister for Family and Children's Issues Ainars Bastiks, Welfare Minister Dagnija Stake, State Secretary Dita Luka, Gunars Krusts from the Ministry for Schools and Adult Education, the President's legal advisor Sandra Kukule, Ambassador of Sweden Göran Håkansson, County Governor for Tukums Edmunds Petersons, representatives from other local authorities and the Boards of the Livslust Foundation and its Latvian sister organisation Asociacija Dzivesprieks. The visitors were shown round and invited to meet the teachers and pupils. In a presentation, Principal Edijs Petersons and social pedagogue, Ilona Luksa highlighted the success former pupils of the school had gone on to enjoy, in other words, they were working, studying or living a normal family life. The school's programme for social rehabilitation plays an important role

in pupils' success. Everyone agreed that Livslust is a new way of thinking which is worth spreading, especially to special schools for vulnerable children. It was decided, therefore, to form a working group comprising representatives from the ministries and Dzivesprieks' Board with the aim of safeguarding and spreading Livslust's methods. The first meeting was held on 4 November and the next meeting was booked. We look forward to a rewarding collaboration.

The attitude of the staff builds trust

You have to chance it a little with other people to function in society. It's difficult if you've grown up without parents or in a problem family and you've been repeatedly let down. That's why the attitude of the adults close to the pupils plays such an important role in their rehabilitation. To win pupils' trust, staff must work as a team, in which everyone sends out the same message and works together to create a secure environment. On 14-15 September, Eva Christensson and Elisabeth Melin invited all employees to a seminar. The subject was furthering the team spirit and understanding of the school's purpose and planning the future. As part of the group work and open discussions, Livslust's aim and working methods were defined and a plan of work agreed for the next two years.



Livslust pupils on their annual countryside excursion

Livslust's unique combination

- Homely, secure environment
- Social rehabilitation with individual adaptation
- Personnel with the right attitude
- Small groups
- Vocational training with practical experience in own workshops
- Joint assumption of responsibility
- Drug prevention activities
- Healthy leisure activities
- Scholarships for further education
- Employer network
- Follow-up of former pupils



All former pupils are followed up

When pupils leave the school, they receive help from social pedagogue Gita Priede in looking for work or a place at another school and at finding accommodation which they are entitled to in their home municipality. We then try to keep in contact with them, to offer them the support they would normally get from their parents and to assess the success of the school. Since last spring, Gita has managed to trace and meet all former pupils and in most cases, it was a positive experience. The vast majority of former pupils have ended up working or studying and living in normal relationships with permanent partners and some have children. This type of follow-up isn't seen at all at state schools with pupils from the same target group as Livlust.

New rooms in the attic ready at last

It's taken a lot longer than planned, but the bedrooms are furnished at last and the large lounge will be ready for the Christmas party. The work was carried out by Livlust's Building pupils together with some hired professionals. Doors, cupboards and furniture were built onsite by the Building pupils. The lounge has been given a traditional Latvian feel with beautiful wooden pieces. A big thank-you goes to Ingvar Karlsson and Lasse Lindman, our loyal helpers since 1994.

Companies who contributed material: Bruske Måleri, Casco Adhesives, Daloc, Draka Kabel, Gunnebo Fastenings, Gustavsberg, Höganäs Byggkeramik, Ifö Electric, Johns Mansville, Lexell Electric, Lindab, Markaryds Armatur, Nils Hanssons Åkeri, Outokompo, Plannja, Rettig Värme, STEA, TAC Svenska, Thorin & Thorin, Uponor.

Painter training with Latvian partner

With Latvian painting company, Krasu Serviss, as a partner, the Building course of studies specialises in painting, tiling and other surface treatment. The company supplies the school with teachers, paint and other material together with practical work for qualified pupils. There is high demand for skilled painters in Latvia and Krasu Serviss aims to provide qualified pupils with employment. The Painter, Carpenter and Agricultural Worker courses of study are currently in the process of achieving state accreditation. The Sewing and Kitchen Assistant programmes are already accredited and pupils receive a state diploma on qualification.

Training service technicians

This vocational course, started by Electrolux at Livlust, continues to be run on a small scale. It has, however, been extended to include the reconditioning of microwave ovens in addition to vacuum cleaners. Juris Neimanis, responsible for operations, has been to Electrolux in Stockholm for training.

Livlust's farm is growing...

Thanks to everyone who "bought" a piece of agricultural land for Livlust. To date, we have acquired 37.7 hectares or 75 acres thanks to your support! Together with the land we rent, we have almost 260 hectares available to us. We hope to be able to acquire or lease a further 20-40 hectares. This year's harvest of winter wheat and

rape was satisfactory, but the rain in August gave us problems and pushed up the costs of the harvest. Nevertheless, the results were positive. Our peas didn't fare so well and we harvested just a fraction of the crop, resulting in a financial loss for us.

Due to Latvia's entry into the EU, we receive an agricultural subsidy equivalent to approx. 25% of what a Swedish farmer receives. The net contribution from Livlust's farming in 2004 covers the costs of approx. 3 pupils for a year.

Kaspars Pavars, who was responsible for the Farming right from the start, left Livlust this summer to pursue his studies and business activities further. Kaspars was one of the key people in the building up of the farming operations and we wish him all the best for the future, and we say hello to Andris Fogelis, Kaspars' successor.

The dream of a grain drier has become a reality.

Thanks to a generous donation to Farming from a private individual we have been able to obtain a grain drier. We are grateful to have it in plenty of time ahead of next year's harvest. Having our own drier will make a big difference to our profitability. This summer we were also able to purchase a bogie car, a muck spreader and new tyres and rims for the tractor – a big thank-you to our donor.

Sponsors meet pupils in team competition

This year's "Sponsor Games" comprising some fun sports and some slightly more demanding sports were held on 5 June in Aizupe. A number of sponsoring companies put together teams which competed against teams from Livlust and the schools in the neighbouring village. Singing, dancing and good food were also on the programme, all of which was organised by Livlust pupils.



Pupils entertain visitors on Sponsors Day.



The FA Order visits Livslust

"On a sunny Thursday in September, 21 excited girls climbed aboard the boat to Latvia. We were on our way to visit Livslust where we would experience the activities there and the everyday life of the children. The pupils served us a wonderful meal with vegetables grown at the school. We recognised the food as food we used to eat before fast food came along. We were taken on a tour of the school. We met the guys doing up a room in the attic and were shown their woodwork. At the farm there were tractors and other agricultural machinery. The textiles workshop and sewing room were in a separate building. Textile workers are taught from scratch here. We were shown training rooms and computer rooms, and the pupils showed us their own rooms which they had put their own personal stamp on. The principal told us a bit about the young people's backgrounds, but really wanted to talk about what Livslust can do for them. We realised that Livslust wants and can do a lot for these young people, but we also realised that they still need more of almost everything. Finally, we bought some of the popular textile goods from the sewing workshop.

We left the school with many positive experiences of this type of aid work - that it achieves a lot of good work. Even though the numbers helped by Livslust are few it is much better to make a strongly-focused effort which really helps than for lots of people to receive inadequate help. After we had thought further about how we could help Livslust, it seemed to us that the girls got fewer opportunities than the boys to move on and receive different kinds of vocational training. Bearing in mind that a sewing workshop and computer expertise are already available, we think there should be room for a high-tech computerised sewing machine which could be used to sew patterns and to embroider etc. We can probably also arrange for a textiles teacher for the computerised sewing machine. We at the FA Order would like to say thank-you once again for a wonderful visit and for looking after us so well."

Gunilla Hansson, The FA Order

Would you also like to travel to Latvia this spring?

We are constantly being asked whether we'll be organising a trip to Latvia again. Well, we're off this spring! We'd like to invite summer hosts, sponsors, and other donors and, of course, anyone else who would like to come provided we still have places. It will be a 3-day trip with one day in Riga and excursions to Livslust and other places of interest. **We need to know how many people are interested, so please register your "interest in the Latvia trip" on the enclosed form and send it back to us by post or fax.**

A Swedish summer for Livslust pupils

Thanks to Vattenfall's donations to our trips, 14 Livslust pupils were able to visit Sweden this summer. Getting to stay with a Swedish family makes a big difference to the young people's self-esteem and summer trips are an important part of their social rehabilitation. Lisa Josefson and Eva Ribbing are responsible for organising the trips and the contact between the families and pupils. A new, popular feature this year was the joint lunch for

host families and pupils on their arrival in Stockholm. The local Gotland newspaper printed a big article on the Friström family from Slite, who have been taking pupils since the start of 1999. **A big thank-you to all the summer hosts for your fantastic commitment!**



Inga and Vita on a canoe trip with the Sandgren family

This year's initiatives for Dzirciems special school

Thanks to the support of SEB Finans, Livslust pupils continue to organise activities for pupils at Dzirciems. A number of concerts, sporting events and joint parties have been held this year. This summer, Dzirciems pupils stayed two weeks at Livslust in Aizupe and, in Engure on the coast, pupils from both schools met at a joint camp.

Interest in Livslust's wooden and textile goods

The carpentry workshop has received several orders in Latvia for school gymnastics equipment and for furniture. In addition to the popular chopping boards, there are also a few new products under-way. The sewing workshop is also launching a few new products and has had a number of special orders over the year. We are now looking forward to the Christmas orders from some of our sponsoring companies. We will be selling Christmas packs, aprons, large and small fleece blankets, combi hat/scarves and much more. **Please use the order form enclosed with this newsletter to order goods.**

Baltic seminar

"Business opportunities in the Baltics" was the title of the seminar organised by Livslust on 18 October. Around seventy participants were invited to meet the highly captivating speakers in the form of Michael Treschow from Svenskt Näringsliv, Maria Rankka, a journalist, Anders Paalzow, Principal of the Riga School of Economics, Matti Viio from Snickers Workwear, Johan Frisk from WLT, Pontus Sardal from SEB Finans and Fredrik Ekman from Mint Capital. Ulf Wickbom led the very interesting talks, personal reflections and experiences. Proceeds from the seminar will cover the cost of 1,5 pupils for a year. **A big thank-you to all the participants and sponsors!**



A bequest to help our activities

Wellard Svensson from Ulricehamn saw a documentary about Livslust on TV. He was deeply moved by the situation of the vulnerable teenagers at the school and desperately wanted to help in some way. He lived by himself without heirs and in his will asked for his estate to be left to Livslust. We send our extreme gratitude to Wellard who died in August and to his relatives who helped us with everything after his death.

The rest of the news in brief

- Livslust staff starts teaching in English. Pupils already have English on their timetable.
- In their free time, pupils can choose from sport, music, pottery, woodwork, flower arranging and self-defence lessons.
- Over the summer, pupils rowed canoes along the River Abava and went on a trip to Plienciems on the coast.
- In September, old and new pupils went on a 2-day bus excursion to Klaipeda, Palanga, Liepaja and Kalvene. It was a great way of getting to know each other.
- Principal Edijs Petersons and soc. ped. Ilona Luksa represented Livslust at a seminar for young people at risk in Ventspils on 26 October.
- On 5 November this year's harvest festival was held in Aizupe. On 11 November, pupils went to see "Ronja the Robber's Daughter" at the theatre in Riga.
- Farming pupils visited a trade fair in Ramava to look at new machines.
- Latvian pensioners, teachers and Swedish clergy were among the visitors to Aizupe.
- Unilever in Latvia have sent a year's supply of hygiene products as a donation to the school.
- Telia Fördel's customers are continuing to send their bonus points to Livslust.

- Electrolux's art society put on an exhibition of work by Livslust pupils which was then sold in aid of the school.
- Essen International is continuing its offer to design and print information material and other publications.
- Vattenfall personnel bought Opera tickets within the company. All proceeds went to Livslust.
- Instant Attention has invited Livslust to use its services of publishing press releases on the Internet for free.
- We welcome Anette Keiler-Arvedson, formerly a PR manager at Vattenfall, as a new Livslust volunteer.
- Thank you to Snickers and Magnus Karlsson at IT-Huset who help us with the new website and Kalle Jonsson at Vattenfall who has offered his services as a computer consultant.
- Kerstin Nordin and Anette Keiler-Arvedson held a very well-received breakfast seminar for women entrepreneurs at Millesgården on 28 October.
- A big thank-you to the Söderberg family for the money collected for Livslust following Sven Söderberg's death.

Different ways of supporting Livslust's activities

A gift to Livslust is a gift to young people at risk in Latvia. LIVSLUST PARTNERS offer long-term commitment. LIVSLUST SPONSORS support the activities with a voluntary contribution each month. Individual contributions can also be made, e.g. at Christmas time or for a birthday. You can offer to be a SUMMER HOST or PURCHASE PRODUCTS made at the school or Livslust's own CHRISTMAS CARDS. To find out more, contact us on +46 8 660 77 84 or livslust@telia.com or www.livslust.com.

We are sincerely grateful...
...to everyone of you who gives your support!

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Livslust's partners and major contributors 2004 –

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