

THE SKY is the LIMIT

Year 2020-21, Issue 9



The Sky is the Limit
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FROM THE EDITORS

The Editors

Delayed by the Corona season, like all life has been, here comes Issue 9 of The sky is the limit. For obvious reasons, there are very few reports of mobilities as we have been pretty immobile over the past year. However, this has given us the opportunity to finally collect information on and impressions about the jobs we train for, which you can read in 'What we do & who we are'. This time, it compensates for the very short Going places. 'Our partners

abroad' reports on some successful strategies they used to cope with the crisis but most of all the contribution from the Austrian Nockberge park, our long term partner, shows how values such as unique flora and fauna, co-existence, sustainability, passing on local traditions and promoting local products guide their daily activities. Despite the pandemic, a group of students still managed to complete an on-line international project and

came up with a series of articles on burning global issues – these you will find in our 'What we have learnt' section and is titled Hop on & off around the world. 'Yes we can' brings a number of reflections on our experience with the lockdown, some of it actually quite positive! The 'Vibrant minds' this time features two poems in German, remember, it's not just an English magazine but rather a foreign language one.

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Norway taught me not to give up even if the day's not right or if the weather sucks

By Bor KLANČAR

I took part in an Erasmus+ (POPREI) mobility to a school in Voss, Norway, which specialises in agriculture and environment conservation, like ours. I find it hard to sit still in class but I love outdoor sports – which is why I enjoyed the experience so much. Most training was done outdoors.



Obviously, the weather is an issue in Norway – for us. But not the locals. If they have a goal or set about a task,

they do not give up when it starts raining. We got caught in a snowstorm and they didn't bother much, we just fi-

nished what we started. I was thrilled. I noticed that the Norwegians don't spoil their children as much as we do. In the forest kindergarten they are out and about all day every day, whatever the weather. They make fire and cook on it. They use real tools and none of the grown-ups screams how dangerous it is. I saw a child cut wood with an axe nearly his size and he was praised after accomplishing his goal. And proud, of course. Developing trust between children or students and their teachers is very important to Norwegians.

Their standard of living is much higher than ours and they buy high quality and expensive outdoor gear but they are very modest in many other ways. Their lifestyle is self-reliant and sustainable, they depend on nature and are not obsessed with shopping. Even today they are more Vikings than consumers, willing to put some effort in survival. They have fewer sunny days than we do but they appreciate them way more!



Invasive species across Europe

By Irena ŠUBIC JELOČNIK

SENHIAS (Save our European Natural Heritage from Invasive Alien Species Attack) is a project that aims at raising awareness about invasive species across Europe and at emphasising the importance of preserving biodiversity as well as natural and cultural heritage. I accompanied my students to Sweden in one of the 4 mobilities of the project and took part in hosting guests from Sweden, Belgium and Portugal in Slovenia.

I have been teaching English to students of nature conservation for nearly a decade and have myself had to acquire quite some knowledge of the field, along with a vast vocabulary. Still, fieldwork in Sweden widened my horizons with a detailed insight into the issue of invasive species in marine ecosystems. And I fell in love with Naturum centres.

As always, the students were thrilled by the experience. Staying in another country, working and socialising with people from several countries, taking in the nature, the culture, the school environment and of course experiencing first-hand what they mostly learn about in theory back home – never fails.

Perhaps the most touching of all was the observation of one of the students that the most important part of each mobility is not the content but making new friends and that 'it is always possible to communicate, even if you don't speak each other's language'. How about that!



Alps4nats online mobility

By Urška KLEČ

Second year students of nature conservation have been involved in the project **Alps4nats – Alpine initiatives for Alpine natives**. Small groups of students formed initiatives to address local sustainability challenges in the fields of agriculture, tourism, biodiversity and climate change. The fundamental principles guiding these initiatives are: **Learn, Act and Raise Awareness**.

In the beginning of the school year, representatives of Alps4nats initiatives were supposed to travel to France to make a list of biodiversity issues, which

are present in Slovenia, France and Italy and inspire students to learn and act. Unfortunately, COVID-19 prevented us from travelling abroad.

Instead, students and teachers from all three partner schools started an online mobility action in early February. They presented various alpine species and ecosystems, explained reasons for their endangered status and described actions, which led to improvement of their population status. They didn't limit their work to endangered species, but also included wolf and brown bear, which have repopulated the Alpine area in the last decades. It is not rare that we come across news reports about damage to livestock caused by large carnivores. Despite the need to manage their populations, we should put more emphasis on practices that foster better coexistence with these species. Students also presented invasive plant and animal species that are spreading across the Alps.

In the coming weeks our online mobility will focus on climate change issues, but until then, we are learning about French and Italian culture and heritage through a series of fun challenges. Despite the success of online mobility, we look forward to meeting face to face once again.



Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



What we do & who we are

By Daša DOLŽAN, Neža KAVALAR & students of vocational classes
(with a little help from the teachers)

Our school offers vocational courses in a number of fields (and not just the fields that you plough!). Below you will find a presentation of the profiles that we train for.

Farmer

What does a farmer do?

A farmer ploughs fields, plants crops, mows grass, makes straw bales, feeds the animals, milks the cows, drives a tractor, works in the orchard, the vineyard and in the forest.

What does a farmer use?

Farmers use tools such as a spade, a shovel, a rake, a pitchfork, an axe, a hose and a hoe ... They also use tractor attachments, for example a cultivator, a harvester, a hay baler, a rototiller, a seeder, a wagon and more.

Where does a farmer work?

A farmer works in the field, in the forest, in the vineyard or an orchard, and in the barn.

Why did you sign up for this program?

Because we have a farm at home and I need more education for the future.

What do you like the most about this job?

I can manage my time the way I want.

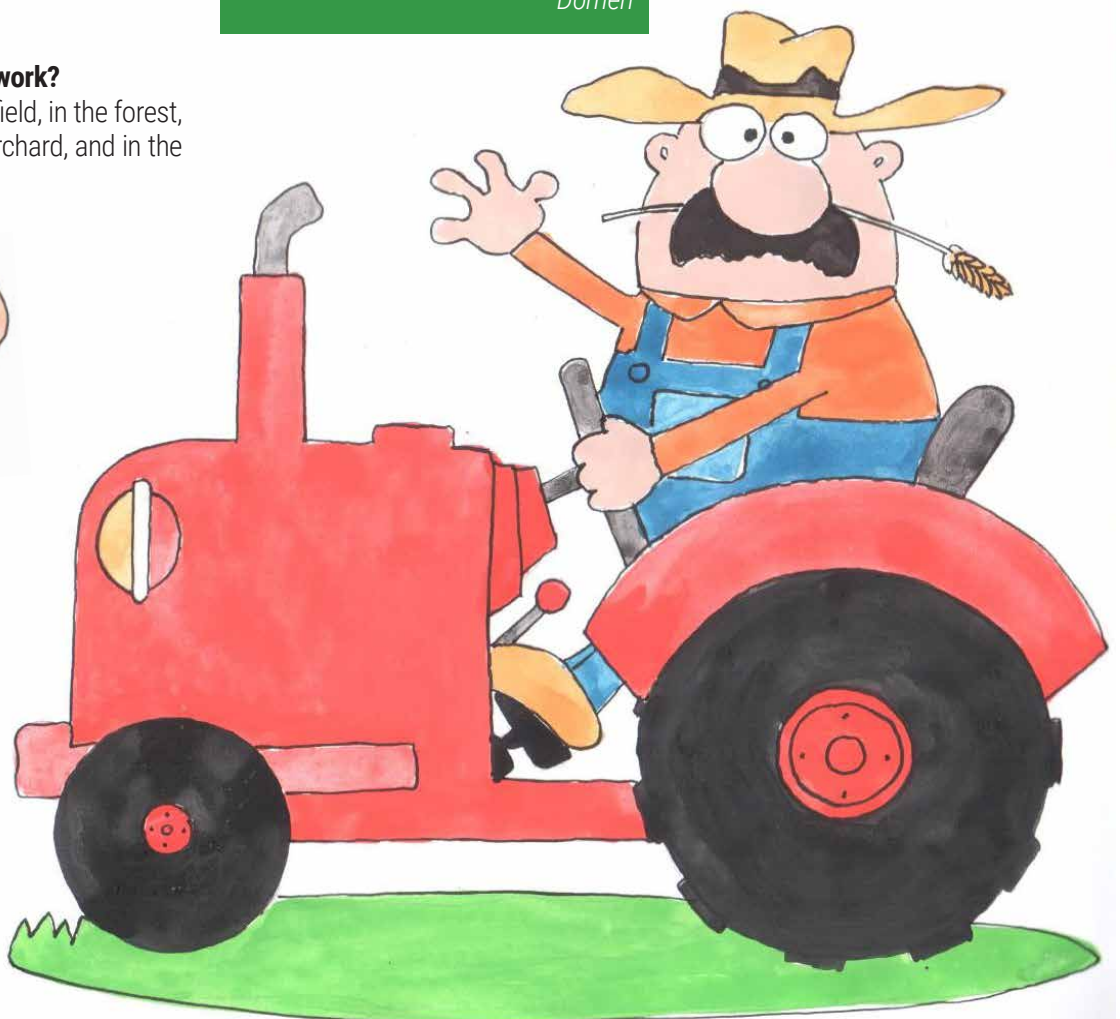
Do you have any plans for the future, with this education?

I will take over the farm.

Domen

PROs

- breathing fresh air
- working in nature
- living off your animals and crops
- home grown fruits and vegetables
- connection with other living things
- being your own boss



Gardener

What does a gardener do?

A gardener plants crops, flowers, vegetables ... and waters them; digs up the soil, takes care of plants, removes the weeds and dry parts of plants, harvests the crops and prepares the garden for winter.

What does a gardener use?

A lawnmower, gardening scissors, a shovel, a rake, a broom, a wheelbarrow, a ladder, a garden hose, a tractor, pots, gardening gloves, protection gear and a chain saw.

Where does a gardener work?

Gardeners work in gardens, fields, vineyards, orchards, garden centres, greenhouses, tree nurseries and parks.

PROs

- breathing fresh air
- working in nature
- living off your crops
- good for body, mind and soul
- home grown fruits and vegetables



Why did you sign up for this course?

I signed up for this course because I love nature and I wanted to know how to properly take care of it. Also, I wanted to know how to grow my own food.

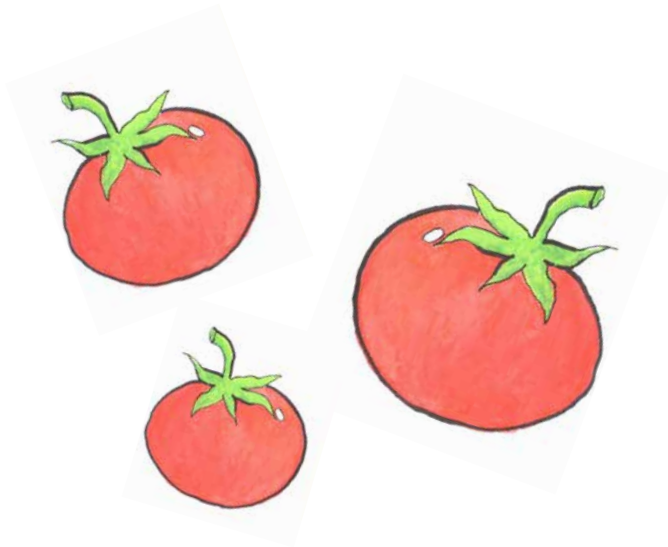
What do you like the most about this job?

I like being outside and working with my hands and I got to meet new people with similar interests as mine.

Do you have any plans for the future, with this education?

In the future I want to be a farmer. I think that gardening knowledge will come in handy.

Pika



Florist

What does a florist do?

A florist makes and decorates bouquets, undercuts flowers and waters them, wraps candles and gifts, makes arrangements, decorates rooms and other places for special occasions, decorates wedding cars, sells flowers, candles, gifts ...

What does a florist use?

They use an apron, gloves, flower scissors, a hot glue gun, vases and decorative ornaments, wires, decorative paper, fake or dried flowers, ribbons, floral foam, a knife, a watering can and hose, measuring tape, spray paint, ducktape, pliers.

Where does a florist work?

They work in flower shops, garden centers, greenhouses, at flower stands and marketplaces.

PROs

- being creative
- beautiful work environment
- working in nature, with flowers
- helping people, making arrangements



Why did you sign up for this program?

I signed up because I love to create and I want to do something different with flowers. I love to be in nature because it calms me and makes me feel like I am in a different world. At home we also have a small farm and I help my grandmother planting vegetables and flowers from which I make bouquets and arrangements.

What do you like the most about this job?

I like my job because I can create something different with flowers every day and when I see other people, how happy they are when they get a bouquet of flowers or just one flower, it motivates me even more and makes me happy.

Do you have any plans for the future, with this education?

I want to work in my own florist shop, where we would offer florist, horticultural services and landscape garden decoration. Next to the flower shop there would be another small shop we would offer local produce.

Manca



Confectioner

What does a confectioner do?

A confectioner creates, makes, shapes, bakes and decorates cakes, cookies, biscuits, pies and pastries; measures, weighs and mixes the ingredients and follows recipes. They beat the batter and knead the dough. Sometimes they make ice-cream. Confectioners bake for special events and for hundreds of people. They bake a lot of different kinds of desserts. They have to get up early to make fresh pastries.

What does a confectioner use?

A confectioner uses utensils, appliances and dishes: a cooker and an oven, a blender, an ice-cream machine, a cookie shaper, a whisk; spatulas and baking sheets, a broom to clean up the kitchen at the end of the day. For baking they use ingredients such as flour, sugar, eggs, butter, yeast, milk, chocolate, cinnamon and more.

Where does a confectioner work?

A confectioner works in a pastry shop, a bakery, a hotel, a restaurant, a grocery store or a supermarket.

I'm a confectioner. I decided for this course because I like working in the kitchen, especially with sweet ingredients. When I was little I was helping my mom in the kitchen a lot. Then I started baking on my own. I think my job is good because sweets, cakes, pastries and our other products make many people happy. I can also use my imagination to decorate desserts. In the future, I want to open my own café with confectionery. But first I want to learn as much as possible about desserts.

Blanka

PROs

- free desserts
- learning a lot about sweets
- making cakes and other sweets for your relatives
- you can have your own sweet shop



Baker

What does a baker do?

A baker mixes the ingredients, sifts flour, adds yeast, salt, extracts or add-ins into the dough, lets the dough rise, preheats the oven, greases the baking tray, shapes and bakes different kinds of bread, buns, croissants, bagels and pretzels.

What does a baker use?

Bakers use utensils such as a whisk, a bowl, a sieve or a colander ... They also use kitchen appliances, for example an oven, a blender, a microwave and more.

PROs

- working with hands
- working in the kitchen
- eating healthy bread
- home-made baked goods
- being your own boss



Where does a baker work?

A baker works in the kitchen, in a bakery or in a supermarket at the baked goods department.

Why did you sign up for this program?

Because I like to bake and this felt like the best option.

What do you like the most about this job?

I like to knead dough and it's good for when I'm frustrated. I also like to make pizza dough.

Do you have any plans for the future, with this education?

Yes, I will hopefully be a baker if nothing else works. I will go to work in my local bakery.

Tilen



Butcher

What does a butcher do?

A butcher slaughters, skins and bones animals such as pigs, cows, calves and bulls, chickens and turkeys. Then he cuts meat into smaller portions and prepares it for customers (makes sausages, shapes *čevapčići* and so on). A butcher also sells meat and advises customers on meat preparation.

What does a butcher use?

A butcher uses utensils such as a knife, a chopping board, a cleaver and appliances, for example food processor, fridge and freezer or cold rooms to store meat.

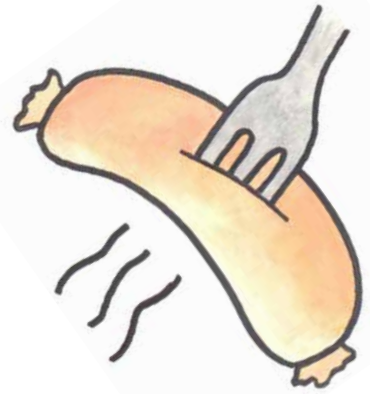
Where does a butcher work?

A butcher works at the butcher's shop or at the meat department in a grocery store.



PROs

- eating high-quality meat products
- working in a small team
- having a well-organised day
- starting and finishing your day early
- being your own boss



Why did you sign up for this program?

I decided for this course because I like to work with people. I like to work with meat and try different recipes.

What do you like the most about this job?

I like that people need me when they don't know how to slaughter a pig or a sheep. I like this atmosphere between you and the customer and how happy they are when you come.

Do you have any plans for the future, with this education?

Yes, I have the plan to continue school. Then I have the desire to open my own butcher shop.

Peter

Farm equipment mechanic

What does a mechanic do?

A mechanic diagnoses, repairs and overhauls farm machinery and vehicles, such as tractors, harvesters, and irrigation systems. They work on hydraulics, engine, transmission, driveline and similar.

What does a mechanic use?

Mechanics use many basic handtools, such as wrenches, pliers, hammers, and screwdrivers. They also use precision equipment, such as micrometers and torque wrenches, welding equipment and power tools to repair broken parts.

Where does a mechanic work?

A mechanic may work indoors or outdoors, depending on the machinery. They work in repair shops, garages or on-site on the fields.

Why did you sign up for this program?

I signed up because I love farm machinery and would love to know how they work.

What do you like the most about this job?

My favourite thing about this job is that I can work with tractors and get to know different machines to help with agriculture.

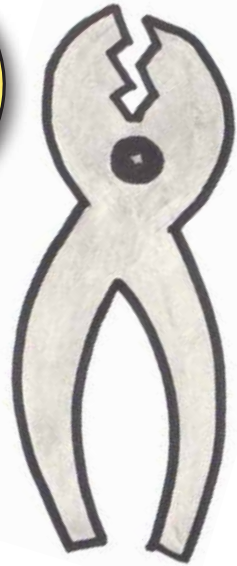
Do you have any plans for the future, with this education?

I don't have any plans for the future.

Valter

PROs

- enjoying hands-on work
- fixing things
- meeting new people all the time
- learning something new every day
- being around machines each workday
- a lot of variety



How we have been coping with the pandemic at the UNESCO Biosphere reserve Nockberge

By Heinz MEYER

The gentle hilltops set in the middle of the Alps are the characteristic trait of the Carinthia Nockberge. The Biosphere Reserve Nockberge is most captivating with the unique flora and fauna. However, the symbiosis of nature, life and work is its special feature. Thanks to this special feature, a unique coexistence between humans and nature has been able to develop. This is important to preserve and develop this area further in a sustainable way. In addition, those things that have been tried and tested over generations are worth passing on. The transfer of knowledge, traditions and skills to children, visitors and all those who are interested, is one of our core tasks. Due to the pandemic this year, we have been faced with special challenges. All school programs were cancelled in spring and in autumn it was still not possible to carry on with activities for schools. Also, the exchange



program with BC Naklo could not take place although many Austrian tourists participated in our summer activities, which were conducted by our rangers. The awareness about regional produ-

cts has increased noticeably during the pandemic. During this time, a delivery service for regional products was initiated in cooperation with different partners.



Hop on and off around the world with e-Twinning: Alaska, Siberia, Japan & Ethiopia

By students of 2L in 2019 – 2020
with Bernarda BOŽNAR

eTwinning projects are usually established among different European schools. Last year's 2L class was involved in the project Cultural hop and off around the world where students from Slovenia, Italy, France, Turkey and Ethiopia set on the path of exploring together global challenges in a number of countries around the world. The final result is an interactive map with short films, audio recordings, online boards and newspaper articles. The project won an eTwinning Quality Label.

In this project I learnt about Australia's weather, climate and fires, which caused a lot of damage in 2019. Fire destroyed nature, most of all forests ... It killed a lot of animals (birds, reptiles and mammals such as koalas). Many houses burnt down and people lost their homes. It's important to help Australia, because it's a part of our planet Earth, our beautiful home. We must take care of it.

Eva RANT

I have learnt a lot by taking part in this project. The most important thing I learnt is how to work as a team. Pre-

viously, I had only worked by myself and this project has taught me how to successfully work with other people. I also learned how to write an article that is interesting and educational at the same time.

Kaja TOMASSINO ROZMAN

In this project I have learnt how to use padlet and how to write a good article. If you want it well written, it should be reviewed by several people.

Nika KAPLJA

While working on this project, I learned a lot about not just Ethiopia, but also

many countries in Africa. I learned how difficult the lives of all Ethiopian people (especially women) are and how we can all do something to help them, even if our job is just raising awareness. I also learnt that working in a team can help you get different perspectives on a certain topic.

Urška ERMAN



Hop on and off map

The real reason why Alaska is in trouble

By Aleksander LOKATELJ, Jure OMAHEN & Matija JANC

At first glance, Alaska doesn't seem to be in trouble, but the more you look into the climate change, the more you see that Alaska is one of the most affected parts of the world. It soon may drown beneath its own previously frozen land.

Many villages in Alaska lay on the coast and those are the ones we need to worry about. For example, a small village in Alaska has been falling into the surrounding river for decades. And for decades, the village's residents, most of them native Alaskans, have been asking state and federal agencies for the help and funding they need to relocate the entire community. The lack of funding is still a problem and only a minority of the buildings and population had been relocated.

Whole ecosystems are affected and if we don't do anything, we will face a

mass extinction of indigenous species of animals and plants. Permanently frozen rivers are warming up and the sheets of ice are getting thinner, which may cause a lot of incidents including drowning because of the ice breaking under you.

There are many reasons why we should act now and one of them is because we will also be affected greatly.

The rising sea level will cause harsh coastal flooding and change weather patterns around the globe. Wildfires are also becoming common in Alaska due to the rising temperatures. We all

know that wildfires cause a lot of carbon dioxide to be released into the atmosphere. The CO₂ will cause the oceans to become more acidic which will dissolve coral and the shells of crustaceans.

And if that still isn't enough to persuade you into helping our cause, then maybe you should be aware that most of the seafood you eat comes from places like Alaska. On the other hand, the warmer climate is helping farmers grow more crops.

It's too late to stop and reverse the damage made, but we can still try to limit any further issues by educating ourselves on the topic.

How Siberia is slowly disappearing

By Ajda KROFL & Maj ZUPAN & Eva ZIBELNIK

Global warming in Siberia

We've all heard about the global warming and how it affects Earth and ourselves. One of the issues that it causes is the melting of permafrost in Siberia. Permafrost is frozen ground which includes rock and soil and its temperature always remains below zero – that way it stays frozen. Because of global warming, however, permafrost has slowly began melting and with that a series of problems have arisen.

Consequences of global warming

One of the biggest problems is that old and forgotten diseases are coming back to life. How is that possible? Well, here is an explanation: when something is frozen, it stays the way it is or, in other words, it gets preserved for as long as it stays frozen. In this case there were frozen bodies of animals trapped under the permafrost. Some of the animals still carried dangerous diseases like anthrax, smallpox, Spanish flu ... And when the

permafrost melted and uncovered the bodies of those animals, the diseases came back to life. First, they infected other living animals and after that the animals infected people.

Of course, that isn't the only problem that comes with it. Warmer atmosphere causes the ground to collapse in some areas. Because of that many people have lost their homes and work areas such as fields and forests, which also affects the industry and the economy of that area and its surroundings.

Yet people aren't the only ones who suffer from the loss of their homes. More and more wild animals are losing their habitats and their food sources which also causes extinctions. Some people might find it hard to believe this but because of the rising temperatures even Siberia (one of the coldest areas on Earth) is suffering because of the raging wildfires. Wild animals then flee from their habitats in the wilderness to the people and civilization. If that continues, the ani-

mals soon won't have any space left to live which would result in mass extinction.

The thawing permafrost is also exposing more and more of the huge hairy beasts, which roamed the colder Siberia 10,000 years ago. And with farming (agriculture) and hunting unreliable, more locals are searching for them. Digging for mammoth tusks is illegal, so the hunters are secretive. One ivory tusk can be worth up to 16,000 dollars on the Chinese market, enough for a family to survive one whole year.

Conclusion

It is very unfortunate for our planet and animals to suffer so much because of our wrongdoings. That's why we need to step together and help each other for a better future of people, wildlife and our planet Earth.

Four reasons to visit Japan

By Žan KELIH, Timon MALNAR, Andraž BELIČ PFAJFAR & Klara PRIMOŽIČ

Japan is a fascinating country with a rich culture and landscape. But why exactly does a tourist want to go there?

Food

The one thing that Japan is very famous for is its diverse and unique food. They have so many types of food that aren't found in any other part of the world like sushi, ramen, soba, tempura, gyoza. The most common type of food is seafood, which can also be eaten raw. The food consists of a lot of different soups that have various ingredients in them. Meat dishes aren't that common due to Buddhism.

Language and writing

The Japanese language is very unique and not at all similar to Chinese as many people think. It uses its own writing system that can be quite difficult in itself, but the thing that really makes Japanese hard is the way people have to speak to different groups. Many languages have two ways to speak – formal and informal. Japanese takes it one step further and has multiple options.

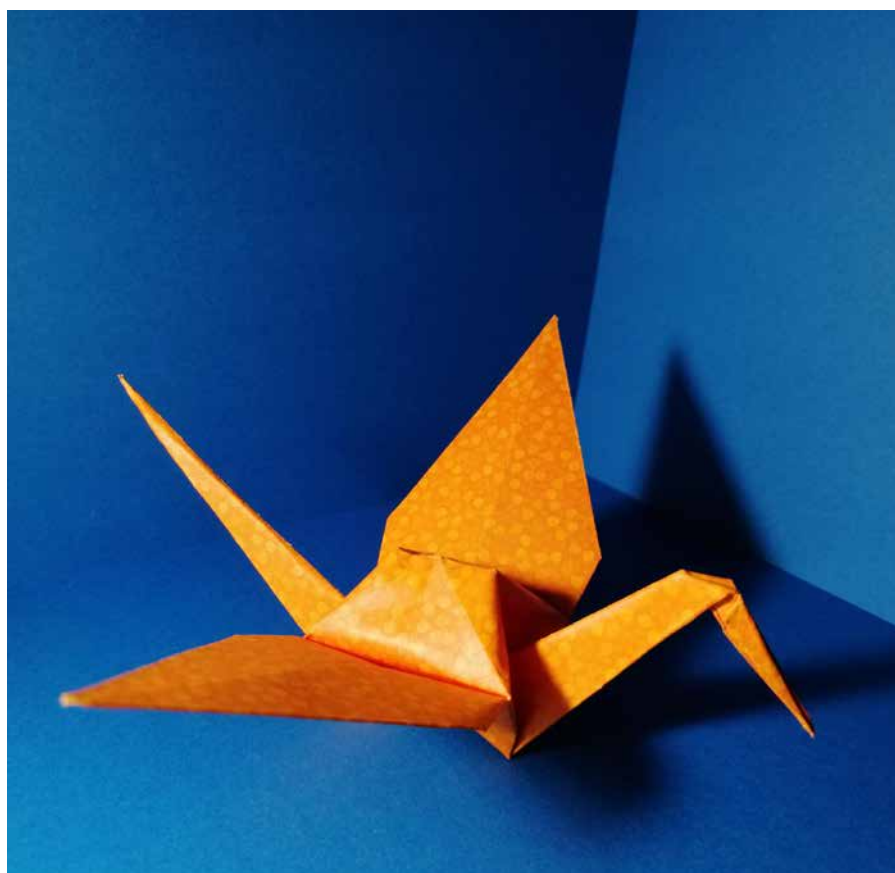
Cultural differences

In Japan, people aren't used to talking as much in public spaces. You shouldn't talk in crowded spaces and talking on the phone is considered rude. Japan is really harsh on rules, people form queues automatically and are usually not acting uncultured in public spaces. If you're sick, you should always wear a medical mask to keep the germs in. Japan is also really strict about punctuality. Things like late trains or people not being at work on time are nonexistent in Japan. But they don't have any problems with nudity. They have lots of hot springs and a number of rules on how to bathe in them. They don't appreciate physical contact as much as western cultures. When you are eating, you should slurp, so you show that you are enjoying your food. If you ever want to visit Japan, you should look up some other cultural differences so that you are not considered rude.

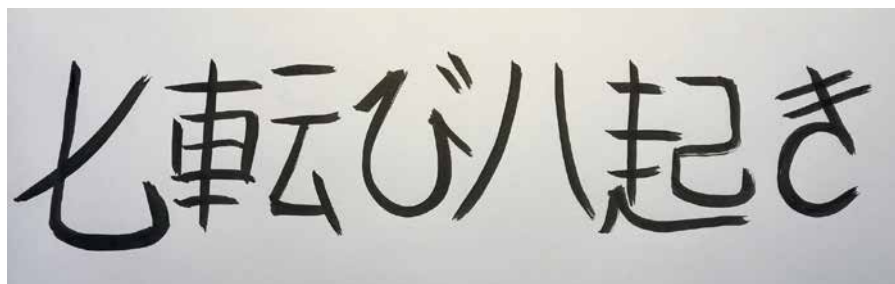
Shintoism and buddhism

In Japan, there are two major religions: Shintoism and Buddhism. Shintoism revolves around the belief that anything in nature contains a Kami (神) – god. You can see this in Japanese culture from ikebana to bonsai. Shinto translates to the way of gods, so they believe in multiple dei-

ties. It's the most widespread religion in Japan, with about 80 % practising it. They visit shrines, which have now become a popular tourist attraction. They also host lots of different festivals dedicated to their gods. But Buddhism is not a religion true to Japan. It spread from Korea and became popular in around the 6th century. It follows the teachings of Buddha, the path to achieving nirvana.



A crane in origami technique
Crane made & photo by David RUPNIK



'Nanakorobi yaoki' comes from the rich tradition of Japanese proverbs and means 'fall seven times and get up eight times'.
Writing & photo by Žan KELIH

Married at the age of 8?!

By Urška ERMAN, Kaja TOMASSINO ROZMAN,
Kaja ZAPLOTNIK & Maša MLADIČ

Ethiopia is the birthplace of coffee, donkeys and camels, one of the oldest countries in the world and the place of 200 dialects and over 80 languages, yet not a single woman there can decide what her future will look like!

Can you imagine being married at the age of 8? And meeting your husband at the altar while finding out he is five times older than you? You may not, but girls in Ethiopia certainly can. Every minute 28 girls in Ethiopia get married. It is not even their decision and they cannot do anything about it. Marriages in Ethiopia are not really about love. It is all about money, respecting tradition and gain for everyone else but the newlyweds. Numerous women in Ethiopia are placed into arranged marriages when they are young. Many of them are exposed to harmful traditional practices like child marriage, female genital mutilation and polygamous marriage. As indicated by specific tribes, for example the Oromo tribe, being married after the age of 16 is viewed as a taboo and carries disgrace to the young women and the family. In northern Ethiopia, the majority of people continue this tradition in order to secure their own and their children's futures, raise their family's status, avoid stigmatization, and prevent the shame of premarital sex.

The Programme 'Leave No Woman Behind' is an integrated programme aimed to empower women in the

Amhara and Tigray regions (regions in Ethiopia). It has made a lot of progress.

Here are some of the results:

- reduced prevalence of child marriage
- reduced prevalence of harmful tradition practices, including female genital cutting
- increased access to voluntary counselling and testing for HIV/AIDS by the community
- changing gender roles and division of labor of household chores and control of household assets
- women empowered through literacy classes and more supportive of children to attend school

Even though the women in Ethiopia are being neglected and badly treated, there are some who truly took a stand and made a difference.

Tirunesh Dibaba: The first woman to win Olympic gold medals in both the 5,000-metre and 10,000-metre races

Zemi Yenus: In a country where autism was considered a curse and autistic children were confined to a room, Zemi established the first autism center in Ethiopia

Amsale Gualu: The first female captain in Ethiopia and the sixth female pilot in the country

Meaza Ashenafi: Lawyer and Women's Rights Activist who established the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association.

Terrible things are happening to women in Ethiopia and they are finally taking a stand. They are trying to make a better world for them, as well as for the future generations and we should all help them reclaim what has been taken away from them.

This school year, our students and staff have been/are taking part in the following mobilities:

POPREI, NAPREI

- Aboretum Opeka Marčan, Croatia
- Biosphärenpark Nockberge, Austria
- ShipCon Limassol, Cyprus
- Zespół Szkół Ponadpodstawowych, im. Wincentego Witosa w samostrzelu, Poland
- Voss Jordbruksskule, Norway
- Parnumaa Kutsehariduskeskus/Parnumaa vocational education centre, Estonia

SENHIAS

ITHCF Gembloux, rue Verlaine, 5, 5030 Gembloux, Belgium

Suitable

Gymnasium Berchtesgaden, Berchtesgaden, Germany

Alps4nats

- Liceo Scientifico Statale Annibale Calini, Brescia, Italy
- MFR La Tour d'Aigues, Luberon, France

CoReFuture – Competence Ready for Future Expectations: staff mobility

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Goats are great!

Emma AŽBE talked to Lara TAVČAR, an animal lover and owner of a very special 'little zoo'.

What kind of animals do you have? And how many?

Different animals live in my little zoo. I have about 10 – 20 rodents, two rabbits, turtles, tortoises, a hedgehog, a ferret, two lizards, two tarantulas and an axolotl. In addition to small animals I have two dogs, two cats, thirteen chickens and two ponies.

How much money do you spend for your animals in a month?

I spend about 100 – 150 EUR a month on all the food. Hay and bedding are grown at home. Then there are the costs for a vet, if needed.

Did you adopt them?

Most of my animals are adopted. I got them from people who got tired of them, didn't have time, developed allergies ... and for other reasons. But I also bought some and got them as babies from breeders.

Why do you have so many animals at home?

I have loved animals since I was a child and I always wanted to have a lot of them. Once I took on a couple of them, I quickly became known as a shelter and I received calls every day. I kept some of them and I found a new home for others.

Do you have them outside or in the house?

I have small animals in the house, the others are outside. Currently, a very special space is under construction, separated from the house. The place will be heated, there will be electricity inside and it will be intended only for animals.

When and why did you become so fond of animals?

When I was little I used to go to different farms, to the zoo and so on ... with my parents. So I was already fascinated by animals at that time. I have always felt good around animals and still do. I feel joy and the animals calm me down.



What was your first pet?

The first animal of my own was a hamster named Smrček. I was in the fourth grade when I got that white Russian hamster for my birthday.

What's your favourite animal and why?

My favourite animals are goats. When I was little, my father's friend brought goats to pasture every year. I loved them very much. But most of all I was happy about little goats every year. So

goats have been a big part of my life. I just find them great and in the future I really want to own them.

What was your first interaction with an animal?

I first met the animals when I went with my grandmother to her friends' farm. Back then I really wanted to have a farm when I grew up. Because the animals on that farm were the first animals I met.



Seek discomfort

By Vid ZUPANČIČ

My name is Vid and I'm part of the Bio-exo society. It's a group of people who love exotic animals. We also organise exhibitions. Usually there are two exhibitions a year. Members bring their animals: snakes, fish, turtles, rodents, ferrets, praying mantises and so on. It's the

biggest exhibition of its kind in Slovenia. I really enjoy working there because we teach people about animals and helping them overcome their fear of animals such as cockroaches, snakes, spiders and so on. People often ask me if I own any animals myself and my answer is,

yes, I do have a guinea pig. I hope you learned something new and I hope you will overcome your fear of certain animals – if you have it. Remember: Seek discomfort (to overcome it).

Lockdown was a happy time because of my animals

By Ema AŽBE

I have animals at home. More specifically in my room. I have gerbils, parrots, a cat and a dog in one single room and everyone accepts each other. Parrots can freely fly to every corner of the house, and the cat and the dog can roam around, too, only gerbils have limitation. Every time an animal passes away another one appears. I have never been with them when they died, I don't know is that luck or curse but every time an ani-

mal has gone I was away somewhere. Each animal is special to me, they have their own personalities and feelings. So I'm really sad when they're gone. When I have enough space for a new animal I'd like to rescue them, but I usually buy them at the store. I consider them rescued because they had a long way to get to the store and they are usually transported in small cages and badly treated. I must go to the pet store once

per month and even when coronavirus struck it wasn't a big deal. Pet store was still open even during lockdown. Actually, it wasn't that bad when the lockdown began. I was with my animals 24/7 so it was a happy time. Corona didn't affect me at all! Animals were glad, too, that I could spend more time with them, especially my dog Roxy.

I am writing this because someone promised me cookies

By Jerca BOKAL

Have you ever heard the saying: 'feel the fear and do it anyway?' It is a lot easier said than done, but every once in a while you get a chance to do something a little crazy. And every once in a while you actually do it. Even if it scares you.

Everything started on January 1st, 2021 when I wished happy new year to my friend Gaj in the Netherlands. We had not talked in a while so there was some catching up to do ... He and his family train and sell showjumping horses. They have a beautiful stable with 25 horses, give or take. They were planning on going to Spain for a competition with 5 of the horses and they

needed a groom – someone who would take care of them, feed them, prepare them for competition and everything else. Because of the whole corona situation it was quite hard finding a groom who would be willing to go to Spain for a few weeks so he asked me if I was interested. I said yes before I really thought things through. I did not even ask my mom as I was not at home. It was the first thing I told her when I saw her, though. And the awesome mom that she is, she supported me (and still does) in every way.

The competition – Sunshine tour – is held in Spain in Vejer de la Frontera. The tour brings together more than

2,000 horses and 400 riders from 40 different countries over seven weeks. It is one of the biggest equestrian events in Europe. To be honest, I was nervous. It is a big event, you have to be organized, hard-working, you have to make sure that everything is the way it should be, and if it is not, you have to fix it as fast as you can. I had never been a groom at such a big competition. Well, I had never been a groom at a competition, but you know, go big or go home, right?

The plan was to go to the Netherlands first, stay there for a few days and then help pack things, prepare the horses and drive to Spain. Because of the



whole corona situation I was not counting on flying to the Netherlands so we were looking for other options. At the end, they picked me up at home and we drove to the Netherlands as they had some business in Slovenia. That was a week or so before the date we were leaving for Spain. They picked me up in the morning and we drove for 12 hours. I got a place to stay in their truck where I also live now when we are in Spain. The truck has a living part, similar to a motorhome, with two beds, a table, a small kitchen and a bathroom with a shower, a sink and a toilet. In the other part there is a place for safely transporting up to six horses.

While staying at their home and stable (their apartment is above the stable) I helped them in the mornings and in the afternoons, while I didn't have school. They also taught me a few things that I need to know how to do now when we are in Spain.

We packed things and left Wednesday morning. Gaj and Jackie – a girl who also helps with the horses – left in a car around 6 am. They drove for two days. I went with Gaj's parents in a truck. After an hour of driving we stopped and waited for some friends who were also going to the competition with their horses. I continued the drive with one of those friends, named Nick, and his



3 horses. We continued driving as a group of one big truck and two smaller ones, with 6 people and 12 horses, for 3 days, every day for 10 hours. So a little more than 2,300km. We slept at some stables so the horses and all of us got some sleep.

The competition started on Tuesday so we had a few days before that. We used them for preparing the horses, training, getting used to everything. My typical day now when the competition started starts at 6 am. I wake up, get myself ready, eat breakfast and then go to the stables. All the horses from the competition have to be stabled here. The truck where I live is parked 500 meters away from our horses. When I get to them I check if every one of them is still alive and well. I give them their hay and grain mix. I muck out the stalls and change water in water buckets. I swipe in front of stalls and make sure everything is at its place. When Gaj comes he tells me what the plan for the day is. He tells me which horse he is competing with and when to have it ready, which horses have to be walked and which have to be lunged. The most important thing I have to do is prepare the right horse and make sure it looks as good as it can. I have to be careful and use the right saddle, bridle, saddle pad, put on the right start number, boots and get it to the right ring in time. Then I help warming up in the warmup ring and when Gaj is done with the horse I take it back to the stable, put everything off, clean the horse and the tack and repeat everything with the other horses. We have 5 horses with us – two mares and three geldings. He doesn't compete with all 5 in one day, usually only with 2 or 3 our horses but then he also rides horses from another owner (who has around 20 horses at the competition) but I am not sure how many of those he rides a day.

For me this is an excellent experience and I enjoy it a lot. It is a lot of work but I also have fun. I have met so many different interesting people from different parts of Europe. I hope I can do this again sometime. At first it was scary for sure, now I don't want to leave (the reason for that could also be sunshine and 17°C).

Hasta luego!

Mein Land

By Ažbe RAUH, Inja
JARKOVIČ, Anja MARKIČ
MERLAK & Enej VALJAVEC

Das ist mein Land
Das ist mein Land
Da ist meine Liebe und mein Herz.

Hier meine Vätter kämpfen,
Hier meine Vätter gewinnen,
Hier lebe ich.

Mein Land ist sehr elegant.
Ich halte seine Hand.
Es ist 'ne pefekte Zehn
Ich möchte es immer wieder sehen.

Das ist mein Land.
Ich halte seine Hand.
Ich bin sehr stolz darauf.

Stadtleben

By Aljaž SMOLEJ, Tinkara
URBANČIČ, Rebeka SELJAK,
Tina FILIPIČ

Die Stadt ist groß,
Hier ist kein Moos
Und wir haben zwei Zoos.
Stadtleben ist nicht für uns.

Autos machen viel Lärm,
wir sehen keinen Stern,
aber das ist sehr modern.
Stadtleben ist nicht für uns.

Ich gehe vorbei Hochhaus
Ich sehe eine große Maus
und ich bin in 10 Minuten raus.
Stadtleben ist nicht für uns.

How does popular music affect young people?

By Pika LOTRIČ

The definition of popular music is: music written and marketed with the intention of achieving mass distribution and sales, now principally in the form of recordings. Many people find it overrated and boring, is it really?

Most young adults all over the world listen to popular music, but, as it was stated before, many people dislike it and find it boring and overrated. I and many other people find it interesting, fun and helpful. Sometimes people feel like they want to disappear, but music helps them.

I asked some people about the effects of listening to popular music. Most of them say it helps them through difficult times, some say it helps them relax. They say it helps them disconnect from reality once in a while when life is too much. It gives them some time and space to clear their head and think. It comforts them when they are sad and makes them happy. Some people seek refuge in music. It feels like you are able to enter many worlds at once. It makes them comfortable with who they are.

Music and the artist can help them realise that it's okay for a boy to wear skirts and dresses or paint their nails. Good examples of this are Harry Styles and Yungblud.

Some of the artists people listen to are Yungblud, Taylor Swift, Lana Del Rey, The 1975, The Neighborhood, Cavetown, 5 Seconds of Summer, One Direction, Neil Sedaka, Harry Styles, Niall Horan, Louis Tomlinson, Tom Grennan, The Platters, Abba etc. Some of them are well known but all of them are worth listening to.

In conclusion, everyone has something that makes them happy and that makes them feel comfortable. But never judge it. You may find this music overrated but it is a safe space and life saver for many people. Never judge a book by its cover.



Tolkien's Artwork in The Hobbit

By Ana POKLUKAR

Nowadays, everyone knows Lord of the Rings – all have heard of it, most have seen the movies and many, many have read the books. The series is one of the best-selling of all time, and it was even said that it is 'the Book of the Millennium'. An important forestory for The Lord of the Rings is published as a children's story; The Hobbit or There and Back Again. As The Hobbit was meant for children, Tolkien insisted for in it to be some illustrations. So he painted quite a number of them.

It is said, that John's mother taught him to paint, and that he started painting at an early age. Though he never truly studied painting (his passion were languages), he was remarkably good at realistically painting nature like landscapes, flowers or trees. He was especially fond of trees, as can be seen in his long and detailed descriptions of them in his books. Besides nature, he had a good hand for buildings and such. But he himself had said that he could not draw a human figure.

He painted a lot of places from his stories, but not for the publishing purposes – he just liked doing so and it also made it easier for him to keep the scene as it was and not accidentally change it. But as said before, he wanted The Hobbit to

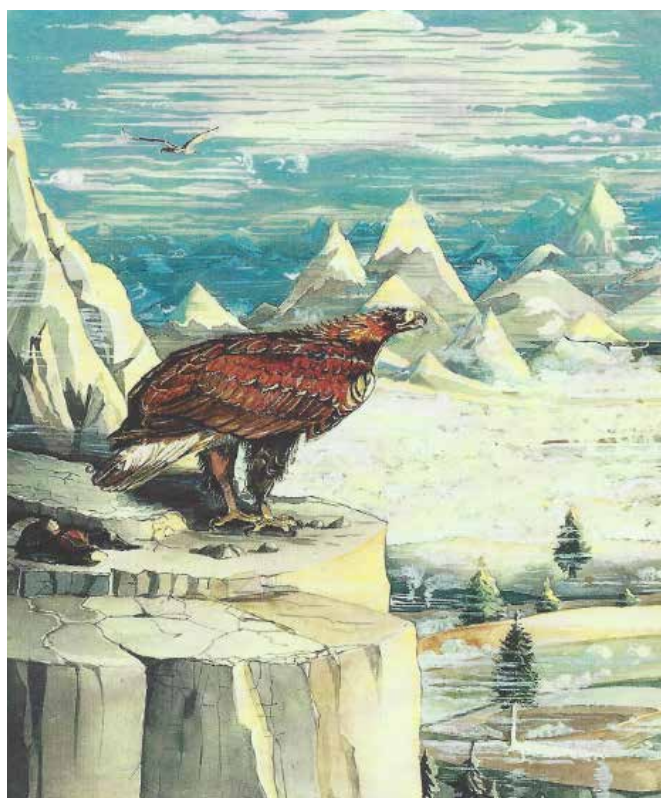
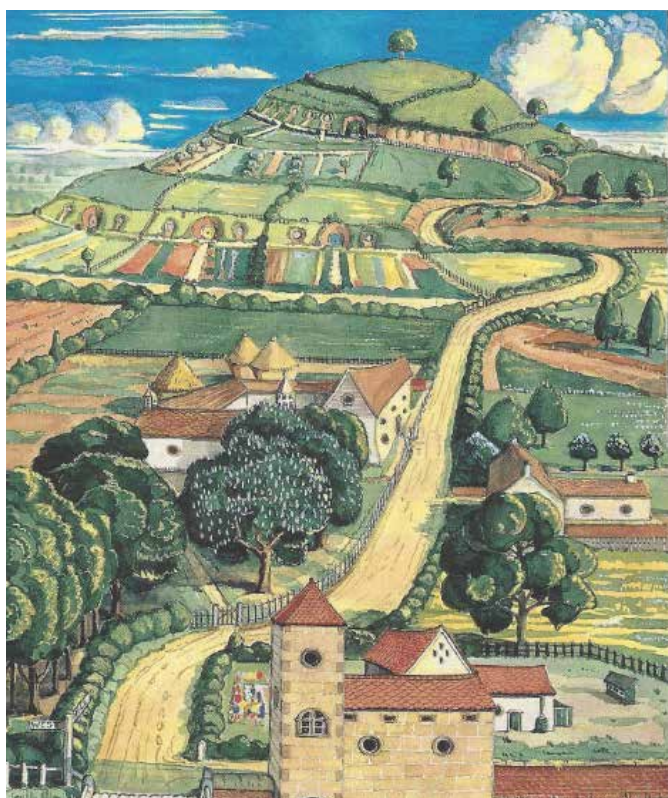
have some illustrations. Even if at first his publishers thought of illustrations as unnecessary, Tolkien did sketch and include them into the manuscript – and when the publishers saw them, they decided to include them. So the author spent a good deal of time planning, painting, correcting and repainting water-colour paintings for the book.

In the first publication of the book, there were ten black and white illustrations and two maps. One of the illustrations (the Mirkwood forest) was cut at the top and since Tolkien gave away the original, we will probably never see that painting in full.

The dustjacket and Thror's map were not printed and coloured as Tolkien wished. It was said that the dustjacket

had too many colours (white, black, green, blue, and red). So to Tolkien's dismay, they opted not to use red. Tolkien's publishers also limited map colours to consist of only two – so Thror's Map is in red and black despite the fact that Tolkien intended for it to be blue, red, and white. There were other complications with Thror's map, as Tolkien wanted the secret runes on it to be seen when lifted to the light – so a map would be printed on one side, and on the other, the runes. When a reader would lift the paper towards light, he would be able to read the runes. But because publishers found that to be of no use, and to cut the price of the book, they decided to just print the map and runes on one side.

In later editions and newer publications some of Tolkien's paintings were printed in full colour. Nowadays if you wish to buy a dustjacket, it also includes a red coloured sun and a dragon. And so now, readers and fans all over the world have the pleasure of having a better insight into Tolkien's world and its beauty.



From: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/tolkien-can-draw-who-knew-7-beautiful-hobbit-illustrations-photos>

We used to take everything for granted

By Jerca **PODOBNIK**

I must say everything is very different now, and it will probably be for a very long time if not forever. Pandemic has taught me that we should appreciate the time spent with people that we love. We used to take everything for granted. Every morning coffee with our friends, every date with our partner and every

dinner with our family. And now, that we are forced to stay at home for our well-being, we can feel the emptiness that the pandemic has brought us. However, we shouldn't feel empty and bored while being alone, we should do something productive, something that we enjoy doing. I know it's hard being in your home,

away from your loved ones, but we all have a number of things that we can do. Even from home we can learn new things, improve our knowledge in certain areas and much more. We just need motivation or, in other words, a little kick in the ass.

Corona won't stop me

By Lara **TAVČAR**

I own a little zoo and I used to go to pet shops every other week. When I heard on TV that everything will be closed and we will have to stay at home until the corona virus is gone, my heart almost stopped. I am working as a waitress and because we had to close I don't have a job at the moment and that means no money. But since I spend a lot of my money on my animals every month, I got terribly scared I wouldn't

make it and I would have to give my animals away because I wouldn't have enough money to get through this crisis. Then I got an idea that I could sell my old cages and that's exactly what I did. I sold all the cages and I got enough money to buy food for my animals that will last for 3 months. I started picking dandelion and other plants that were good for my animals and that's how I avoided spending money on fruit

and vegetables. And if I'm honest, dandelion and other plants are healthier for my animals. Thank god we didn't get corona virus in the winter and since now I'm home almost 24 hours, me and my boyfriend started making cages for my animals at home so I won't have to spend money on buying new ones. I've had this little zoo of mine for about 5 years. Nothing has stopped me so far and neither will this corona virus.

There are some advantages to the lockdown, after all

By Neža **JARC**

There are a lot of PROs and CONs of the coronavirus lockdown. I think the best advantage of this lockdown is that people finally appreciate us farmers. The food that was shipped from different countries before is now not allowed because of the lockdown and people buy food from local farmers instead of buying shipped

food in stores. Since the school is shut down for who knows how long, the con is that students have to do work from home which is not very easy, because we have to study by ourselves and sometimes we do not understand what we have to do. The biggest disadvantage of this lockdown is that we do not get to see our

friends. For me, it is a benefit that we get to stay home all day, every day and we can spend time with our family and pets. Another con is that we are now in front of the computer all day doing work from home and some people do not have a computer at home and are not able to be a part of this kind of learning.

Lockdown pros & cons

By Bojan **MICOV**

PROs

I can stay at home more and learn new things like how to cook and bake better, learn a new language, draw better. I also have time to play video games, watch movies and TV series, clean and tidy my



room, help clean the flat, study more, sleep more and save more money. There is less pollution.

CONs

I can't meet up with my friends, go to



the cinema, visit restaurants, play outdoor games (like football, basketball ...), I can't visit relatives and friends at their homes, sometimes it's harder to study and do home assignments if you don't understand them.



It's been great to reconnect but now it's not fun any more

By Andreja ZGONEC

Situations like this happen once in a century. This pandemic started as something amusing, something that would bring people together. Scenes on balconies from Italy and Spain where people are singing are so heart-warming. We finally have a lot of time to spend with our families and

reconnect better. In this period, we are part of something special but it is slowly turning out to be terrible. We can finally see the worst side of human behaviour. Some leaders of big countries do not care about human health but only about economy and money. Every day people are

dying in quite large numbers without their relatives by their side. I am very proud of all the workers that still go to work and do their job in this crisis: all the doctors, shopkeepers, garbage men, postmen and other workers that are risking theirs and their families' lives for us.

There are some beautiful places where I live

By Klemen CVETKO

I am surprised how I have managed to stay at home for so long without parties and with my parents. Sometimes they are so annoying that I want to leave the

house. I am surprised that I am going outside more than before, when I was in school. I discovered new places where I live and they are absolutely beautiful.

That actually surprised me the most. I have also managed to do everything for school, which is very surprising for me. I didn't think that I would be able to do that.

Things I found out about myself in the time of the coronavirus pandemic

By Jernej GRUBAR

To begin with, I must say that this pandemic has done some good things for me. As a student I couldn't sleep very long in the mornings and I had to go to sleep early, but now I have so much more time and energy. I believe that I can study more effectively because I can sleep more, therefore my brain has more time to process all the infor-

mation. I am more relaxed because I study knowing I have unlimited time. Secondly, I have had a lot of time for myself and I have woken up the parts of me that were forgotten in the race towards the finish of this school year. I have started to play music again (my poor neighbours), I have reconnected with nature and found out that running

has a very therapeutic effect on me. The only downside (or two) I can see in this pandemic is of course all the harm and death this virus causes and I am starting to miss my friends. Finally, the most important part of keeping a healthy mind in a healthy body in this pandemic is a well composed schedule and sticking to it no matter what.



Ryran

- 3.4.2020 -