Celebration the traditional Meteņi in the children's towns

We have officially stepped into February – the Month of Candles – and are preparing to welcome the spring, which is marked by the ancient Latvian spring waiting holiday Meteņi, also known as 'Fastlevan'. 5. februārī plkst. We will celebrate this traditional holiday on 5 February in the Children's Town at 11:00 and in the children's park Fantāzija at 15:00 by playing musical games and measuring our strength. The programme will be hosted by the teaching staff of the folklore studio Vācelīte operated by Ventspils Centre for Creative Learning.

Mummers – the Landlady and the Fox – will play traditional Meteņi games, go on fun rides, race, overcome obstacles, test their throwing skills, and measure their strength together with children from near and far to wake the Bear and to make all the preparations to welcome the spring.

The folklore studio Vācelīte has been operating in Ventspils Centre for Creative Learning since September last year. This programme includes a cycle consisting of eight sessions of ancient traditional celebrations. They are well attended by pre-schooler groups from Ventspils and led by qualified educators with deep interest and extensive experience in folklore. For several years, educators Ilga Porniece, Ineta Kalniņa, and Sandra Gūtmane cherished the idea of raising awareness of folklore among preschool children in order to raise their interest in Latvian traditions through educational games, which would allow for these traditions to take roots in their families.

Meteņi is sort of a midpoint between Christmas and Easter or the winter and spring solstice, which marks the end of winter and the beginning of spring. Therefore, it can also be referred to as the spring waiting celebration. Just like in all winter celebrations, this time was also associated with mummering, as our ancestors went from house to house and feasted.

The event is organised by the Ventspils Cultural Centre with the support from the Ventspils State City Municipality.