

# THE MUCKRAKER

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muck rak er (mük'raek'er) n. A journalist who tries to promote reform by writing exposes about various social ills. Colloquial, coined by Theodore Roosevelt.

Our school has a problem. A BIG problem. What you are currently holding in your hands is the solution to this problem. So, what is this problem? The problem is that there is nobody to tell you what's REALLY going on at JFKS. Last year, the smoker's corner was teetering on the edge of being "abolished." This year there are plans to move it. Our drink

and snack machines are the third best earning ones in the entire city, yet the S.C. only receives 3% of the profits. The rest is kept by the owners of the machines. And we don't have any money to buy toilet paper.

The Muckraker is an independent student newspaper, which means we are here to offer you unbiased coverage of the events and people that shape JFK. We plan for this to be a bi-weekly newspaper (i.e. published every two weeks) and it will

initially be free of charge. This issue is devoted to the biggest current issue in our school: the SC presidential elections. We will try to cover as wide an array of issues as we can in our school. Unfortunately we can't be everywhere at once, so if there is anything you think we should know about, leave articles, suggestions, comments, or advertisements in our mailbox which will be by the Coke machines. So, sit back, relax, and enjoy your paper (or is math class so much more exciting?).

## Special ★ Edition

# The SC Presidential Election

## Candidate Profiles

THE MUCKRAKER

### Speaks

The elections are on and life is hectic. The candidates are screaming their opinions out at you, be it through speeches, posters, or fliers. They have given you their promises and offers for your vote and now it's your decision. So how do you know who to vote for? As usual the candidates have promised almost something under the sun. How do you tell if the candidates can achieve what they promise? Who will be the best president? The solution lies in looking into what a leader is. As life has shown me, and a few English teachers have told me, there are four things a person must do to be a successful leader. First he/she must have a vision. Then he/she must be able to inspire and convince people of their vision. This is what the candidates have been doing so far. The problem is that the best ideas, even if they have all the support they need, will not succeed without organization and perseverance. However, most of the time people forget all of this, and consequently the wrong people get elected and most of the promises don't get fulfilled. Just because the persistence and organizational abilities of a candidate (or the lack thereof) are not that obvious during the elections, in office they will make the difference between getting that hot drinks machine you want so badly and not getting it. It's in your interest to look at the candidates more in depth. The only indications of their leadership capabilities are the ways they have run their campaigns, and past successes and/or failures of the candidates. So do yourself and everyone else a favor by looking at the candidates and not wasting your vote.



In order to jog your memory and help you deal with those second thoughts here are the summaries of the candidates' speeches. There are in condensed form, i.e. we extracted only what they really said, no so-called "Politician's Promises" have survived our excellent B.S.-cutter's scissors. This is what we can hold them accountable for, should they win.

### MR. MORRIS

Mr Morris's speech starting out with him declaring that his goal is to "make life fun and bearable" at the Kennedy School. A permanent School Store, a Buzz Book (on time), more sports competitions (especially with other schools), a yearbook, bigger lockers, "Verkuzte Stunden", table tennis paddles and cards that could be used during the lunch hours, as well as box office video shows during the lunch hours, and improvements to Spirit week, including a seminar day, new theme days (Men/Women in Black, Jurassic Day), and more student vs. teacher sport's competitions are what would make the JFK experience just that. The key to realizing these dreams lies in a fundamental re-organisation of the Student Council, the body that could effectively implement the needs of the students.

The effectiveness of the Student Council can only be improved through giving the students more direct input into

### Mr. Wild

Mr. Wild responded to the criticism in Mr. Grant's speech. He pointed out that "this is not Hollywood - this is school and we want school spirit," and that "[Mr. Morris and he] are trying to combine school spirit with the politics of the school."

In order to achieve school spirit he would set the following goals: first of all a fun Spirit Week, with a pep rally, talent show, seminar day, and various competitions; dances that will be longer and have more live bands; an affordable yearbook; doner deliveries to the student store, a hot drinks machine, and finally bigger lockers for all

### Mr. Grant

Mr Grant started his speech out with information about himself and pointed out that after 13 years in the school he had "learned how the school works and how to use the position as Student Council President to represent the student body." Just as Mr. Morris did, he stated that the biggest current problem with the SC was that its inefficiency, and that solving this would be the key to accomplishing his goals, as well. The reasons for this inefficiency are a lack of organization and a lack of willingness to work from many of the student council representatives.

These problems have arisen because the SC is simply too large. The solution lies in putting more emphasis on committee work. This would not only help solve the current inefficiency, but also deliver the additional phases of allowing the Student Council to handle "a whole variety of problems" and address these issues in more depth. Mr. Grant "wishes to accomplish" the following goals: a spirit week that is "fun for everyone", a seminar day, better Fundraising coordination between the different fundraising groups, a Buzz Book ready for November, a coffee machine, a one world project, and better communication with other german schools so that our school would be informed of Berlin-wide student activities.

their representative body. Before the students can put more input into the SC, however, the SC needs to better inform the students as to what's going on. Both goals can be accomplished through two simple moves, firstly through quarterly high school assemblies, in which the SC would inform the students as to its current and past activities, and then accept feedback from the students. Secondly, through agendas of the upcoming SC meetings to be distributed to the SC-representatives, so that they could receive input from their classes and therefore better represent their constituents in the SC meetings.

As to the SC meetings themselves, Mr. Morris would have them last a double hour, and so address the issues more completely, instead of just brushing on them in one class hour. Such a Student Council is the means to the ends of a pleasant JFK School.

students. This last point he plans to realize by giving the music people their own lockers in the green building and giving everyone else the now free big lockers in the white building.

In order to achieve these goals Mr. Wild, as both other candidates, sees a change in the Student Council necessary in order to fulfill his plans. He, however, sees money as being "the key to the Student Council" and that without it nothing will happen. To get money he plans to have a highly organized fundraising committee that would raise money from food sales, raffles, run-a-thons, half-court shots during basketball games, and senior class auctions.

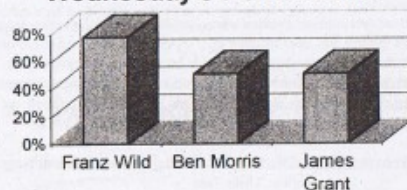
Although there are only three of them, the presidential candidates this year represent many students at JFK. Just because they're running for presidents doesn't mean they are necessarily all goodie-two-shoes. In candid interviews with THE MUCKRAKER, the candidates admitted to everything from riding Schwarzfahren to breaking into houses and blowing up firecrackers in them to flirting with drugs. For obvious reasons, we won't match these activities with names. Here are brief overviews of who your presidential candidates are.

**Franz Wild**, 16, is an Abitur student in the twelfth grade who has been in JFK since ninth grade. Though he is officially German, he's spent most of his life in Zimbabwe. Most of us can remember his brother, Max, who completed JFK last year. Franz decided to run for president after Dad asked him to be his partner. "I just thought 'why not?'" His previous leadership positions have been limited to chairing at Model United Nations meetings. He has never been in the Student Council. On a more personal level, Franz likes almost all music, especially jazz, but dislikes techno and "heavy, heavy metal." Like the other two candidates, he does not consider himself a very studious person. After finishing school, he may jump straight into studying either journalism or philosophy. Otherwise, he will take time off, and make a road trip through southern Africa or live in another country for a year and "experience life."

**Ben Morris** is a sixteen-year-old eleventh-grade Abi student. Benji, as he is known by his friends, has lived in Berlin for almost his entire life and has been in JFK since kindergarten (with the exception of one and a half years in a German school.) His sister, Nami, who is always very concerned about him, is a senior this year. He ran for president because "it'll be fun" and he likes challenges. Like Franz, his only leadership positions have been in MUN, but he has been in Student Council in ninth grade and has substituted for sick representatives from his class for the past two years. Ben plays the saxophone and clarinet and likes all music, especially jazz and hip hop. Asked if there is anything in particular he wants to let you know, he said: "I'm fun."

This is **James Grant's** fourth time running for SC president. He has been in JFK since pre-school and is now 18 and in thirteenth grade. James wants to be president because he likes responsibility and working for other people (like he does in his Youth Group) is very rewarding for him. He was in the Student Council in the 95/96 school year and knows from that experience that "it needs organization." James has two sisters: Ruth (senior) and Miriam (10th grade). In his free time he likes to play Ping-Pong, go to Church congregations. He has no plans for when he finishes school. James, though not "a smoker," is the only candidate who will have an occasional cigarette.

### Wednesday's Poll Results



# Ben and Franz: We're for Real

Is our campaign a mere show, or does it actually have anything to do with politics? Can we fulfill all our promises? These are the questions many people are asking at the moment.

We believe that in reality our campaign reflects our abilities to organize. We talked to the right people, got the appropriate equipment, and set everything up to show you that School Spirit and down-to-earth business can be combined. We have shown our enthusiasm and didn't just scrawl something

Furthermore, to underline our dedication to our fellow students, we will organize a Döner delivery from "Efes Grill" today. Watch out for flyers for further details.

This is just the beginning of what we will do for you, to make your life easier at JFKS. If you have any questions, please feel free to approach us at any time. We're there for you, not for ourselves. And just remember: We're for real.

—Franz Wild and Ben Morris.

## Smoker's Corner to Go Up in Smoke?

In the beginning there was the Smoker's Corner. Then there was criticism. And more criticism. This year the Smoker's Corner celebrates having weathered 20 hard years of battle with the Anti-Smoking Faction. But this year the Anti-Smoking Faction is coming back strong as ever. Currently, the Smoker's Corner is teetering on the edge of its annihilation. Its survival this year depends upon its being kept clean... by the smokers themselves!

The current plight of the Smoker's Corner dates back to last year when the Schulkonferenz (the Schulkonferenz, in conjunction with the Educational Directorate [ED] make all the rules and regulations in our school), decided to finally do away with the Smoker's Corner. This idea was countered by the High School Administration, who said that this would only create more problems in the form of students smoking in the bathrooms, and students being even later to class because the way from the park is much longer than from the Smoker's Corner. The Schulkonferenz then decided to try to move the Smoker's Corner to the emergency exit in the staircase of the white building. When this was brought before the District of Zehlendorf, however, the cost of such a move (approx. 15 000 -DM) was more than the District could stomach, and so the Smoker's Corner stayed where it was. The Schulkonferenz, undeterred by this decision, issued their final (we hope!) ultimatum: either the smokers keep the Smoker's Corner clean, or the Schulkonferenz will go to the ED and have it extinguished once and for all. Unfortunately, the Administration can do nothing in the face of such a powerful body as the ED; whatever the ED says, is law. This puts the fate of the Smoker's Corner directly into the hands of the students, or more specifically, the smokers. The Administration intends to dump the problem in the hands of the Student Council as it is this body that represents the students and should deal with the problem.

The question now is, what will the Student Council do to resolve this issue, or will they even take action at all? All the Schulkonferenz needs in order to convince the ED to abolish the Smoker's Corner is the proof that it is un-cared for and a mess. The simplest solution would be for every smoker to take care to clean up after him or herself and deposit his/her butts and/or garbage in the trash cans. Experience has shown, however, that not all people are responsible enough to handle such a simple task. With this in mind, the next obvious step would be for the Student Council to create a "Smoker's Committee" which would consist of either smokers or Student Council members or both, and that would be responsible for keeping the Smoker's Corner clean. Certain people have already taken quick and vital actions to keep the Smoker's Corner alive and well (see Hero of the Week). What we really need is for the people who use the privilege of having a Smoker's Corner to do their part to keep it, and keep it clean. The Smoker's Corner has weathered 20 tough years, and it would be a shame to have it go up in smoke now.

## Hero of the Week

Who: Kyanusch Kay

Where: The Smoker's Corner

When: Friday, the 12th of September, ~12:30

What: The lunch period began as usual. It was a beautiful day, and the smokers had gathered together in groups for their daily lunch time puff. Suddenly someone noticed that smoke was wafting from one of the garbage cans by the entrance to the school. Everyone was stunned into shock, except Kyanusch Kay, who zoomed off to get water inferno. Eye witness Christoph Lemke: "Everyone there just rise." Upon return to spring directly into of an uncontrollable given moment, our hero dumped an entire liter of water right on to the fire, while onlookers merely gaped dumbfounded. For this amazing show of selfless heroism, furthered all the more by the fact that he is a non-smoker himself, Kyanusch Kay has been awarded the honor of this week's Hero of the Week award!



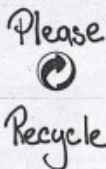
If you know somebody who deserves to be the Hero of the Week for a selfless, heroic act, please put a picture of the person and an eye-witness account, signed by two eyewitnesses, in our mailbox.

THE MUCKRAKER is an independent student newspaper. The opinions expressed here in no way reflect those of the administration of the John F. Kennedy School.

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Photography: Thilo Tost

## Rumor Buster

There have been rumors to the effect that Mr. Grant is only running to see if he can win. The Muckraker confronted Mr. Grant with this accusation and Mr. Grant has officially declared that he will not abdicate if he wins.



## The Unofficial Candidates

We, Robert Nachama and Sebastian Seele, have decided to run for Student Council President. Why are we different from our competitors? While our opponents try change, we will renew the entire system. 1. Funding will be taken over by an "eingetragene Verein", a nonprofit organization, which is not obligated to pay German tax and is attractive to donors, as it can grant tax-deductible "Spendescheine". This Verein, not being part of the school, will sponsor parties, appeal for donations, and finance such endeavors as SC owned snack coke, and even coffee machines. We estimate a 50% increase in SC funds.

2. The SC needs reform. Its inefficiency is due primarily to its by-laws, which render decision making next to

impossible. We plan to reform the SC's powers, responsibilities and duties into different branches, comparable to a modern-day government.

3. We also will increase the importance of your personal opinion. We will frequently ask YOU to vote on issues, instead of leaving the decisions to your SC representative.

4. Lastly, we will institute the act of impeachment. We want the office of SC President to be a challenged one, meaning that if, at any time, you are not happy with the President, you (the student body) can remove him/her from office.

Now comes our promise to you:

If, by 1.2.98 the reform of the SC has not fully been completed and a new SC is not effectively dealing with issues, we will resign at once.

—Sebastian Seele and Robert Nachama



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