

A New Project

It is becoming very apparent that the majority of the state schools are as yet unprepared to meet the demands of blind and visually impaired children. The teachers are not very trained and the schools are not properly equipped with the required educational aids. These and many other inconveniences have resulted in a serious decline in the standard of education. There are skills that the children would still need to develop and subjects to learn. Therefore, we have planned a support project for our children who have joined inclusive education.

Arrangements will be made for them to come to school every month for a long weekend, in order to enhance their skills in computers, mobility and daily living skills, crafts, domestic science, English and music. This will also help them retain a close link to Al-Shurooq School. The budget for such a project is approximately £8000 (eight thousand pounds) for a period of nine months.

A New Arrival

We are very pleased to add to our family a lovely seven-year-old boy from Bir Zeit called Nasser. In addition to his visual impairment, Nasser is also physically disabled as a result of cerebral palsy due to neonatal asphyxia. However, Nasser is a very witty little boy and given proper care and education, he will overcome.

When he first joined Al-Shurooq, Nasser found it very difficult to accept being away from his family and totally refused us being around him. It took a while for all of us, including Nasser, to adjust.

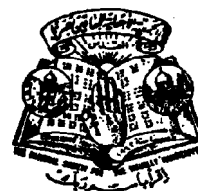


Braille Book Production

For some time now, we've been fundraising for the purchase of a new Braille printer. Fortunately, the society has signed an agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with the purpose of supplying a Braille printer for the society. However, the UNDP provided €22,000 towards the cost and the remaining €10,000 was covered by the society through your generous donations. The new printer will be installed in the new premises.

During the last three months six new titles have been added to our book collection, and two hundred fifty volumes of Braille books have been given out on loan, in addition to twelve Perkins Braille readers.

Thank you all for your support and we wish you a happy Easter.



THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

The National Library For The Blind

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Quarterly Newsletter - Spring 2009

Dear Friends,

It is quite amazing how quickly weeks, months, and years pass by. We have already gone through the first quarter of 2009. The cruel and inhuman attack on Gaza, which started in December and ended in January, still has its drastic effect on every Palestinian. Such atrocities could occur to each and every one of us at all times. We are all target of the Israeli forces. Sadly, governments of the developed world turn a blind eye to all the tragedies that Palestinians have to endure day after day. Whenever Israel chooses, it has full freedom to demolish houses, force people to leave the country, kill and injure innocent people. Surely, there are other ways of solving the problem of rockets falling upon their cities, but not mass destruction. We pray and hope that the Lord may one day bring peace, justice, and equality to the people of this Holy Land.

Helena Shehadeh

Al-Shurooq Matters

Things at the school are going smoothly; the children are happy and studying hard. The School's annual outing took place on March the 25th, and as usual the trip was to Jericho, being the warmest town to go to. They went to the park they had been to last year, to which some improvements had been made, and the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves trying the different games. They were lucky to have excellent weather, particularly as the previous day, it was terribly cold and stormy. Members of the staff did their best to give the children a lovely time.



Children at the Banana Land - Jericho

Easter is fast approaching; and the children will be going home for a long weekend so that the Christian staff could take a break. For the Christian community of the land, Easter is extra special. The Greek Orthodox Churches have prayers on a daily basis all during lent. The height of these services are the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of the Holy Week, Saturday and Sunday mark the peak of these celebrations. Please pray with us, that the Christian community in this land may retain their presence, in order to keep our faith alive, and the churches survive.

An Excellent Volunteer

We had the privilege of having a volunteer to help with the children, particularly in their free time. She was able to come for three weeks; from February 22nd until March 15th. Although Meghan is only 19 years-old, she was quite a responsible young lady, who fitted in with us extremely well. She did an excellent job with the children, and they all loved her, she got along even with the most difficult ones who need a lot of care. Meghan was sent to us through Melrose Parish Church, where her parents are members of its congregation. Thank you for sending her, we are grateful for her help.



Meghan and the children

Awaiting the Big Move

For the last six months some of us have been quite frustrated, as we wait month after month for the new building to be completed. We now hope to be in, and settled towards the end of April. The final handover of the building took place on Monday the 30th of March, then the cleaners started the hard task of clean the place prior to our moving in.