

6th „ELPIDA“ newsletter / February 2016

Many little people in many little places doing many little things ...



„ELPIDA-FOR-IRAKLIA“ is a small private non-profit organization supporting people of the small Cyclades Island of Iraklia who are in need because of the severe economic crisis in Greece.

Since summer 2015 the Greek crisis has almost vanished from our everyday media due to refugees sweeping into Europe, terrorism and all the other dramatic changes worldwide. Being far away from migration routes Iraklia itself is not directly affected yet.

My holiday impressions from August 2015 – plus more information from our continuous correspondence:

- **Tourism:** At first sight everything was as always: great warm hearted hospitality, people open and affectionate, the usual **good quality** in accomodation and food! 😊😊😊
- **Behind the scenes life is getting harder and harder:** People have to make a year's living within the short summer season. 😞
- **Money** was often spent on fundamental items only, **souvenirs' sales dropped**, so **my stationery** with the local underwater motifs was affected too... 😞
- For **keeping their job** 😊 people often have to do **extra non-paid work**. 😞
- Some can make a little money by **renting rooms** during winter for **€ 200,00 per month** 😊, but this small extra income is likely to be reduced to next to nothing by **risen electricity bills, risen taxes and bank rates** for the loan they needed to build the rooms with. 😞😞😞
- With **cleaning** for others and **artistic and creative craftwork** you may be lucky to make some ends meet. 😊
- **Health and medicine:** In summer there was a very nice **residential lady doctor** – with her daughter as an interpreter – they did **voluntary non-paid work!** 😊
- In **November 2015** Iraklia was again provided with **a doctor for a whole year** – after a long time without – and also with the **necessary medication**. 😊😊😊 The latter is also **periodically delivered** by www.griechenlandhilfe.at 😊 Thank you, Erwin!
- People **without** access to any **tourist business** are in a **dire situation**. Most have **mortgages** to pay for and with **higher taxes** and **income cuts** it's **extremely difficult to cope**. 😞😞😞 If possible they **cultivate** some **fruit and vegetables**, have a **goat** or two or keep **bees**. 😊
- In contradiction to other promises **income and pensions** were **cut** down to **50%**, that means less **money for heating in this chilly winter** 😞😞😞 and **not enough** for **proper food**. 😞😞😞 Ironically there was snow on New Year's eve while our skiing areas in Austria had to wait much too long for a bit of real winter feeling...



Iraklia, Dec. 31st 2015

- Farmers can hardly make enough profit because they pay **rent** for the land they keep the **goats**. They can't sell enough **cheese**, and the price of meat has **fallen** to **€ 2,00 (!!!)** per kilo goat alive. To sell them slaughtered is forbidden now due to **strict hygiene regulations**.☹☹☹
- **The sea: Boats** were offered in summer on different terms for excursions to the nearby islands and to other beaches.☺ This winter **fishermen** were having a **hard time** with very **few kalamari and less fish**. So there's a **crisis** from the sea too!☹
- To support their **nutrition** they grew more of their **own crop plants** and again the bees brought **first class honey**.☺ Since storage of fresh food is limited there's a **shortage** for many families, ☹ and we're lucky to provide **food parcels**.☺
- **It's impressive how people support each other: If you have, you give and share! Especially the emotional support and solidarity within families and friends is very valuable and priceless!**☺☺☺☺☺☺

About our project – OLD & NEW:

- It was a great joy to meet **Evangelia** again and her new carer Theodora. She was in **good mood and well looked after!** Her **daily meals** were sponsored by a taverna. My visit was as touching as last year and both send their sincerest thanks and greetings!☺☺☺ In **September** Maria injected **€ 350,00** into her fund and another **€ 100,00** in **December**☺, because due to the capital controls there were less donations for her.☹



- Our solar lamps give a spectacular night appeal to the ancient **Kastro** in **Livadi beach!** **Petros**, the new **πρόεδρος** (próedros = president, here mayor / **chairman of tourism**) had done a marvellous job **clearing** a great part of the **overgrown rocky pathway** with his friends in many **volunteered working hours**. The rest will be done until summer, then everything will be fine for an **extensive tour to this spacious historical jewel!**☺





- **School:** After years of waiting the nursery and primary school finally could move into the new building in the mountain village *Panaghía*!!!☺☺☺ They got all the **necessary teachers** again☺, even a theologist but none for PE. Maria is still giving free additional English lessons to those who prepare for higher education.☺
- For storing all the teaching materials they bought **shelves** for **€ 140,00**.☺



- As I told you in my last letter the **improvement of *Tourkopígado beach*** has started. Since 2006 a new road connects this shielded inlet on the south coast with *Panaghía* and it's being used not only by **fishermen and sailors** but more and more by **tourists**. Simple means should give a nice welcoming touch but the planned **stone tiles** were **too expensive**, so there's a **better solution** now and **Petros** got already **€ 1000,00** for it. The walls and the water-well were pleasantly repaired. Another **€ 350,00** are promised for waterproof paint, solar lamps and plants.





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### AROUND THE DONATION BOX:

- In Summer Maria got **€ 950,00** from our English friends!☺☺☺ A fund raising cake bake was organized – with a Greek flag tablecloth(!!!) – and some more money came from **individual contributions**. There were additional **materials for school** and **informal „lessons“ English – Greek** and vice versa in the evenings. **Many thanks to Carole** and her committed team, to **Anne and John**, to **Gill and Mike**, to **Lynne and John!**☺☺☺



- In August I was able to give **€ 1150,00** to Maria from donations and sales provision and another **€ 150,00** to two families.☺
- In **September** I participated again with my stationery at the **Glocknerlammfest in Heiligenblut** as well as at a **Christmas market in November**, where I also offered homemade jams from wild berries and spicy condiments. **€ 700,00** will be transferred again in spring by my reliable couriers Lynne und John☺, due to capital controls bank transfer is not advisable now.☹

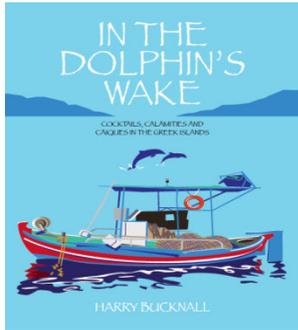
**Since 2012 we have reached the impressive level of € 9050,00!!!**

**☺☺☺ A big and happy THANK YOU to all of you! ☺☺☺**

### **More plans and informations:**

- In preparation right now: **Food parcels** for 10 families with children.☺☺☺ There is no fresh fruit in winter, so they`ll contain **2kg each of minced meat, chicken, pasta, rice, sugar and flour, 5kg each of oranges and apples** and each **costs approximately € 70,00**.
- **Evangelia** will be supplied as usual with the necessary **household and sanitary goods**.☺
- Erwin Schrumpf's [www.griechenlandhilfe.at](http://www.griechenlandhilfe.at) will continue supplying the island with the necessary **medical goods**.☺
- At school, they don't have any arts and crafts classes like they have in big city schools but with professional guidance **children can realize their own film ideas**☺ and take part in an annual countrywide **School film festival**☺ where the best films will be rewarded. The total expences will be around **€ 400,00**, parents and the school budgeted will provide half, **€ 200,-** will be from Elpída money.

- **Austria:** My stationery sales have swung into a **solid level**, so for **2016** I've decided to **double my provision shares for Elpída**. 😊 This year I have some more **picture shows "BEAUTIES OF IRAKLIA"** on my mind and I'm planning an **exhibition about WATER**. Hopefully we'll reach the total of **€ 10.000,00!**
- For the first time I took part in a magazin competition with my best **underwater pics** 😊 – but no price winner! 😞 I'd have loved to donate half of the sum to Elpída, maybe next time... There's still such an incredible lot of interesting things to learn about photography!!! 😊😊😊
- **My recommendation for your holiday book:**



„In the Dolphin's wake – cocktails, calamities and caiques in the greek islands“ by Harry Bucknall – a heartwarming journey from Venice to Istanbul across the Greek islands and through the Greek ways of life – even with one short stop on Iraklia!  
[http://www.amazon.co.uk/Dolphins-Wake-Harry-Bucknall/dp/1903071348/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1421858529&sr=8-1&keywords=in+the+dolphins+wake](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Dolphins-Wake-Harry-Bucknall/dp/1903071348/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1421858529&sr=8-1&keywords=in+the+dolphins+wake) – in paperback, Kindle and audiobook

**Just recently I heard the sad news:**

**Evi Zografou, creative artist and one of our local supporters, suddenly passed away. May you travel light, Evi and many thanks for everything! (>>> 4th Elpída-newsletter)**



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WE'RE MOST GRATEFUL FOR YOUR EVERY SUPPORT LIKE:

- **Spreading information** to friends and relatives
- **Donations** – even small sums are really helpful! (Some collect their **small change**, share their **discounts** or organize a **fund raising event...**)
- **This time I specially ask you to support our food parcels à € 70,00 – whole, half or quarter, every sum will be highly appreciated!**
- Visit our picture shows PowerPoint presentation **"BEAUTIES OF IRAKLIA"**
- Buy or sell our **stationery**
- Contact us with an **interested host**
- Subscribe to our **newsletter** (send me your / your friends' email address)
- Best of all – **spend your holidays on Iraklia** and take your friends with you!!! 😊😊😊

