

THE MUCKRAKER

extra **LARGE**
X-mas special

THE INDEPENDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL STUDENTS' NEWSPAPER

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THE
MUCKRAKER



YES! It is finally time for us to say the two magical words: Christmas Vacation! While studying for and writing our last tests and Klausuren, the 21st December has been in the back of our heads, giving us all the energy we needed. Now, that's all over with. Sit back, relax, and do nothing for once... except of course reading this extra-large Christmas edition of The Muckraker. It's filled with a bunch of interesting articles and columns. Find out about the reliance of our school's internet filter or inform yourself on what seems to be a new trend at our school and all over Germany: PLO-scarves. If you don't feel like reading something political, check out the male and female opinions on Christmas Shopping, or simply enjoy the crossword puzzle and cartoons. Whatever your plans for Christmas break are, we'd like to provide you with a few words of wisdom: after two weeks of hectic shopping, wrapping presents, annoying cousins, air-headed aunts, constantly complaining grandparents, too much food and a burnt Christmas tree, you'll hear yourself saying, "Man, I just can't wait to be back in school!" Don't believe it? We'll see. Furthermore, don't forget to think up a few awesome New Year's resolutions – especially some that you'll actually fulfill (believe us, we know!). Either way, take it easy and enjoy the break, because we all really deserve it.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Your Editors.

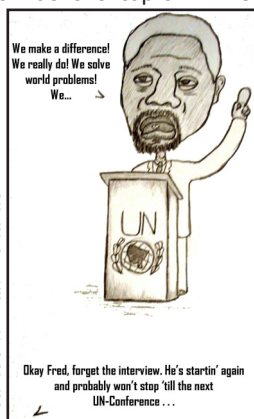
The Best BERMUN Ever

So what do you get when you put together 445 delegates, 42 admins, 107 teachers, 27 student Officers, the former Foreign Minister of Germany, and many more vital ingredients? A really musty-smelling broth? No, not really. Instead, you're looking at the participants and organizers of this year's Berlin Model United Nations conference, the largest BERMUN conference to date!

Now, what made this year's conference so special that many have been calling it "the best BERMUN ever"? Perhaps it was the topic. "Investing in the Youth:



photo: Therese Wiskott



cartoon: Max Deharde

Empowering Future Generations" does seem like something that would appeal to us young adults, and it sure was. The delegates of this year's conference had the opportunity to find new means of incorporating the youth in

politics, providing means of education for youth everywhere, and preventing the stigmatization of youth infected with HIV/AIDS. Perhaps it was the guest speaker. Mr. Joschka Fischer, former Foreign Minister and Vice-Chancellor of Germany, was kind enough to address the BERMUN General Assembly on the last day and share what he learned going from his defiant days as a street revolutionary to one of Germany's most popular and prominent politicians of all time. Or perhaps it was the gathering of almost 700 young adults from 17 different nations (e.g. Hungary, Turkey, USA, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Germany, etc.) that spent these four days together showing the world

BERMUN, continued on page 4

English Abi

We've heard the heated debates (arti, discussed it ourselves on numerous occasions, signed petitions and heard a plethora of opinions. But what really happened to the English Abitur? After multiple meetings and discussions involving our school's English Department, the Berliner Senat, JFKS Administration and Student Council, the ED reached a decision on this year's English Abitur at its last meeting! To find out WHAT exactly is going on read the SC's summary on all events and proposals.

on page 5

Christmas

It's almost time for our long-anticipated Christmas vacation. But before you rush off to join your family and friends in endless festivities, take your time to enjoy the multiple articles, jokes, and more, dedicated solely to our favourite holiday of the year!

on page 7

New Columns

As part of our mission statements, The Muckraker always tries it's best at providing a platform for all students to let their voices be heard. You've probably all read former JFKS student Moritz Zeidler's column "Zeidler Zappt!" (page 10) before, but he's not the only one any more. Anna Zychlinski and Eileen Wagner take on the challenge of a regular column. While one seems very "Carrie Bradshaw" (don't know her? Shame on you!) and the other one is a Cynic's dictionary, you're bound to find something!

on page 6

Gelbe Spione

A recent article in the September issue of "SPIEGEL" caused quite a lot of turbulence in Germany – and China! The article criticized Chinese living in Germany of being spies for their government. One of our journalists, Eileen Wagner (who is actually half-Chinese herself) describes the reactions of Chinese and Germans to this article.

on page 8

JFKS Life

MUCK of the Month

SCHOOL NEWS

As most of you know, an SC-initiated student debate about the Zentralabitur took place a few weeks ago. The student audience voted 42 in favor of the Zentralabitur, 18 against, with 16 abstaining.

The discussion then went to the English Department. It was there decided that a reformed JFKS Abitur will be written this year...

What does reformed mean? The testing format will be similar to those Klausuren students have taken in the past. However, it won't be individual JFKS teachers creating the questions; a committee of current teachers and alumni Abitur teachers will be writing one set of three questions for the Leistungskurse and one set for the Grundkurse.

As has been done in the past, these questions will be submitted to the Senat for approval; two will be chosen by the legislature for the Klausur.

Unlike in the past, these questions will not be book-specific. They will be general, so that any and all pieces of literature that students have read in their Abitur English courses can be referred to.

Grades were the biggest controversy at the student-led debates. -To make these fairer, the grading scale for the final Abitur Klausur will be adjusted so as to credit JFKS students' advanced English. ...Plus, the Fehlerquotient will be eliminated for E2 students.

Anonymity in the grading process is a goal: Students' works will not have their names on them, only a number. Also, expectations will be agreed upon in the department: All students will have to fulfil the same criteria in their writing.

That is this year; what the future years hold remains to be seen, debated, discussed...

...And while on the subject of Abitur: We have 91 students taking it in this year.

All the best to them!

Lena Walther

Teacher Feature: Mr. Boulin

This issue's Teacher Feature is about Mr. Boulin, a new and very nice history teacher at JFKS. Coming from America he has a lot to tell us and even reveals how the German language has brought him into a rather funny situation...

Hi Mr. Boulin! We'll start right off with our first question. How has your life changed since you have moved to Berlin?

My life has changed dramatically because I'm going from a very small suburban school where my biggest class was 20 kids to a very big city school where my class-



photo: Till and Karen

es, on average, have about 25 people. Of course it also changed because I moved my life from America to Germany. This move has been, of course, very, as you say in German, "anstrengend" (laughs) and of course a new life to begin in a new land is always a bit stressful, but I think for the most part the move and the change from America to Germany has been wonderful.

What was the most embarrassing thing that happened to you here in Germany?

Ah, I went to the bank and asked the lady in my broken German, "Wo kann ich mein Geld putzen?", thinking that the word "putzen" was "to put down". Of course my most embarrassing moments in Germany had to do with the language.

What do you like especially about JFKS?

The students, it's that short and that simple of an answer. The students and the discussions that I have with the students are very meaningful and I find that, at the end of the day, and I said this to you both, I learned a great deal not only academically, but I also learned a great deal about how the people here in Germany think. As a history teacher I find that very interesting.

And what do you dislike?

My biggest issue at JFKS is the lack of available technology. That I think is a problem that very many Americans have coming from American schools, in which technology is encouraged and very much supported by the school system. To not have open access to technology, to be dependent on solely one laptop for an entire department is very stressful.

So how did you develop your love for history? And were you good in history as a student?

As a student I was absolutely horrible in history because I had a teacher that made us memorize from a textbook. My passion for history came from university where I had a teacher that made history into a story and he actually made us think and use our own imagination... and for someone who is quite imaginative this really, for me, made history absolutely fascinating. I fell in love with history at college level because it isn't anything robotic but actually makes you think.

What is your favorite hobby?

Sport. Sport. Sport. I love soccer, I love American football, I love weight lifting, I love hiking, I love cycling, I love anything that gets me outdoors...

I know! I always see you in Zehlendorf with your bike! (laughs)

Yeah, I'm always on my bike and then in the evenings I'm usually at the gym, just to keep fit at my age. It's important to have a balance between using your brain during the day, all day. Its mental exercise versus physical exercise!

Do you consider moving back to the States?

No, I'm married to a beautiful German woman who is doing her "Referendariat". I don't want to move back to the States because both she and I would like to one day have a family and, to be very honest, it is quite expensive to raise a family and have a home and two cars, which you have to have, where I grew up. And so we've made the decision that this is where we are going to settle down and raise a family. Hopefully we can stay here in Berlin, although Zehlendorf, which is where we live right now, is quite expensive and so we will have to see what the future holds in store for us. In two years when she's done with her Referendariat we'll have to make some concrete choices.

We wish you all the best. Thank you for the interview Mr. Boulin!

Karen Fischer
Till Kischkat

JFKS Life

Alumnus Feature: Whatever Happened to... Savas Manoussakis?

When did you graduate from JFKS? Were you in Abitur or Diploma?

I graduated in 2003 from the Abitur program.

Where did you go to college/university and what did you study?

I went to the University of Kent in Canterbury, UK. I started off doing a joint honors degree in Law and Politics. I soon realized though that law was a far stronger degree to have and that, due to the critical and analytical approach of the school, it was actually far more interesting than I had initially expected. So in the second year I changed to straight Law. Canterbury is a quaint old student town, with nice sights in the countryside, but by the second year its charm really began to wear off, especially when thinking back to Berlin. I therefore managed to convince the student exchange office that despite the fact that I had applied one and a half years too late, a year abroad was still possible. Options ranged from Amsterdam to some town in Norway to La Reunion, a French island in the Indian Ocean. Thanks to all those years of Herr Neumann's French classes I managed again to convince them that two years worth of mandatory French Law courses weren't all that mandatory and so we eventually settled on Bordeaux. My Erasmus year was at the Université Montesquieu Bordeaux IV, where I had the distinct joy of studying French Administrative and Civil Law, amongst many other happy subjects. Despite the lack of any preparation I got good grades, improved my French to a proficient level, and had the time of my life meeting people from all over Europe and traveling throughout much of France.

What do you do now?

Right now I'm doing my Master's degree in Law at the London School of Economics. The courses I've chosen and the strong influence of economic thinking at the school give me a great insight into the process of globalization of which London is a major center. A great thing about the LSE is that due to its location and reputation many prominent speakers visit, providing interesting perspectives and context to your studies. If you're considering studying something within the social sciences, then the LSE is definitely an institution I recommend.

What are your hobbies?

Traveling has always been a passion of mine. Thanks to ridiculously long summer holidays I backpacked by train throughout much of Europe with a buddy from University (I recommend the inter-rail train ticket or Eurorail for non-Europeans). I also went hitchhiking throughout much of France, Spain and Italy, with South America being my next target. In relation to that, the study of languages has, since my days at JFK, been something of a hobby. Here at the LSE I've managed find time to take some Spanish classes. Besides that, politics, Global affairs and writing have all been great interests of mine. I'm hoping to someday combine them all, possibly by working in an institution of the European Union.

What activities were you involved in during your school time?

I was definitely one of those 'politicos', not in theater, musicals nor too present in sports. MUN was the activity of choice for me, providing the unique opportunity to pretend I knew what I was talking about (an essential skill for later academic



and career life, especially within the legal domain). This opportunity was also available in the Student Council, which I participated in for several years. Besides that I was in Mrs. Hepner's Peer Helping, which in retrospect probably helped me more than any needy peer in terms of learning the essential skill of listening and identifying the problems and needs of others (again something of essence to any lawyer). I had the distinct honor of being Editor of and contributor to the Muckraker and I also participated in Mr. Felt's fantastic Leadership Class (If you're not in that class, get in that class.)

Do you have any favorite memories from the classroom or an activity?

Ah so many... I remember the charged atmosphere at JFK as Bush's brilliantly justified, conceived, and executed invasion of Iraq began. I, as one of the Editors of the Muckraker, felt obliged, always in the interest of truth, to conduct a 'scientific' poll of Bush's popularity at JFK. The question if I recall correctly was, "Do you think Bush is a) a good President b) incompetent c) an imperialist aggressor". Somehow b) and c) got most of the pie chart. It was also fun cornering an official from the US embassy when he came to JFK for a discussion on the war.

Something I'll never forget is when I won the Kennedy Quest for the question "What drives us forward?" Getting that check worth 1500€ and having a whole crowd cheer for me sent my ego on a trajectory I still cannot control.

I was Chair of the Environment Committee at BERMUN. It was great fun sitting up high directing the discussion of some 50 people, coaxing compromise, enveloped for some misguided reason in an aura of authority. As an added bonus I got to tell bad jokes to an audience of about 500 in the General Assembly - priceless moments.

I decided to go out in style at the Abifeier. Robert Doege and I, as those chosen to give speeches, in a flash of literary genius realized that Abitur could also be written as "Abi-tour". This was the starting point of a beautiful metaphor, likening the Abi to the Tour de France. We went all the way with a dramatic entrance on bikes in tight biker pants and "Chariots of Fire" playing in the background. We then went on to deliver a speech we are confident inspired everyone to greatness.

What was your favorite subject? Favorite teacher?

Difficult one. Mr. Felt's English class, the very one that gave birth to the Quest, is definitely up there. 1984, Catcher in the Rye and Brave New World are still some of my favorites from that time. Mrs. Golding's English class was brilliant as well. PW with Frau Kather was great, encouraging a reflective, critical outlook I like to think is still with me today. Of course Herr Neumann's good nature and petits déjeuners cannot be forgotten.

What were your Leistungskurses? English and PW.

How has your time at JFKS influenced your life?

I guess I strive for the cosmopolitan atmosphere at JFKS, and have, to an extent, become more cosmopolitan because of the school. Being surrounded by so many smart and curious people, both teachers and students, has made me appreciate intelligent conversation, something too often lacking in the outside world, and has instilled within me much ambition and curiosity.

What was the most valuable thing you learned in school?

The languages I picked up at JFKS were invaluable and will hopefully play a central role in my future in the EU. A perhaps more profound skill came through essay writing. Not only did I have, and still have, a considerable advantage in knowing how to structure an essay and formulate an argument, but more importantly, through essay writing, I have learned to organize and focus my thinking. This is something fundamental not only academically and in relation to work, but is also of great personal importance.

Do you have any advice for the current students of JFKS?

Don't choose a University degree just because it sounds fun and interesting. I've seen too many people rush into a degree like that only to later realize the lack of real global importance of their degree as well as the poor job prospects at the end of it. Clear your head and take the time to identify what your interests and strengths are and where you want to go with a particular degree.

Don't forget High School is just the beginning, and while your current stress (such as grades etc.) may seem overwhelming, you, just like everyone else, will get over it and when you look back it'll seem trivial. I guess the important thing to take away from High School is the will and curiosity to learn. While the final grades do play somewhat of a role in your future, a lot more depends on personal drive and determination. So really, don't let mediocre or even bad grades get in the way of whatever personal goal you may have.

Finally, just to end in a cliché, life's a journey so enjoy the ride.

How soon can we expect to see the headlines: "Savas Manoussakis, Ruler of the Universe"?

If things go according to plan you'll never know! HAHAAAA!

Thank you for the interview!

JFKS Life

Heated Debate Well Attended

The English Central Abitur has led to discussion and disagreement at our school ever since the notion was first introduced by the Senat. Should we take the same English Abitur as other Berlin schools, although our standard is a lot higher? Could the result be a decrease in the level of our education? Such were some of the questions raised at the student-led debate organized by the SC on November 27. The pro Central Abi team, consisting of Jennifer Flöter, Sarika Dewan, Daniel Wendisch, and Leonard Sandow, argued that the current JFKS English Abitur with its school-internal second evaluation is unfair for the students and that the grades received are not a reasonable representation of our level of English, especially compared to German students getting high marks in the Zentralabi. The contra Central Abi – or rather pro JFKS reformed Abi – side, consisting of Stefanie Gebele and myself, agreed with the other team concerning the necessity of a change having to happen. However, we argued that this change should be limited to the English department modifying the current exam to make it more fair and perhaps “weigh” it in such a way as to result in higher grades, in order to maintain the standard of our education.

After giving each team six minutes to present their opening remarks, the moderators, Frau Hövermann, Mr. Douglass, Victor Boadum, and Nick Erb, allowed the teams to question one another. Since the atmosphere was rather heated and the audience also very en-

gaged in the topic, several disruptions occurred during this cross-examination period, however, this did not obstruct the flow of the proceedings. Although the question-answer session was not quite conventional, as questions often consisted of mere statements and answers were frequently in a Socratic style, which is to say they were themselves questions, it was a good opportunity for both teams to try to refute the arguments of the opposition and increase everyone’s understanding of this issue.

The part that the audience probably looked forward to most was the possibility for them to ask the teams questions. These inquiries were either direct attacks on the ideas presented by either one of the teams or lengthy statements of personal opinions. It was probably the most heated phase of the debate, as it ultimately led to yelling. Yet it was perhaps also the most productive stage, as it allowed for the ideas of more people than just the contestants to be voiced.

At the end, a vote was held in order to know the general opinion of the students. Of the approximately eighty 10th through 13th graders present well more than half voted in favor of the Central Abi. Considering that the Educational Directorate is about to decide on the matter, it is good that we now know where the majority of the students stand on the issue, so that the Student Council can represent that opinion.

Farsane Tabataba-Vakili

BERMUN, from page 1

what the youth is capable of, showing the world that we are not, as some claim, solely an “MTV generation”.

For those of you that weren’t involved in the conference or were catching up on your hibernation from November 14th to November 17th, let me give you a crash course in BERMUN 101. As the term Model United Nations implies, BERMUN is a simulation – or model – conference of the actual United Nations, in which we debate topics that are on the agenda of the UN, as representatives of not our own country or opinion, but rather of the opinion of the respective country or non-governmental organization that is assigned to us, and we draft so-called resolutions that directly address the topic.

You might wonder, “Well, so what’s the point of all of this UN-mumbo-jumbo?” Good question. At BERMUN and any other MUN conference, young people have the chance to stand up and speak up in front of their peers and assume the roles of diplomats that address issues of critical importance

to our world. So you not only become an expert on these topics, but you also learn key rhetorical and consensus-building skills that will help you in your future careers and endeavors, no matter what they are. And, of course, you get to meet young students from all around the world that are interested in the same issues as you are or that are just glad to be part of the event. Unfortunately, this was the very last BERMUN conference for some of us participants. Speaking as one of these individuals, I felt privileged to be part of something so forceful, vibrant, and exciting. It is rare to find such dedicated, friendly, and helpful people that are all moved by the values and goals of this conference, a conference that has acquired more and more success since its birth in 1991. On behalf of those that are leaving after this school year, I’d like to thank everyone that was involved for making this conference what it truly was: the best BERMUN ever.

Samira Lindner

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1. Come to our weekly meetings in the 20 minute break on Tuesdays in B214
2. Send in your articles to themuckraker@gmail.com
3. Join the Muckraker Yahoo! Group
4. Drop a note in our mailbox or approach us randomly in the hallways

The Centralized Abitur in English

Throughout the past months, there has been much discussion amongst students, parents, and teachers concerning the English Abitur exam administrated by our school. Although almost all students have an opinion on the matter, whether it be to support the JFKS English Abitur, or favoring the Centralized Abitur, many students feel that somehow, they might not really be informed about both options thoroughly.

Last year was the first time a Centralized Abitur system was introduced to Berlin. Our school offered the Centralized Abitur exams in math and all language subjects except in English because of numerous concerns about how our school's way of teaching English would be affected by administrating the final English exam. The English curriculum also didn't match the exact criteria of the centralized English exam, and the Senate granted our school a 1-year exemption. After positive and negative feedback, our school and the Senate faced the same problem as last year, and the Senate agreed to again grant our school a 1-year exemption from participating in the English Centralized Abitur exam after the English Department proposed to change the JFKS English Abitur.

The questions that we students should be asking are how exactly these two final exams, the Centralized Abitur and a JFKS English Abitur, differ from one another; what changes the English Department has made and how they will affect us - and finally, what effects the English Centralized Abitur could have on our school.

There are many differences between the Centralized Abitur and the revised JFKS English Abitur. The most significant difference, perhaps, is that the JFKS Abitur is created by our school's English department, while the Centralized Abitur is written by the Senate. Students supporting the introduction of a Centralized English Abitur believe that by administrating such a test, we would become comparable with all students in Berlin, because we would all be taking the exact same test. Furthermore, many students believe that if we took the Centralized Abitur, our grades in our final English exam would improve drastically; we would score higher than students applying from other schools. Thus, admission to German universities would become easier for us JFKS students.

The aspect of fairness is also often cited as a reason to introduce a Centralized English Abitur, because the "Zweitkorrektur" would be conducted by a teacher who doesn't work at the JFKS

and, therefore, would be completely impartial. The fact that all corrections and decisions regarding the grades are made within the confines of our school often times seems to be a grievance for many supporters of the Centralized English Abitur, because they feel that such a grading method in no way allows for an impartial grade, since the English teachers might be prejudiced toward students they know and be prompted to grade inaccurately one way or the other.

Although the English Department is aware of these various arguments, it believes that the JFKS English Abitur is in fact the better option for both the students and the teachers of our school. Supporters of administrating an individual JFKS English Abitur argue that in order for us to continue having a literature-based Abitur, we could only administrate the JFKS English Abitur. Students are currently taught by a curriculum which is created to ensure success on the final exam, but by switching to a Centralized Abitur, we students would no longer be prepared to successfully pass our final exam, because the curriculum of our school doesn't fully prepare us for the Centralized Abitur. While our JFKS Abitur is mainly literature based, the Centralized Abitur focuses mainly on summarizing and analyzing texts which are related to topics that are to be discussed during class in preparation for the exam. Supporters of the JFKS English Abitur believe that by administrating a Centralized English Abitur exam, the level of English at our school would decrease, because we students wouldn't learn as much, knowing that we would be taking a final exam that doesn't really challenge us. Another fear is that because the Centralized Abitur is aimed at students who learned English as a foreign language, the importance of English would substantially be reduced. To ensure that such a scenario doesn't take place, the English Department has proposed some modifications to last year's JFKS English Abitur.

This year's JFKS English Abitur will be the first final exam during which all students of the same course difficulty will receive the exact same questions to ensure comparability between all students. In order to tackle one of the student's biggest concerns, which is the issue of fairness, the English Department has proposed the introduction of a new grading scale which would be modified to reflect our school's superior abilities in English. Additionally, the initial proposition included the introduction of a holistic grading system, which should ensure that all exams are graded anon-

ymously, by only identifying the student's exam with a number. However, in which form the holistic grading system can be conducted during the Abitur remains to be seen, as the Senate has raised some concerns about grading an anonymous Abitur. A further point addressed by those who wish to continue with a JFKS English Abitur is that once the Abitur only goes up to 12th grade, a permanent separation during English classes between diploma students and Abitur students would have to take place should our students take the Centralized Abitur.

This year's 13th graders will be taking a JFKS English Abitur. However, the question that remains is what the future of the English Abitur holds. At this point in time, no decisions have been made as to whether or not our school will be granted yet another exception, or if we students will be allowed to take the Centralized Abitur. The most important thing for all students of grades 10-12 is to fully understand both concepts in order to be able to make an educated decision. It is our responsibility as student body to have an opinion on this issue and should there be any further questions concerning the specifics of both proposals, please feel free to contact the Student Council at scpresidents@gmail.com. Furthermore, we would strongly urge all of the older students to talk within their classes about the various possibilities and, should there be a need to talk to members of the English Department as well as our well-informed Abitur coordinators, to please do so.

No matter which of the two propositions you personally support, it remains in the interest of the Student body as a whole to make sure that next year, we will not be in the same situation as this year, but that rather, we form our opinions now so that the students' voice can be heard and taken seriously. It is because of this that the Student Council has held a student-led debate concerning the English Abitur issue as well, organized an info session for the 12th and 13th grade with an English teacher to ensure that the new proposal is clear to these students, and why the entire Student Council has already discussed this exact topic countless times during the SC meetings. The Student Council plans on continuing these discussions, because we believe that a decision concerning our future should not be made without our input.

*JFKS Life / Opinion***Duck!!**

Friday December 7th marked this year's SC dodge ball tournament finals. At four o'clock, the 3 finalist teams met in the gym to compete for the gold. First up were representatives of the 11th grade and "Die Macht von der Spree" against the 12th and 13th grade's team, which seemed to bear an abundance of names, so for simplicity's sake, it shall be "Henny's Team". The game was on and referee Mr. Felt soon had to blow his whistle: Henny's Team's Heval Omari was disqualified from the game for checking one of his opponents in a fight for the ball. Showing no signs of weakness, Henny's team enthusiastically pressed on, regardless of their disadvantage in number of players. At the beginning, the teams appeared to be equally strong, ducking, sliding, and leaping across the field, making it a terrific display of floor acrobatics and team spirit. However, tables quickly turned as "Die Macht von der Spree"

found itself with only one player, Till Kischkat, who was left stumbling across the field. Unfortunately for Till, his attempts to dodge the incoming attacks of his opponents failed, making Henny's Team victor. Next, Henny's Team had to play the undefeated champions of the "Help Youth Assembly", which included our new English teacher, Mr. Connolly. Though highly motivated and full of enthusiasm, the former champs had to face defeat after a mere 30 seconds in the game, making "Henny's Team" the new and final champions of this year's SC dodge ball tournament. After the games and award ceremonies, a series of friendly unofficial games took place, lightening the atmosphere.

Despite the lack of audience and surprisingly short playing time, the day proved to be very entertaining for both the players and all five of the observers.

Leonie Schulte

Hope Pasted to a Phone Booth

A black stencil on a dirty, grey wall in the middle of London portrays a starving African child holding an iPod. To its right, the phrase "iNeed" drips with satirical criticism. Throughout the last decade, the streets of Berlin, London, and endless other cosmopolitan cities have become the newest venue for young artists to take a stand, to embed their beliefs into the memories of passers-bys. Here, on existing walls and walls to come, young voices, lost in the grinding, impatient flow of every-day-life, have the chance to edge one step closer to being heard. Today, street art embodies the aspirations of society's youth and offers them a safe haven to exhibit their thoughts.

However, this art constantly faces new condemnation, new judgment. The everlasting stream of controversy puts forth the question: does street art merely deface public property or does it actually carry a hopeful glimpse of new times to come? To the unschooled eye, street art may look like the trashy scribbles of pubescent teenagers rebelling against their superiors. However, true insight on street art only springs from understanding the differences between street art, graffiti, and murals. Whereas the term graffiti suggests initials or pseudonyms spray-painted, written, or sketched onto the walls of public spaces, the name mural usually describes a publicly sponsored

painting on a wall, looking to achieve a political goal or promote ethical or social points of view.

Hiding away their work in places ranging from side alleys to telephone booths to the roof tops of old buildings, the artists use methods such as stencils, stickers, and wheat pasting to set down their reveries of change on brick, stone, or the metallic doors of city toilets. These nightly journeys of roaming through the streets and secretly creating art fulfill their need to proclaim the individuality that they perhaps feel deprived of in this unforgiving, endless sphere of mundane, routine hum-drum. Their random images and play of words often meet the absurd, essentially striving to communicate their dreams of "the good life" to the world around them. With their work, these young artists strive to break down the facade of the nameless mass, attempt to create dialogue between the passing stream of tired, worried faces and their own insight on the meaning of life.

Day by day, street art braves the criticism of those who do not understand what fulfillment its existence gives many of today's youths. It withstands the drone of the jarring talk of vandalism, only to give hope to youthful minds. It spreads the word that life can be good.

Leonie Bell

The Cynic's Dictionary**PROGRESS**

- the word politicians use to describe the delusion that humanity is moving forwards.

Eileen Wagner

The First of the Nothings

They say a columnist is someone who has nothing to say and needs somewhere to say it. I would therefore introduce myself to you as someone with a great deal of nothings, and with friends who have declared themselves tired of listening to them. Unfortunately, when one considers that you and I have as little time for nothings as my friends do, the purpose of this column seems to blur into obscurity. Consider me, therefore, as the one who muses over the things nobody else has time to wonder about. Love, life, why the color at the bottom of the German flag is referred to as gold when it is clearly yellow, how crocs came into fashion, pain, pleasure, why comparisons to pigs and cows are negative to foxes positive, philosophy, hope, despair, light, dark, truth, why men can't multitask, family, music, art, loss, need, liberty, freedom, farts. I should thank you, dear reader, for coming this far, and following so willingly the aimless wanderings of my mind. They say not all those who wander are aimless. Not all those who search or seek do find. I hereby invite you to wander and search with me. Let us see what there is to be found and if we find anything at all...

Anna Zychlinsky

Christmas

Christmas: A Holiday Contaminated or Just Another Excuse to Start a Debate?

Christmas these days has become a very controversial topic – in religion, commerce, politics and even education. The most used anti-Christmas argument is probably that it has been commercialized by many corporations. While it is statistically true that the shopping frenzy is at full speeds during the holiday season, one might consider that this applies to other celebrations as well. Easter is commercialized, Valentine's Day is commercialized, and even your mother is commercialized – on Mother's Day. So why do we care so much if companies use the year's most important holiday as another excuse to spread advertisement? Is it not true that we are our own masters and can decide what to buy, and what not to? Pope Benedict XVI has recently issued a statement on the Christmas debate, saying that Christmas festivities have been "subjected to a sort of commercial pollution" – and while I agree that what those companies are up to is impudent, wouldn't we be showing true Christ-



photo courtesy of <http://www.mobilewater.net>

mas spirit by celebrating it traditionally nonetheless?

In the United States, the Christmas debate is probably more distinct than anywhere else. School boards have removed "Silent Night" from the choir

programs in favour of a more multicultural ambience, and President Bush is being publicly criticized for sending out the annual White House greeting cards wishing everyone "Happy Holidays" instead of a "Merry Christmas". The question remains: what's wrong with saying Merry Christmas, with a season that promotes the theme of peace and serenity, with our cities being decorated (and therefore refurbished), what's wrong with the Free-TV-premieres of all those blockbuster movies? If people fuss about the Christmas wave that hits the stores sometimes as early as late October, they do not only show their liking for a non-commercial Christmas but also their inability to look past something as insignificant as another company trying to get our last penny. Frankly, we need to stop being such a Grinch, give Christmas a break and continue on celebrating it like we have for the past two thousand years.

Stefanie Lehmann

Christmas Shopping

Female Perspective

Christmas is a happy time in the year. Children's faces shine in like street decorations and shop-windows... The Christmas markets smell of sugar and winter. Many people enjoy all the colors and the atmosphere in the streets, the happiness that is all around. But the weather is not joining in. It is too warm for Christmas! There's no snow and what is Christmas shopping without any snow? Still shopping! So would one not expect all the girls who love to shop to really enjoy this season? Well, yes. But as much as one could follow the cliché that girls like to shop and boys do not, it is not quite that simple. Many girls like Christmas shopping, but many also do not, since it is very stressful. Christmas shopping is not as much fun as other shopping, as one has to consider the opinion, likes and dislikes of others and not just ones own. You need to consider whether the receiver of the gift would like it or not. This creates a lot of stress, since you run around all day like a headless chicken, trying to find something for the specific person. And if you do not then you are either very annoyed or even upset, since you will have to go Christmas shopping again. This is the same for girls and boys. Those females who usually enjoy going shopping are not necessarily immune to stress. And Christmas shopping, as fun as it can be, is very stressful. Some however especially enjoy the aspect of giving to others. Those who are nice enough to only think about the giving aspect of buying presents often enjoy it more. They are happy, since it is fun to get something special for others.

Whether you like Christmas shopping or not has nothing to do with your gender. You can like or dislike Christmas shopping nondependent on your gender. The way you think about it is a lot more relevant.

Charlotte Foerster-Baldenius

Male Perspective

It's Christmas time! Don't we all love the presents we get? Except for the book we get every year from our beloved aunt. But come on, guys, how badly do you hate buying presents? You go to 25 stores that all show you the same item and all say exactly the same lines to make you buy something. But like always it looks like it was manufactured by a one-handed monkey, blind-folded and with a gun held to his head to make him work faster. So what do we do? We go to the next store and again we don't find anything. And if we, after hours, finally find something good, we tend to spend twice as much as planned. No matter how much you planned to spend you will end up spending more. It's as if the cashiers know exactly what you want to spend and that you still have a little more money in that back pocket or in your shoe. There is no chance for you to save it. Once we bought something and finally give the little something we bought to our family we get the same "thank you" and the same fake smile saying "I don't like what you bought" and that "quite honestly, it's not the thought that counts"-look on their faces (that we give our aunt for the book)! Your family can't drop you so it doesn't matter all that much. But if you get that look from your special loved one you know you've messed up. So why do we still go Christmas shopping? We do it because every year we think we have matured and know exactly what to get. At this point I would like to quote a very wise man: „Why go Christmas shopping? There's 24-hour delivery service online.“ He has a point but a bad one. Christmas is not about buying awesome expensive presents. It's about being with the people you care about and giving those people presents you worked for.

Julian Graham

Opinion

NAZI.COM: So Much for Internet Blocks

As we are all surely aware, luxuries such as gaming, checking our Myspace, and various other websites have been blocked in order to keep students focused on school research when using the school's internet. Yes, very smart move. However, what about the fact that the entire student body has uncontrolled access to various Neo-fascist, racist and left-wing extremist websites. Last month Herr Witzel's PW-Leistungskurs went to the library to research anti-democratic groups. To their surprise, they could access an abundance of international extremist and Neo-fascist websites including merchandise shops and radio stations. An American Nazi site in particular, NSM88, offered registration forms to minors as well as the access to a copy of "Mein Kampf" Hitler T-shirts and a colourful variety of swastika friendly attire. That's not all, in addition to becoming a member of America's biggest Nazi party and turning yourself into a walking Hakenkreuz, you can also read up on your latest holocaust-denial propaganda while you watch movies of book burnings and anti-immigrant demonstrations and listening to some white power, anti-Semitic hardcore music. Though these sights are important for research, they should not be accessible in an international school like ours. If research on these pages has to be done at all then it should be done at home and not in our library where students as young as 12 years old has access to them and could be influenced by them. Even though none of us would like to believe that we, in this generation and at this school where the horrific details of the Second World War are pounded into our brains every year, could ever be manipulated by this ideology, a recent incident in our school bathrooms begs to differ. A few weeks ago swastikas were found painted on the walls of many of the boys' bathrooms. If this is not a sign that we are still susceptible to fascism, then what is? How are these sites any better than gaming, pornography, or Myspace?

A school that rests on the foundations of equality and does not tolerate violence or racism should not allow its students to be exposed to such dangerous, manipulative sources. On behalf of the 12th grade PW-Leistungskurs, this article requests the immediate blockage of these sites that can certainly cause more problems than checking your Myspace profile.

Leonie Schulte

Die gelben Spione schlagen zurück!



photo courtesy of www.spiegel.de

Eine junge Chinesin, die aus einer roten Jalousie späht und der dazugehörige Titel „Die Gelben Spione“ machten die Septemberausgabe des „Spiegels“ besonders unter den in Deutschland lebenden Chinesen unbeliebt. Darin behauptet Michael Kröher, Autor des Artikels „Prinzip Sandkorn“, dass Chinesen in Deutschland zum großen Teil von der chinesischen Regierung beauftragt wurden, in Deutschland Spionage zu betreiben.

Die Vorwürfe sind nicht neu. Es gibt inzwischen Beweise, dass Regierungsrechner von chinesischen Trojanern infiziert wurden. Nun sind auch Deutschlands Spitzentechnologien an der Reihe. Beispiel der Wirtschaftsspionage ist der chinesische Smart namens „Nobel“. Der Anblick kann täuschen, denn es gibt beim chinesischen Produkt einen ungeheuren und unübersehbaren Unterschied: Der Nobel wird vorne angetrieben, im Gegensatz zum Smart, deren Motor hinten sitzt.

Ohne Zweifel sind jedoch die meisten Vorwürfe reine Spekulationen, die das ominöse Bild der „gelben Armee“ zeichnen. Schon das rassistische Titelblatt erinnert an die wilhelminische Kolonialzeit. Nahe zu alle weit verbreiteten Vorurteile und Klischees rund um China werden hier zum Besten gegeben. Äußerst einfallslos sind auch ein gefälschtes Konfuzius-Zitat und frei erfundene Anekdoten. Der Leser wird verunsichert und dazu angestachelt, generell Chinesen im Bekanntenkreis auszugrenzen. „Neugierig, eifrig, vielseitig interessiert – auch in deutschen Hochschulen und Forschungsinstituten arbeiten Tausende Chinesen, die mit diesen Eigenschaften perfekte Forscher oder perfekte Spione sein könnten – vielleicht auch beides.“ („Der Spiegel“, 09/2007, Seite 27.) Solche Anschuldigungen tauchen immer

wieder im Artikel auf. Kein Wunder, dass viele Chinesen sich seitdem beschweren, von Kollegen gemobbt zu werden. Natürlich ließen die in Deutschland lebenden und soeben beleidigten Chinesen das nicht auf sich sitzen. Die CASD (Vereinigung Chinesischer Akademischer und Studentischer Gesellschaften in Deutschland e.V.) hatte einen Protestbrief verfasst, der den „Spiegel“ auffordert, sich öffentlich zu entschuldigen und eine Gegendarstellung in der nächsten Ausgabe zu publizieren. Da beides nicht geschah, erstattete die CASD eine Strafanzeige gegen die Autoren, wegen Beleidigung, Beschimpfung und Verleumdung chinesischer Kultur. Am 10. November gingen sogar ca. 150 Chinesen auf eine Demonstration vor dem Hamburger Spiegel-Gebäude. Der Gegenangriff der Chinesen blieb nicht mehr allzu freundlich. Slogans wie „Diskriminierung hat in Deutschland Tradition“ werden via E-Mail unter den chinesischen Studenten fröhlich verbreitet. So bewahren also Chinesen ihre kulturelle Souveränität: indem sie die deutsch Kultur angreifen.

Die Ausgabe hat im Endeffekt nur die Spiegel-Redaktion ihrer Ignoranz entblößt. Schließlich ist diese nur auf Verkaufszahlen fixiert sind. Dass aber solch ein niveauloser Artikel soviel Aufregung erzeugen kann, zeigt wieder, welche Kommunikationsprobleme Chinesen in Deutschland haben: Für sie ist alles, was in der Zeitung steht, immer noch Meinung der Regierung.

Die Aktion in Hamburg endete mit einigen Demonstranten, die laut die chinesische Nationalhymne vor sich hinträllerten. Schon skurril, denn der Text beinhaltet noch Aufrufe der Revolution wie „Steht auf! Ihr, die es ablehnen, Sklaven zu sein. Mit unserem Fleisch und Blut, lasst uns eine neue Große Mauer bauen!“ oder „Millionen Herzen schlagen für einen Gedanken, die Gewehrschüsse des Gegners ertragend, marschiert voran!“ Für den einen oder anderen mag es unpassend erscheinen, für den Spiegel-Leser sowieso unbegreiflich. Dies bestätigt doch gerade die These, dass Chinesen voller Nationalstolz sind...?

Amüsant ist es trotzdem. Chinesen, die im eigenen Land nicht demonstrieren dürfen, gehen in Deutschland auf die Straßen und demonstrieren gegen einen Artikel in der Zeitschrift, der anscheinend viel zu viel Freiheit genießt. Im chinesischen Fernsehen wurde diese Geschichte noch nicht gezeigt, vermutlich müsse man zuerst erklären, was „Demonstrationsrecht“ und „Pressefreiheit“ bedeuten.

Eileen Wagner

Culture / Opinion

Movie Review – The Kite Runner

Since 1979, Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, a city once admired and celebrated for its cosmopolitan as well as intellectual ambience, has been in a state of continuous war and civil strife, a state exacerbated by the Taliban occupation of the late 1990s. The upcoming movie "The Kite Runner" based on the novel by Khaled Hosseini, is about an Afghan emigrant named Amir (Khalid Abdalla) who takes on a dangerous journey to Taliban-controlled Afghanistan to redeem his sins and witnesses the devastating situation in his home country.

Amir grew up in Afghanistan in 1970s with his childhood friend and servant Hassan (Ahmad Khan Mahmoodzada). Although Kabul then was a melting pot of cultures and colors, there was still a distinct hierarchy in society and between cultural groups. The differences in dress, dwellings, and vocabulary show the contrast between the city's wealthy Pashtun majority – Amir – and the oppressed Hazara minority – Hassan.

Due to his mother's death in childbirth, Amir yearns for the affection of his emotionally distant father, Baba (Homayoun Ershadi) and blames himself for the death of his mother. Kabul's annual kite-flying competition offers an opportunity for Amir to earn Baba's respect but also causes the bond between the two children to suffer. After the competition, Amir witnesses Hassan being raped by the neighborhood Pashtun bullies but his cowardice prevents him from interfering. Amir's sense of shame causes him to defy

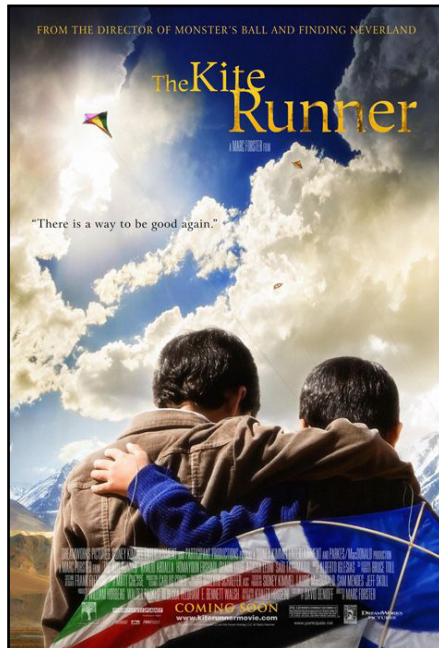


photo courtesy of www.impawards.com

and betray his devout friend a second time, which brings about the final break in their friendship. Many years later, once he has emigrated to the United States after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1978, Amir, now a writer, receives a mysterious phone call telling him that there's a way to redeem himself, thus, catalyzing him to journey back to Afghanistan. The universality of the theme of this movie – no matter what one has done in the past, there is always a path to redemption – allows for the movie to be graspable and reach audiences anywhere in the world. Unfortunately, per-

haps due to the pressure of maintaining the standard movie length, the glimpses into Afghan culture, tradition, and politics were sometimes too cursory and if developed, would've added much more depth to the movie. The largely unknown cast and subtitled dialogue, however, created genuine authenticity. Although reading subtitles for over 45 minutes may irritate some, hearing the beautiful language of Dari was an experience of itself. A small criticism to add to the movie is the love story that appears almost out of nowhere in the middle of the movie, following the tension and excitement of the flight out of Soviet occupied Afghanistan, and could've definitely been shortened. Luckily, the excitement picks up once again when Amir returns to his home country. From the public execution of an adulteress at a soccer game to the poor, brutalized Afghan orphans; most of us are probably not aware of the horrors that took place during the Taliban regime.

The movie provides a gripping cinematography of the vibrant city of Kabul of the 1970s and the grim, gray, and destroyed facades of Taliban-occupied Kabul of the late 1990s. "The Kite Runner" offers an authentic, though not deep, insight into Afghan culture and history, as well as deals with the archetypal journey from cowardice to courage – perhaps not the ultimate Christmas movie, but definitely a movie worth watching in the New Year.

Samira Lindner

MSN - Is It Worth Risking?

The most frequently asked questions in the JFKS aren't only "Hello, what's your name? What grade are you in? What class do we have next?", but also "Do you have MSN?"!!!

MSN is an instant messaging program which was first released on December 13, 2005. Today, it has over 614 million users all over the world. This Windows Live Messenger lets you "chat" by instant e-mail-like messages. You can also send audio documents and videos.

This may all sound fun, but unfortunately, there's a dark side to instant messaging. First of all, our language gets shortened to hundreds of abbreviations: LOL-Laugh out loud; ASAP-as soon as possible; BB4N-Bye bye for now; BRB-Be right back; IC-I see...

Another disadvantage is that when you read something, you can't really know what the other person is thinking, because you can neither read their face expressions nor hear their voice. For instance, when you tell your friends a joke, they might laugh hysterically, they might just grunt, they might find the joke horrible, or they might smirk. But when they reply, they only write "LOL" and you'll never know what they really thought!

Something else to consider: Everyone has probably made the discovery that surfing on the web unfortunately takes up quite a lot of time when you don't pay attention. The clock hands rush around and around, for hours without end.

Could MSN even have a negative effect on our health? The problem of overweight people is currently being discussed by our chancellor, Merkel. She and her number of scientist say the causes are

fast food and a lack of exercise. Has anybody ever thought about the fact that teens and even increasing numbers of kids spend their free time in front of the computer typing messages to their friends? Instead, they could very well have the same discussions while playing soccer, during or after school, or even on the phone, while they are multitasking! Furthermore, the internet connection and electricity being devoured by your computer costs a lot.

On the other hand, though, the phone bill is much more expensive than your internet connection and electricity bill. Also, when you're on the phone you can usually only talk with one single person, but on MSN, you're able to chat with all your friends at once.

But having lots of friends means that you can easily get yourself a virus, since it spreads like wildfire, and dirty pictures! Even if your computer has a virus protection system, it is still always a risk.

As you can see, the current score in this debate is – pro MSN: 2 and con MSN: 4, meaning that having MSN perhaps isn't as desirable as one might think, although it might appear "cool" at first. Even without it, you're not letting any of your friends down.

Think about this: would you rather have friends that appear like robots [by chatting with them on the computer] or have real people to talk to?

Source: www.wikipedia.org

Rebecca Jetter

Opinion

Zeidler zappt – lustig laufen

Es gibt einige Schüler, denen ein Fünf-Kilometer-Lauf Spaß zu machen scheint. Sie rennen die Strecke so schnell sie können, kriegen Zeiten um die 20 Minuten und liegen dann kaputt aber glücklich in der Zielgeraden.

Ich gehöre nicht zu ihnen.

Für mich gibt es nur Weniges vor dem mir mehr graut, als früh am Morgen, wenn ich am liebsten noch tief und fest schliefe, mich über eine fünf Kilometer lange Strecke abzuhetzen und für meine miserable Leistung auch noch eine Note zu erhalten.

An meiner Schule in Brasilien versammelten sich einmal im Jahr, an einem Freitag, alle Schüler der Schule, nach Klassen geordnet, auf dem Pausenhof der Schule, um am sogenannten „Fun Run“, einem Fünf-Kilometerlauf teilzunehmen. Dann, nach einer kurzen Ansprache des Schuldirektors, starteten alle Schüler, immer eine Klasse auf einmal, beginnend mit den Abiturienten.

Ich möchte dieses Mal von einem „Fun Run“ berichten, den ich 2004 (es kann auch 2003 gewesen sein) lief, also als Viert- oder Fünftklässler.

Mein bester Freund war zu der Zeit ein Junge namens Ricardo, wir waren unzertrennlich und hatten selbstverständlich auch vor, den „Fun“ Run gemeinsam zu laufen.

Gesagt getan, und so liefen wir zwei mehr oder eher ein wenig weniger in der Mitte des Pulks unserer Klassenstufe, die also brav den Anfang der Strecke bis zur Bushaltestelle hinunter joggte (inzwischen hatten sich schon einige abgesondert), wo unser Unheil begann.

An der Bushaltestelle (ich weiß nicht mehr, wie sie hieß) stand ein Bus. Ricardo zog mich zur Seite, bedeutete mir mit einem Seitenblick, ruhig zu sein und zerrte mich auf den Bus zu. Ich warf ihm einen fragenden Blick zu, doch er flüsterte nur: „Gleich!“ worauf ich mir „Shab shab“ dachte.

Im Bus löste er zwei Karten und setzte sich auf einen Platz, ich setzte mich daneben. „Wir fahren jetzt zwei Stationen, steigen dort aus und rennen den Rest“, erklärte er mir. „Dadurch sparen wir Energie und kriegen ‘ne gute Note.“ Das leuchtete mir alles ein, und so dachte ich mir nur: „Shab shab.“

Doch ein erster Blick aus dem Fenster änderte meine Meinung zu dem Plan.

Denn der Bus war nicht in die Seitenstraße eingebogen, sondern geradeaus weitergefahren. Auch Ricardo schien im ersten Moment ein wenig überrascht, doch er beruhigte sich bald wieder. „Dann steigen wir

halt bei der nächsten Station wieder aus und fahren in die andere Richtung wieder zurück und schließen uns dort, wo die ‚Fun‘ Run Rote wieder auf die Buslinie stößt, dem Trupp wieder an.“

„Shab shab“, dachte ich mir.

Da wir allerdings im Expressbus waren, der jede zweite Station auslässt, dauerte es gut und gerne 5 Minuten bis wir zur nächsten Haltestelle kamen. Dort stiegen wir aus, liefen auf die andere Straßenseite und stellten uns an die Bushaltestelle. Kurz darauf kam der Bus in die andere Richtung, wir stiegen ein. Wieder wollte Ricardo zwei Kurzstrecken lösen, doch ich hörte plötzlich einen Aufschrei vor mir, der aus Worten bestand, die ich nur ungern wiedergeben würde. Er drehte sich kreidebleich zu mir um, er habe kein Geld mehr, ob ich welches bei mir habe? Doch ich musste verneinen und so stiegen wir wieder aus und begannen wieder in Richtung Schule zu joggen. Ich sah schon den Albtraum einer Zeit auf uns zukommen, da hellte sich Ricardos Miene plötzlich wieder auf.

„Komm mit!“ sagte er zu mir und zerrte mich plötzlich in eine Seitenstraße. Auf meine Frage, was denn jetzt schon wieder los sei, antwortete er mir: „Wir nehmen ‘ne Abkürzung zur Schule.“

Ich war begeistert, denn Ricardo behauptete von sich, jeden Winkel dieser Gegend zu kennen und ich machte mir schon wieder Hoffnung, die Schule vor Ablauf der ersten Stunde zu erreichen (wir waren inzwischen 48 Minuten unterwegs und ich dachte mir nur: „Shab shab“).

Ricardo zerrte mich mit rasanter Geschwindigkeit von einer Seitenstraße in die nächste. Links, rechts, links, links, rechts, links, geradeaus, Stufen runter, über den Bach, rechts, links, durch das Wäldchen, links, über die Bahngleise, links, rechts, rechts, rechts, unter die Unterführung (ratterte nicht über uns ein Zug vorbei?), rechts, links, links, rechts, über den Bach, links, rechts, rechts, rechts, über den Bach, rechts, links, durch das Wäldchen, links, über die Bahngleise.... Moment. Hier waren wir doch schon, oder? Genau das schien auch Ricardo in dem Moment aufzufallen, denn plötzlich wurde er langsamer und setzte sich, betrübt dreinblickend, an den Wegesrand. „Sch***e“, war das Einzige, was er sagte.

„Verlaufen?“

Er nickte mit dem Kopf.

Viele Leser werden sich jetzt sicherlich fragen, warum wir nicht einfach unser Handy herausnahmen und jemanden anriefen.

Doch das Problem war ganz einfach: Wir hatten keine Handys. Wir zwei waren die einzigen in der Klasse, die felsenfest davon überzeugt waren, kein Handy zu brauchen. Also blieb uns nur noch eine Option: Abwarten und Tee trinken (obwohl wir letzteres aus Teemangel weglassen mussten). Wir konnten nichts tun, als hoffen, jemand würde in dieser elenden hintersten Ecke Brasílias endlich auftauchen, doch unsere Karten sahen schlecht aus, denn es war niemand weit und breit zu sehen.

So saßen wir da und ließen die Zeit verstreichen. Ich schaute immer wieder auf die Uhr. Eine Stunde 13 Minuten seit Start... ich hatte schrecklichen Hunger... eine Stunde 27 Minuten seit Start... durstig war ich sowieso... eine Stunde 43 Minuten seit Start...

Ich sah schon vor meinem inneren Auge, wie man einen Suchtrupp nach uns ausschickte, da stand Ricardo plötzlich traurig auf und die Gleise abzulaufen. Sofort wurde mir sein Plan klar: Er wollte mithilfe der Gleise den Weg zum Bahnhof, der sich in der Nähe der Schule befand, finden, von wo aus wir zur Schule kommen könnten. Da mir kein besserer Plan einfiel, dachte ich mir nur: „Shab shab.“

Also wanderten wir in schweigsamem Einvernehmen die Gleise entlang, nur ab und zu einem Zug ausweichend, bis wir schließlich den Bahnhof erreichten.

Von hier aus begann die letzte Etappe unseres „Fun“ Runs, nämlich der Weg vom Bahnhof zur Schule, und nach 2 Stunden, 23 Minuten und 16 Sekunden überschritten wir endlich die Zielgerade. Da kam uns ein Trupp von Menschen entgegen. Auf unsere Frage, wohin sie denn eilten, antworteten sie, sie seien der Suchtrupp, der den Suchtrupp der zwei bescheuerten Schüler, die sich verlaufen hatten, suchen sollte, da man den Kontakt zu diesem Suchtrupp verloren hatte. Da die Leute ziemlich aufgebracht schienen, entschlossen wir uns, uns nicht als die „bescheuerten Schüler“ zu outen, sondern meldeten uns freiwillig zu der Beteiligung am Suchtrupp. Das wiederum war jetzt Fun, wir suchten unsere Sucher, ohne dass die anderen Sucher unserer Sucher wussten, dass wir die Gesuchten ihrer Gesuchten waren, dass die Gesuchten derer, die sie suchten unter denen waren, die ihnen halfen die Sucher der Gesuchten ihrer Gesuchten zu suchen. Das war ein lustiges Laufen, ein Fun Run.

Moritz Zeidler

Comments, Replies?

send your opinions and articles to:

themuckraker@gmail.com

*Opinion/Entertainment***High-Tech - Too-Tech**

You have probably seen your grandparents or even your parents trying to use a new device, for example a camera or a TV. But of all those modern-day things, I never dreamt my own dad would encounter a modernized CAR he is incapable of using. Like most of your parents, my dad has been driving for more than 30 years. He has survived many extraordinary events of the car tilting over half way, sliding on a frozen highway, and multiple car crashes. In other words, my dad's a car freak. He can repair even the most complicated things and knows the name of most models by heart – without having studied them in school or college!

On one recent vacation, we rented a car. From the outside it looked like all cars do: it had four wheels, windows, an exhaust pipe, and all those ordinary parts whose names are a mystery to me. We put our luggage in and slumped down into our seats, tired from the long flight. My dad took the steering wheel (obviously) and eagerly started driving.

After only minutes on the road, I could tell that my father wasn't happy about his car seat, since he was fingering around for buttons and switches and levers. It looked like he found one and with a dull thud, my dad's seat dropped several inches down, leaving his head at the height of the steering wheel. We were already on the highway, so my father became quite scared (I mean, who wouldn't be afraid driving on a highway without even seeing the car in front of you?) and tried to make himself taller by bouncing on the seat. My seat was at a regular height, so I could see that there were no cars. My father composed himself and – this time a little more cautiously – started feeling around for another button to get his seat to rise back up. With several quick clicks, my father was suddenly taller than me, and had to duck his head down in order to see something. I really couldn't hold it any longer, and burst out laughing. That was our first discovery in this strange car. But there was more...

The car-rental-place's counter had told us that our car was equipped with a navigation system. Since we were in the middle of no-where, we searched the car for the Navi. Not even my mom, who can find a needle in a haystack, found it, so we ended up having to rely on a tiny map. My father kept pushing buttons in the audio area in search of the navigation system. An hour away from our daylong trip to our far-far-away destination, he finally found it. It was hidden somewhere on a screen that told us what time it was and what radio station we were listening to. Our second discovery with this high-tech car!

A few hours later, we stopped for a break and my parents got themselves coffee. Luckily, this car had cup holders. My father drank the coffee quickly, but my mother fell asleep, saying she hadn't had enough caffeine yet. After 2 hours or so, my mother woke up and took a sip of her coffee. With a grunt and a horrible face expression (I looked at her reflection in the mirror), my mother declared that the coffee was ice-cold. It turned out that the cup holder had been air-conditioned! Discovery # 3!

Those were only half of the bizarre things that we discovered in our rental car and this story is only an example of what is happening to the older generations. While we can figure out how to operate devices, they are too complicated for elders- it is difficult for them even just to turn these things on. But you must ask yourself, who all this stuff is invented by. There are definitely no high school kids in those laboratories experimenting with chemicals, circuits, and the likes. But instead, there are people our parents' age, designing and putting together.

Those professors are geniuses for inventing technology- then why can't the average adult use it?

Rebecca Jetter

Sports Update

The regular season is coming to an end and there are already several clinched divisional titles as for instance the Dallas Cowboys won their divisional title in a heartbreaking win against Detroit on Sunday night football. Now the big question is who is going to win the Superbowl (and not who's chest is going to be exposed this time). Many people say that whoever is going to win the AFC championship game is going to win the Superbowl. However, a lot of people forget all about the talent that lies within the NFC. There are for

instance the Green Bay Packers and the Dallas Cowboys. The Packers have just found out that they have a running back on their roster. They haven't had a consistent rusher all season until they found 3rd string Running-back Ryan Grant. He has topped 100 yards rushing several times now and gave opposing defenses a hard time. This finally relieves the Packers' attack because now defenses have to account for record setting Quarterback Brett Favre with veteran Wide receiver Donald Driver and rookie sensation Greg Jennings

and a dangerous rusher. The Cowboys have a very strong defensive front with a mediocre secondary. The Cowboys are not known for their defense though. They are known for T-O (Terrell Owens), Marion Barber and Tony Romo. The offense is dominating as they score right around 24 points every game. The Cowboys are definitely going to make a deep play-off run. However, you can only hope that their run won't end as the one did last year.

Julian Graham

Odd

Rebecca Jetter



Opinion / Entertainment

Das Palästinensertuch für den modebewussten Antisemiten



Wir kennen es alle: das schwarz-weiße, viereckige Baumwolltuch mit Fransen. Kein Wunder, mittlerweile ist das Palästinensertuch (auch PLO-Schal oder Kufiya genannt) sogar bei H&M erhältlich. Doch was verbirgt sich hinter dem Trend? Hat dieses Modeaccessoire wirklich eine tiefere Bedeutung?

Zum Pali-Tuch existieren viele verschiedene Meinungen. Am leichtesten lassen sich diese durch ein paar Zitate, in Internetforen zu finden, ausdrücken. So schrieb zum Beispiel ein User, der sich Keith Moon nannte: „Ich hab eins und trag es nicht aus politischer Überzeugung, eher weil es angenehm und schön warm ist. Wenn ich so sehr auf den politischen Hintergrund achten würde, dann würd' ichs verbrennen. Denn wie kann jemand, der auf der Seite Israels steht, ein Palituch tragen? Naja, was soll's. Ich werd's trotzdem weiter tragen.“

Im krassen Kontrast hierzu äußerte sich ein weiterer User: „Modisch voll der Reinfall, politisch sowieso. Und für die Arbeiterkampfvermummung tut es auch Omas Schal.“

Die politische Unwissenheit bzw. das politische Desinteresse der heutigen Jugend brachte „Jogurt-eis-mit-sahne“ (15 Jahre alt) auf den Punkt: „also ich finde es absolut nicht schlimm! heutzutage hat das nichts mehr mit politik zu tun sondern eher mit mode. Ich hab eins und bin glücklich damit... die sind aba auch echt hüpsch!“

Auch eine von uns durchgeführte kurze Meinungsumfrage an der JFKS ergab, dass ein Großteil der Palituchträger nicht über dessen Bedeutung informiert ist. Auf unsere Frage, ob man denn über die politische Bedeutung des Schals bescheid wisse, antworteten rund 70% der Befragten mit einem klaren Nein, sie fänden es lediglich stylish.

Ursprünglich stammt die Kufiya aus der irakischen Stadt Kufa (daher der Name), wo es von Männern zum Schutz vor der Sonne getragen wurde. Bekannt wurde es zunächst durch Jassir Arafat, welcher sich nie ohne dieses Tuch in der Öffentlichkeit

zeigte. Durch seine Stellung in der PLO wurde das Tuch zum Symbol der Befreiung Palästinas von Israel. Da die PLO für lange Zeit die Zerstörung Israels als Hauptziel sah, wurde das Palästinensertuch von Rechtsextremisten als Zeichen von Antisemitismus aufgefasst und propagiert. Zudem etablierte es sich in Folge des palästinensischen Freiheitskampfes generell als Symbol des Freiheitskampfes, was heutzutage zur Folge hat, dass es auch in der linksextremen Szene getragen wird. Ein Widerspruch an sich, wie man sieht.

Mit diesem Hintergrundwissen ist es unmöglich, sich einen PLO-Schal aus modischen Gründen um den Hals zu hängen. An diesem Kleidungsstück hängen mehrere Bedeutungen, über welche man sich im Klaren sein sollte, bevor man es anzieht. Auf Networking-Sites wie z.B. Schuelervz oder Facebook finden sich unzählige Gruppen mit Namen wie „Pali Tücher sind sooo hamma“ – so was darf nicht sein! Sich ein politisch so ausdrucksstarkes Symbol um den Hals zu hängen ohne zu wissen was es bedeutet ist einfach naiv und peinlich. An solch einem Beispiel lässt sich die zunehmende Entpolitisierung und Oberflächlichkeit der heutigen Gesellschaft, insbesondere der Jugend, erkennen. Vanity Fair feiert das Tuch als neues Mode-Highlight, ahnungslose Jugendliche unterstützen politische Bewegungen, ohne dies zu wissen – das geht zu weit!

Hinweis der Autoren: Dieser Artikel soll in keiner Weise Menschen, die Palästinensertücher tragen weil sie dessen Bedeutung unterstützen, angreifen. Er dient lediglich der Information und Aufklärung, sowie der Kritik an der Unwissenheit vieler. Es ist jedem selbst überlassen, was er anzieht und wie er seine Meinung ausdrückt, jedoch sollte hierbei der geschichtliche und politische Hintergrund solcher Kleidungsstücke berücksichtigt werden.

Nick Erb
Ina Fischer

A Class Trip to Berlin

Cold wind, frostbitten fingers and bright, cherry colored noses corresponded well to the cheerful murmurings of the small 12-headed film crew. While many Kennedy students sat through the heated debates and joys of the annual BERMUN conference, nine of us decided to join the film director of the Goethe Institute in his effort to make a suitable "History of Berlin" film for US high schools. We as English speaking students were supposed to act like an "American class" that was taking a class trip to Berlin. We had rented a compact Ahorn school bus and were driven around Berlin and its surroundings, stopping at historical sites, such as the Cecilienhof in Potsdam, the Glienicke Bridge, or the famous Checkpoint Charlie - two days of "oohing" and "aahing" like a real tourist in Berlin. A visit to the TV tower, a quick Döner for lunch (and a whole pack of strong mint gum afterwards) and then we reached the majestic pillars of the Brandenburg Gate. Frau Beelitz and her husband acted as chaperones and tour guides in one, enlightening even us "alteingesessene Berliner" with new and interesting stories about the cold war and the situation in the capital. Even an interview with a politician was on our schedule. After two days of filming, cold feet, and numerous laughing fits, we finally departed with a wonderful and interesting experience to last. We look forward to the release of the movie in February and hope that it will be a success, even if it lures hordes of crazed American adolescents to Berlin.

Kirstin Lazerus

Christmas Jokes

Why was Santa's little helper depressed?
Because he had low elf esteem.

Which of Santa's reindeer has bad manners?
"Rude"-olph!

Where do snowmen go to dance ?
Snowballs !

What's a good holiday tip?
Never catch snowflakes with your tongue until all the birds have gone south for the winter.

What goes Ho, Ho, Swoosh, Ho, Ho, Swoosh?
Santa caught in a revolving door!

What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas tree?
A pineapple !

Anissa Nehls

Culture / Entertainment

Kate Nash im ColumbiaClub

Vor fast zwei Wochen, am 3.12., war der ColumbiaClub ausverkauft. Vor dem Club warteten noch viele im kalten Regen darauf, eingelassen zu werden, da war es drinnen schon voll und dementsprechend warm und laut. Wer seine Jacke nicht abgeben wollte, um den Euro zu sparen, war schon vor Beginn des Konzertes am schwitzen.

Dieses begann, stiehlt, eine halbe Stunde zu spät. Vielleicht lag es daran, dass der Sänger der Vorgruppe „Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly“ krank im Krankenhaus lag, vielleicht war es um 21:00 Uhr einfach noch zu früh zum singen.

Zu den Klängen des ersten Stückes ihres Albums „Made of Bricks“ liefen Kate Nash und ihre Band auf die Bühne und übernahmen einer nach dem anderen, bis Kate endlich anfang selbst zu singen. Und was für eine Stimme sie hat, darauf waren die wenigsten gefasst, so viel besser als auf der CD, trotz des leider nicht optimalen Sounds. Seitdem liegt die CD ungehört im Schrank, die Studioaufnahmen werden ihrer Stimme einfach nicht gerecht.

Das Publikum ist sehr gemischt, reicht



photo courtesy of www.musicstobbery.com

von 20 Jährigen Frauen in 60er Jahre Kleidern über Mittdreißiger bis hin zu vollständig ergrauten Männern, wahrscheinlich Ende Fünfzig. Diese Mischung ist es, durch die Kate sich nach ein paar Songs dazu hinreißen lässt, „I quite like it when people dance“ zu sagen, denn bis dahin bewegten sich nur die jüngeren im Publikum zur Musik.

Danach wurde es deutlich besser, nur im hinteren Teil des Saales hielt sich hartnäckig eine Art „Rentnerballstimmung“, wie eine Radioreporterin es im Nachhinein nannte. Vor und auf der Bühne war die Stimmung allerdings deutlich besser, zu den wie verzaubert tanzenden Zuschauern gesellte sich bald auch die Londonerin, die ihr Klavier immer ausladender bearbeitete und dabei ein ums andere mal an Franz Liszt erinnerte, zumindest an das, was aus dem Musikunterricht hängen blieb, dass er ab und zu ein Klavier zerstörte bei seinen Konzerten.

Nach knapp zwei Stunden und einer Zugabe ging das Licht im ColumbiaClub wieder an, die Instrumente wurden weggeräumt und die Masse bewegte sich zur Garderobe. Draußen hatte es aufgehört zu regnen, kalt war es immer noch. Aus der benachbarten ColumbiaHalle strömten vereinzelt Motörhead Fans und legten sich mit der Polizei an, sie hatten ein wunderbares Konzert verpasst.

Moritz Elle

Muckraker Berlin-Tipps

21.-31.12: Lorient die 2. 19:30

Coupé Theater
Hohenzollerndamm 177
10713 Berlin

Viele verschiedene Sketche von Lorient werden von einem schlagfertigen Schauspielensemble vorgeführt. Lachmuskeler garantiert! Nicht verpassen.

21.12.07-9.8.08: Bundesliga live. 20:00

Berliner Ballon- und Mauergarten
Wilhelm- Ecke Zimmerstraße
10117 Berlin
Berlins neuer Erlebnisgarten! Wechselndes Veranstaltungsprogramm am Wochenende. Sportübertragungen auf Großbildfernsehern. Samstag's BBQ und Countrymusik LIVE. Sonntags Brunch und Berliner Lieder LIVE!

22.12.07-26.1.08: Verrücktes Berlin 1601-2007. 20:00

Berliner Kabarett Klimperkasten
Otto-Suhr-Allee 102
10585 Berlin
107 Jahre Kabarett in Deutschland. Sketche aus jedem Jahrzehnt. Nach über 750 Vorstellungen (seit dem 19.11.1977) immer wieder aktualisiert - immer noch der Renner!

22.12.07: Im KREATIVHAUS: AP-

PLAUS. 11:00

KREATIVHAUS e. V.
Fischerinsel 3
10179 Berlin

Lust unter professioneller Anleitung Theater- und Musicalspielen zu lernen? APPLAUS ist eine Theater- und Musicalschule im KREATIVHAUS. Jugendliche bis 18 können ihr an interaktiven spaßigen workshops für nur 5 Euro die Stunde teilnehmen!

23.12-30.12.07: Salsaparty. 20:00

Soda Club - Neue Kultur Brauerei
Knaackstraße 97
10435 Berlin
die Salseras und Salseros und die, die es noch werden wollen, sind hier zum rhythmischen Hüftschwung aufgefordert.

23.12-26.12.07: Die dunkelste Weihnachtsshow der Welt. 20:00

NOCTI VAGUS Dunkelrestaurant & Dunkelbühne
Saarbrücker Straße 36-38
10405 Berlin
Dies ist die einzige Show der Welt in vollkommener Dunkelheit mit einem frischen Mix aus Comedy, Theater und Musical. Die Schauspieler bewegen sich im absolut dunklen Raum

und beeindruckend mit einmaligen Effekten aus Düften und Geräuschen. Das Essen in totaler Dunkelheit stimuliert mit Musik und einzigartigen Shows Ihre vier verbleibenden Sinne. Ein Abend im NOCTI VAGUS wird so zu einem Erlebnis, an das ihr euch lang und gern erinnern werdet.

31.12.07: Silvester Pop Explosion. 21:00

Magnet
Greifswalder Str. 212-213
10407 Berlin
Mega Silvester Party!

Konzerte:

21.12.07- F-THREE

Tommyhaus
Wilhelmstr.9
10963 Berlin

22.12.07- BOTTROPS

Magnet Club
Greifswalder Straße 212/213
10405 Berlin

23.12.07- Dukes

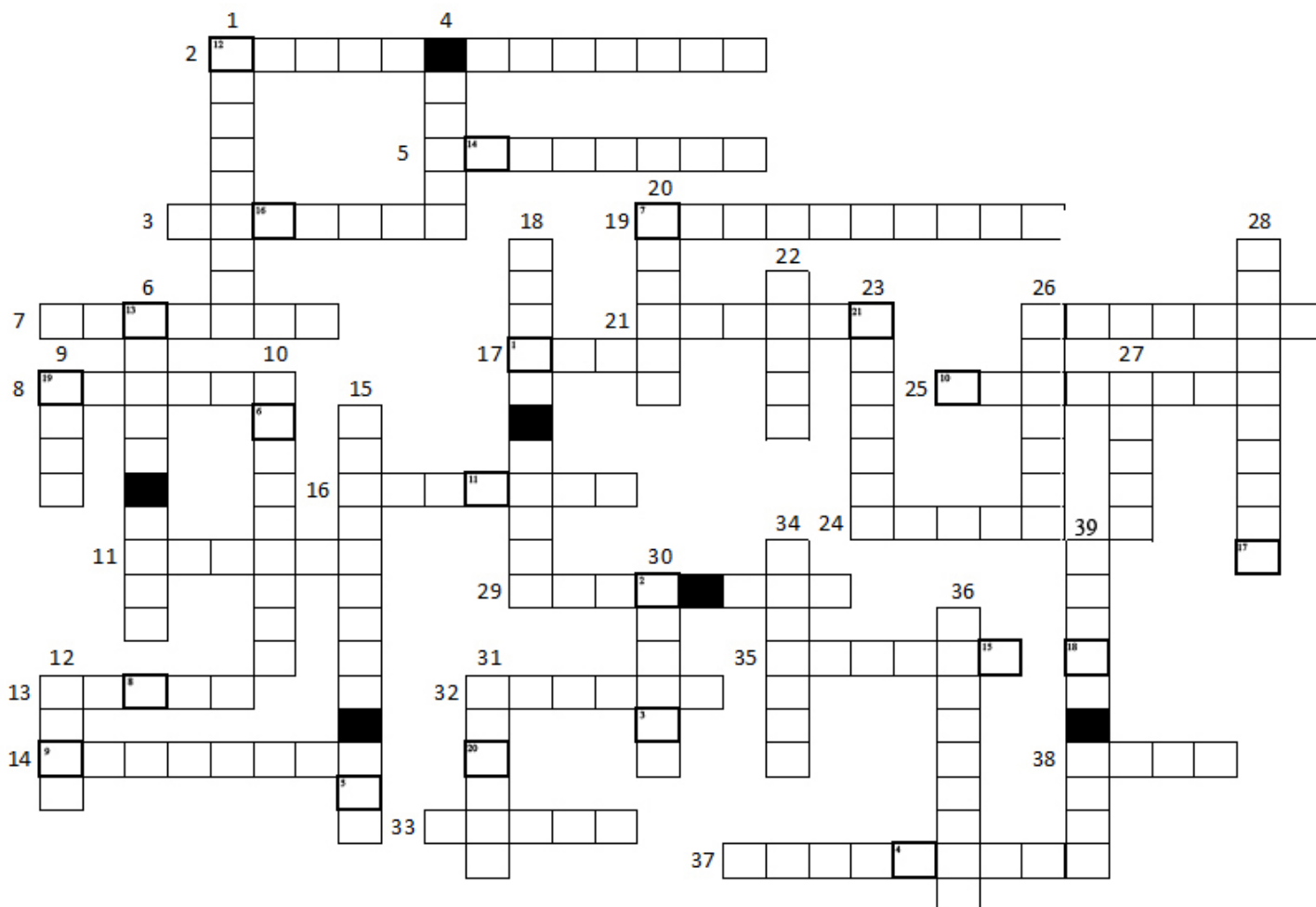
Trinkteufel

Anissa Nehls

Entertainment

The Ultimate Christmas Crossword Puzzle

Farsane Tabataba-Vakili



Horizontal:

2. A spiced porridge
3. Masses of frozen dripping water
5. Sheep herders
7. Inventor of the adage "Merry Christmas"
8. A trough from which cattle eat
11. A celestial being
13. Last year's SC Christmas tree decoration
14. The Christmas season
16. The red-nosed reindeer
17. A tall plant
19. Adornment
21. Christmas music
24. Santa's little helpers
25. A sock
29. Figure made with frozen rain
32. A famous snowman

33. A metal object that makes a jingling sound
35. Another one of Santa's reindeer
37. A plant under which people give each other a kiss
38. Verse

Vertical:

1. The sort of hard edible gift one would receive from a mother-in-law around Christmas time.
4. The alleged Son of God.
6. Red and white candy that could theoretically be used for walking.
9. The alleged Mother of God
10. Animals that pull sleighs
12. Playthings
15. The 24th of December
18. He who lives up north

20. One of Santa's reindeer
22. Foliage and berries
23. He who stole Christmas
26. Small sweet cake
27. The three men who brought gifts to baby Jesus
28. Shrubs with the same leaf-color throughout the year
30. The fourth season
31. The form in which snow falls
34. Wax structures used as a source of light
36. The city Jesus was born in
39. Santa's home

The squares with numbers 1 through 21 in them make up a solution phrase. Can you find what it is?

Your answer phrase:
