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Dear Colleague

**Thetford Education Action Zone Newsletter**

As part of the Thetford Education Action Zone's commitment to showing effective practice, we recently held a very successful conference at the end of May 2002.

We have also produced another newsletter summarising some of the Thetford Education Action Zone's work with schools, as well as the work of schools.

I hope that you find it useful and informative and please do not hesitate to contact the relevant people for more information.

Yours sincerely

Graham Sigley  
Project Director

Technology breakthrough

Artists in residence

Edition 4  
May 2002

Clubbing at dawn

Share the experience

Excellence in Education

Computer courses

# ACTION ZONE



Courtesy: Bury Free Press

## Catch Up creates video stars

Three Thetford pupils are starring in a new national video that shows teachers and parents how to help children to read.

The new video is the latest addition to the materials that support Catch Up, an effective scheme that helps struggling readers which has been developed with the Education Action Zone.

Ricky Fry (Norwich Road Primary School), Saffron Horton (Queensway Infant School) and Kate Smith (Canterbury Infant School) are helping to show that reading is not just about picking up a book. Reading is all around us - on cereal packets, road signs and the television guide, for example.

'Schools work hard to help children, but parents can make such a difference, and that is the message of our video,' said Catch Up Project Director Julie Lawes. 'It's in very simple ways that parents can make a real difference to their child's development.'

Catch Up is currently used by over 3,000 schools in the country. They will all have chance to learn from the experiences of Ricky, Saffron and Kate.

For more information contact Julie Lawes, on 01842 752297.

## New York poet breezes into Rosemary Musker



**ainsleyburrows.com**  
spoken word artist. poet. musician.

The audience was gripped as Ainsley Burrows, a self published poet, spoken word artist, and musician, recited his rhythmic and challenging poetry. His visit was part of Rosemary Musker High School's celebrations for World Book Day last March. Ainsley spoke movingly about his life as a travelling poet and experiences living in New York on 11 September.

During the day, the new library computer system, funded by the Zone, was launched. It means pupils can access their library record by just scanning their finger print. This does away with library cards or having to remember passwords.

## Where will Ben be next?



Ben, the Badger from Thetford, has a passion for travel - London, Borneo, Florida, Brunei - Ben knows them well.

**Find out where else he's been ...**

# More to learning than lessons

If the end of the school day leads to an attack of mad couch disease, think of leaving the remote alone and look at the experiences that could be on offer.

Badminton, Rookie Life Guarding, Skateboard Club, First Aid, Dance, Art and Baby Sitting are just some of the activities arranged for 13 and 14 year olds under a scheme called Student Learning Accounts. They give people the opportunity to try things that maybe they would not have done before, and young people gain qualifications.

All the activities are organised and run by appropriately trained people. Transport, if it's needed, is provided too.

For more details about Student Learning Accounts contact Lucy Carter, Thetford Education Action Zone, on 01842 760293.

## The Iliad - improved by Thetford

The comments of more than 120 Thetford nine and ten year olds are being used to make sure that any glitches in a new set of CDs of Homer's Iliad are ironed out before it is made available to schools all over the country.

Pupils at Abbey Farm Junior, Redcastle Furze and Norwich Road Primary Schools have been hearing the powerful tales of the Trojan War, told by trained storytellers, in a specially adapted version of these lively human stories.



The Greek tales on the new CDs, produced by the Classics Department at Cambridge University, can be used to enliven English and history topics. Teachers have been impressed by how well the trials have gone and how popular the stories have been with pupils.



## Take a seat

Maggie Campbell, artist-in-residence at Abbey Farm Junior School for six weeks during the Spring Term, helped a class of eight and nine year olds create their own furniture.

Class teacher Les Woodcock was impressed, 'The children had to design and make their own chair from start to finish. They used all sorts of materials like textiles, cardboard tubes and tiles and came up with some very imaginative and unusual designs.'

- 1 Jayge Wing
- 2 Ronnie Pickett +Shane Hart
- 3 Caitlin Stevens +Vanessa Adams
- 4 Edna Jura +Igor Alves
- 5 Emma Dulig +Nicola Stone-Parker
- 6 Charlotte Atkins +Shaun Parlour
- 7 Jake Keenan
- 8 Warren Hance
- 9 Chloe Husarek
- 10 Mrs Roberts +John Arbour



More than thirty new after school clubs, from science and computers, to sports and cookery, have been launched in Thetford schools since September with money from the lottery.

These have also included breakfast clubs where, as well as being able to take part in activities from 7.15 am, club members enjoy a big breakfast at a bargain price. At Queensway Community Junior School alone there are thirty members.



## Clubbing at dawn

The Tin Drum Theatre Company led a drama club which finished in April with a Showcase performance at Charles Burrell High School. The club will be starting again next year.

A lunch club at Raleigh Infant School has music sessions with a multicultural theme.

In the next few weeks, a team from Breckland Youth and Community will be distributing a newspaper written by and for young people. Before the end of term, there will be three more of the successful art weekends for six to nine year olds. Also watch out for news of the dance clubs and summer term activities at Thetford Forest that will be getting underway soon.

All these activities have been made possible by funds from the lottery's New Opportunities Fund, and some also have support from local firms including Danepak, Norwich and Peterborough Building Society, Jeyes and Kwiksavé.

If you are qualified to lead any club activities or you would like to support them in other ways, please contact Rachel Rowe on 01842 764291 or email: [education@thetford-eaz.org.uk](mailto:education@thetford-eaz.org.uk).

**Thetford Education Action Zone**  
*Excellence in education*



*means:*

\* Better opportunities for all children to achieve more at school

\* More support and encouragement for all parents to become involved with their children's education. This makes a real difference - increasing motivation and raising standards

\* More organisations and people are involved in education in the town

And it's working ...

The Zone was set up in 1999 and will run until 2004 by when it will have brought in up to £7 million in extra funding for schools in the town. Its purpose is to work with schools to raise standards and achievement.

If you would like to know about the Thetford Education Zone and what it does, please contact Graham Sigley on 01842 760293 or email [education@thetford-eaz.org.uk](mailto:education@thetford-eaz.org.uk).

The most joyful thing about Ben, the Share mascot, is not his energy or his zest for discovery, it's that he remembers those he has left behind.

## Reading partners inspire confidence

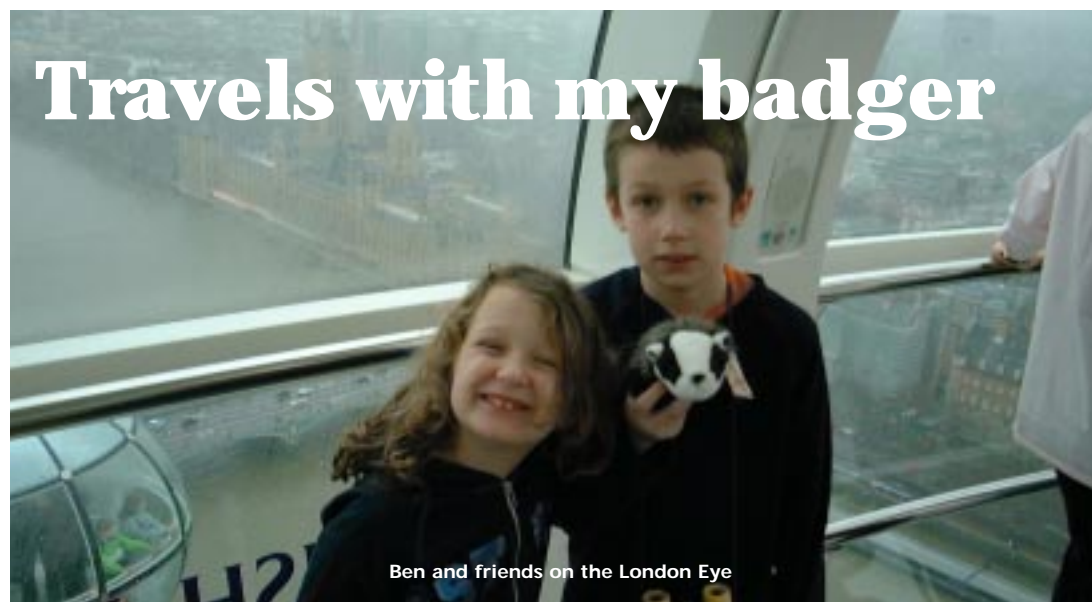
Thetford's Mayor, Albert Paine, awarded eleven students from Charles Burrell High School certificates for completing their Reading Partners training.



The students, who are about to take their GCSEs, are now reading partners for younger children at the school. Like employees from Baxter Healthcare, Trox, Wrexham Metalising and Thetford Education Action Zone, the students spend an hour a week sharing books with children. The volunteers talk about the books and play word games to support and encourage children to read.

Employees from more firms will be completing the Reading Partners training programme during Summer 2002. Anyone interested in helping with this valuable initiative should contact Julie Westrop on 01842 760293 or email [julie.westrop.edu@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:julie.westrop.edu@norfolk.gov.uk).

# Travels with my badger



Ben and friends on the London Eye

Ben has been the companion of many Share families as they travel around the country and abroad as part of their work - particularly with the armed forces. He sends souvenirs back to school and has his photo taken in front of the world's landmarks - Middle East, Central America, Hawaii, Florida, Brunei and tropical rainforests of Borneo - Ben has been there and sent the postcard. Sometimes he brings back the local currency - anything to share the flavour of his experiences with children back in Thetford who track his travels in an atlas or on a map.

## What is Share?

Share is: For children from four to thirteen - For parents, grandparents, carers - Free for families, friendly and it's . .



. . a fun new way to help your child get the most out of school

It is:

- A short weekly session at your child's school - you can come just as often as you can manage
- A chance to try out new ideas with your child - and try them some more at home
- A time to talk to other dads, mums, grandparents and carers
- A time to talk to the Share leader who helps you to help your child

Share has its own newsletter, and a Share pack for everyone who takes part. Share will soon be at every school in Thetford.

To find out more you can phone 01842 760293.



# Parents join in

A Learning Festival blossomed in the Spring. Parents were invited to see something of what goes on in the town's classrooms.

Among the many events which parents were invited to, were art, craft and music activities at Raleigh Infant School and actor Clifford Norgate's reading stories to children at Abbey Farm Junior School.

At Norwich Road Primary School over 40 parents and grandparents as well as friends and other supporters joined the classes of three to five year olds to sing and act out various songs and nursery rhymes. During the 'What's in a Song' sessions teachers explained how the subject of the song linked to topics the children had been studying in class, and then everyone joined in the singing.

Pat Sodey, Leader of the Foundation Stage and piano-accordionist who led the singing said 'It was fantastic. We all really enjoyed it, and we think we will do this sort of thing more regularly. In fact at the end of the summer term we will be inviting parents again for a 'What's in a Story' session.

The Learning Festival was supported by the Thetford Education Action Zone, the Keystone Community Partnership and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. Other schools taking part included Queensway and Canterbury Infant schools.



## Thetford Students Lead the Region

The successful pilot scheme of an imaginative project to help people gain engineering skills will be expanded in September.

The scheme enables students to follow a range of engineering and technology courses. It uses a new engineering training centre in the town. Students also have lessons back at school, and spend one day a week with a local firm.

The Thetford Inspire Technology project was officially launched on Friday 1 March 2002 by Gabby Yorath. Plans to use the new centre to support local businesses with their technology and engineering training are underway.

The project is another part of the Thetford Campus, which is aiming to increase the number and range of training and learning opportunities in the town.



It is also part of an East of England Development Agency (EEDA) project involving all six Education Action Zones in the region. Funding has been provided by EEDA, Thetford Education Action Zone, College of West Anglia, Breckland Council and the schools.

Graham Sigley and Janet Beverley 01842 760293 - email: [education@thetford-eaz.org.uk](mailto:education@thetford-eaz.org.uk) have more information if you would like it.



**Thetford Campus**

## Drop in at the top

The top floor of Breckland House will soon be a brand new Learning Centre open 64 hours a week, offering flexible on-line courses and the more usual tutor led sessions.

The new centre, which will be open to anyone over 16, offers more than 400 courses. 'Learndirect' courses are computer-based and there is always someone on hand to help with the next step so no experience is needed. All sessions are broken down into bite-sized chunks so that they will fit into a busy schedule and you can do them as and when you want.

The IT courses include CLAIT, IBT2 and IBT3. The Directory of all courses will be available from July.

## Aim Higher

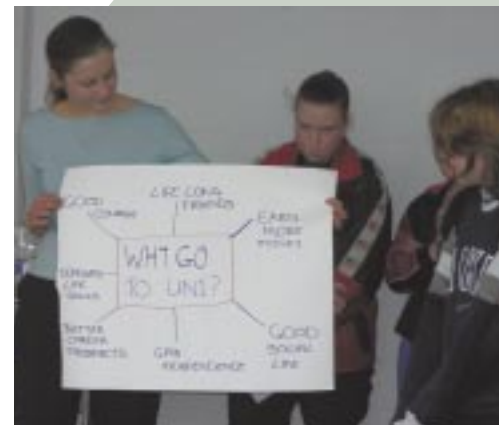
Employers' demand for qualified staff and the link between qualifications and earning potential are leading to more interest in higher education. Students at Charles Burrell and Rosemary Musker High Schools have been finding out more.

Over the last year, closer links have been made with the University of East Anglia and all the further education colleges in the region.

For example:

- \* 143 students in their first year of their GCSE course visited one of the colleges to see what they could offer and to get an idea of what life would be like as a student
- \* Several spent two days and a night at the UEA joining in various Science and Creative Studies activities
- \* This summer, seventeen Thetford students will spend time at a university on a Higher Education Summer School where they will get a taste of student life for a week.

For more information contact:  
Sandra Howard, 01842 760293 - email: [education@thetford-eaz.org.uk](mailto:education@thetford-eaz.org.uk).



## IIP - The standard

Eight of the eleven schools in the Thetford Education Action Zone - and the Zone itself - have now achieved the Investors in People Award.

'Schools are all about the people who work in them whether as pupils, teachers or support staff. The IIP award recognises the contribution staff make and encourages them to continue developing new ideas to improve children's education,' said Graham Sigley, the Zone's Director.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**Thetford Education Action Zone**  
*Excellence in education*



If you would like the information in this newsletter in large print, or in another format, please contact Thetford Education Action Zone 01842 760293



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