

# MR *The Muckraker*

Featured in this Issue: The Results of the Schulkonferenz regarding 10<sup>th</sup> grade, College Advice, Christmas Markets Suggestions, Interview....

## **SPEAKS**

After we all survived the mini-apocalypse last week, your trustworthy Muckraker has made it through as well. Eagerly awaiting the upcoming break, students work hard to complete their last tests and projects to receive their much deserved reward. Similarly, the Muckraker staff has been investigating various school changes, recording news regarding our beloved school and pouring out their wisdom to provide you all with valuable advice. Whether a in 7th or in 12th grade, our articles provide experienced input/advice for the future and knowledge of the present. Thus, we leave you with your curiosity awakened to flip through the pages and if after reading this issue you still have unanswered questions about colleges, careers or the inner functioning of the school, feel more than free to e-mail us and our capable journalists will do anything they can to provide answers for you.

Cheers,  
The Editors

## **School Evolution**

Many of you may have been noticing the increase of renovations and changes throughout our school. From the massive scaffolding outside the aula to the renovation of our library, restorations have been in full effect. For those of you wondering just why this is the case, here are your answers.

### **RENOVATIONS IN AND OUTSIDE THE AULA**

The ceiling of the aula has been criticized frequently for being unsafe and inadequate for the acoustics. Therefore our school has invested in renovating the ceiling inside the cafeteria. The old wooden boards that used to make up part of the roof will be removed and replaced with a much more secure roofing.

Similarly, the top of the auditorium has undergone renovations to ensure greater safety, to prevent any further leaks and to insulate against the cold.

### **"CHILL OUT AREA"**

The Student Council's plan for the "chill out area" has been put in action. Money from the FunRun is currently still being

collected to pay for this; however a designer has been contacted and proposed to set up certain benches in an area in the school. Since there are some problems with fire regulations and lockers blocking possible space, the SC is doing their best to find the optimal location for such an area. One option would be removing the lockers in front of the substitution board in the blue building and replacing them with these benches or another would be setting them up near the bathrooms on the 1st floor of the blue building. Hopefully, the "chill out area" will be installed during the remainder of this school year.

Note: If you haven't done so already, please turn in money collected from the FunRun.

### **CHANGES IN THE LIBRARY**

As many may have noticed, Lutz Hoffman has returned to his position in the library after fall break. Being that our school concluded a contract with an

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agency supplying us with outside employees, Lutz Hoffman was away before being hired again a few weeks ago.

In addition, the library has seen further changes over the past few weeks. Librarian Lucy Scott-Kellermeier stated that about 654 students traffic in and out of the library daily, which is the reason why a new carpet has been laid around the

circulation desk. Furthermore, new books and DVD's have been added to the Library's vast collection, and new tables and display cases are on their way. New Database trials have been created, and all students are invited to try them out. Our librarian has started a weekly tutorial session on Wednesday's 6th period to introduce the new programs and databases.



Photo courtesy of <http://www.sekundarschulen-berlin.de/>

*-Matilde Borio and Simona Koch*

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## JFKS LIFE

### Lack of Student Input Allows for Campus Restriction

As of the 26<sup>th</sup> of November, all 10<sup>th</sup> graders are prohibited from leaving the JFKS campus during the day.

How did it come to this? When a 2013 class trip resulted in three conferences and an expulsion, the administration began questioning the wisdom of letting younger students “run free” on trips abroad and on campus.

A *Schulkonferenz* vote was scheduled.

Our principals Mr. Salzer and Fr. Roschel went to the first student council meeting, explained the situation, and encouraged the students to form a committee that would consider the above proposal and offer alternatives (that 2<sup>nd</sup> semester 10<sup>th</sup> graders have more freedom, for example)

Mr. Salzer approached our Student Council presidents several times, asking about progress on the issue. No students offered to create the committee, and the SC presidents failed to take action.

At the *Schulkonferenz* meeting, the issue was put on the table for a vote. Last year’s SC president, Reyk Börner, and I found ourselves single-handedly pushing against the new campus limitations. Ultimately, however, we could not argue against what the teachers, faculty, and principals found obvious: “The students don’t care about this issue.”

In the meeting, Mr. Salzer respectfully pointed out that he had announced this issue to the entire SC and followed-up with the presidents, even proposing a few compromises of his own. He heard nothing back from the students. There were no e-mails in his inbox from concerned students, no lunch-time chats in his office and, most importantly, no student committee to sway the *Schulkonferenz* board. It

was clear: “the students don’t care.” The vote was passed. The principals, aware of the student body’s silence, graciously agreed to hear the topic again *if* the students could organize an opposition. (Anyone can propose an issue to be voted on by the *Schulkonferenz*.)

When presented with a situation where the students appear indifferent, members of the administration are

always going to make the decision that is easiest for them, which makes perfect sense. Does it make sense that “the students don’t care?” To me it does not. I know that 10<sup>th</sup> graders want to enjoy simple freedoms, and that 9<sup>th</sup> graders look forward to being treated more like adults. Unfortunately, I also know that this decision will stay in place until the student body decides they *do* care about the issue. This could happen next spring, or ten years from now. Either way, the change will happen only if young students deem it worth the effort to argue for their right to leave campus.



Photo courtesy of [wn.de](http://wn.de)

-Max Sherwood

## JFKS LIFE

### A Whole New Seminar Day 2014

The question of what our future beholds is one we confront continually in our lives. Where will we study? What careers will we pursue? While considering options, most students struggle to find the answers to such questions.

At this point the "Seminar Day Committee" would like to introduce itself! Led this year by Emil Sawan Montag, the upcoming "Seminar Day" will have a different approach from all previous ones. This time it will consist of a combination of career seminars and a college fair. Created specifically to assist students in their decisions about the future, the seminars will no longer concern random topics. Instead, experienced professions will be holding presentations and members of our community

will represent various international colleges in the aula.

However, in order to accurately address students' interests, the Career & College Day Committee will require help from individual students. They have developed an online interest survey with proposed career categories, in which students will be able to indicate their top three choices. The outcome of this survey will determine which fields of profession will be presented. The Career & College Day Committee requires the participation of all students. Since this vocation day is targeted to assist all interest groups, all students are asked to take the time to complete the survey to make the seminars as beneficial as possible! Please follow the link and complete the survey! [bit.ly/careerdaysurvey](http://bit.ly/careerdaysurvey).

-Simona Koch

### Interview mit Claudia Mueller

**Journalistin:** Erzählen Sie etwas aus Ihrem Leben

**Frau Mueller:** Ich bin in Berlin Lichterfelde geboren und wohne nun in Zehlendorf. Seit dreizehn Jahren arbeite ich schon an der John F. Kennedy Schule. Zunächst war ich in der Küche tätig, nun verkaufe ich euch die kleinen "Snacks".

**Journalistin:** Warum sind Sie an diese Schule gekommen?

**Frau Mueller:** Das hat keinen bestimmten Grund, das lag damals noch an der Arbeitsvermittlung.

**Journalistin:** Hat sich Ihr Bild der Schüler dieser Schule über die Jahre stark verändert?

**Frau Mueller:** Nein, überhaupt nicht. Sie sind genauso toll wie am Anfang, früher waren sie allerdings kleiner!

**Journalistin:** Welche drei Worte fallen Ihnen spontan ein, um die Schüler zu beschreiben?

**Frau Mueller:** Freundlich, nett... eigentlich nur Positives.

**Journalistin:** Was machen Sie denn in Ihrer Freizeit?

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## JFKS LIFE

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**Frau Mueller:** Ich lese gerne Bücher, die auf wahren Tatsachen beruhen. Dabei spielt das Genre keine Rolle. Ich fahre gerne Fahrrad und das Wandern in Bayern macht mir besonderen Spaß.

**Journalistin:** Was verbinden Sie mit Winter?

**Frau Mueller:** Schnee... Schlitten fahren (obwohl ich das nicht mehr mache). Ja, insgesamt beobachte ich das Schauspiel draußen gerne- wie die Schüler im Schnee spielen oder wie die Vögel nach Futter suchen.

**Journalistin:** Was schmeckt Ihnen am Besten vom Angebot unserer "Schulbäckerei"?

**Frau Mueller:** Also ich esse grundsätzlich nichts davon. Über die Jahre hat sich mein Appetit gelegt...

**Journalistin:** In welchem Bezirk Berlins fühlen Sie ich am wohlsten?

**Frau Mueller:** Auf jeden Fall in Zehlendorf. Im Sommer ist es schön grün und die Leute gehen hier anders miteinander um.

**Journalistin:** Gehen Sie gerne ins Kino?

**Frau Mueller:** Ich bevorzuge eigentlich Musicals und das Theater. Demnächst werde ich die Vorstellung "Die Gefährten" besuchen!

**Journalistin:** Was wünschen Sie den Schülern über die Weihnachtsferien?

**Frau Mueller:** Sie sollen alle schön gesund bleiben und danach glücklich wieder in die Schule kommen!

*-Annabelle Proepstl*

## One Does Not Simply Get Into College

The weather change in November triggers not only an epidemic of common colds and seasonal depression but also intensifies the general fatigue and lack of motivation prevalent amongst many high school students, known as senioritis. If at some point you feel overwhelmed with a simple in-class assignment, drowned by homework, and unable to keep up with fast-paced courses, your condition might hinder you in meeting external deadlines, notably college applications. This process requires extensive research, writing, and test preparation; anxiety, however, is counterproductive.

Regardless of where you will apply, put your own expectations first. Often, you can narrow down your options by determining a set of physical, academic, and socio-cultural environments that appeal to you. Consider your preferences: Rural or urban? Big or small? Old or new? Religious affiliation or not? Party school or grind school? What financial aid is available? And

of course, how academically rigorous is it? If you are interested in the US, keep in mind that according to the National Center for Education Statistics about 80% of students change their major at least once, so aim for strength in all departments. Don't be seduced by a university's reputation at the cost of your comfort. Although transferring is always a possibility, ideally you will spend 3-4 years at the same institution. Additionally, many colleges promote ethnic diversity to simulate "real world" experiences. Finally, campus visits, fairs, and interviews convey interest and establish personal contact, which may influence your choices and boost your chances of admission.

Once you have set your goals on specific universities, familiarize yourself with their entrance requirements and deadlines. The minimum GPA to get into a fairly decent college is around 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Flexible and holistic

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## JFKS LIFE/ ENTERTAINMENT

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Selection criteria evaluate the individual behind the applicant, and therefore demand a wide array of components for consideration including personal statements, standardized test scores, teacher recommendations, extracurricular involvement and achievement, volunteer work and/or class rank, etc. Numerical reports on these qualifications develop over two (Abitur) or four (diploma) years of high school, while the categorical resume usually reflects your entire high school career depending on the particularity of the college area.

The application essay should reflect your motivations and passions through your individual writing voice. The content focus varies between primarily course-related (UK), personal (US), and a blend of the two (Canada and Australia). The challenge of the personal statement lies in a mature and concise but specific representation of your values.

For more information about different admission requirements, fees and financial aid, visit [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org), [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com), [www.zvs.de](http://www.zvs.de), [www.studyinaustralia.gov.au](http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au), [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca), or contact current seniors!

It is never too early to start actively crafting your college application. Do not take it lightly, especially when you are little over a month away from the deadline. However, do not neglect yourself in the process. Accumulating schoolwork and extracurricular commitments can throw a monkey wrench into your plans to remain organized. Pre-schedule social activities and apply stress-management techniques to stay healthy and happy. Know the difference between knowledge and skills learnt in high school –you will need both to succeed in college.

*-Oliwia Hryniewska*

## The Best Christmas Markets

One of the best places to go when looking for Christmas (or Kwanzaa or Hanukkah) presents are the Christmas Markets. In spirit of the season, we have compiled a list of the top five markets and what you can find there.

### **First place is the Gendarmenmarkt Christmas Market**

There are live shows on stage and you can watch woodcarvers, stonemasons and other artists create new art work, while graphic artists, photographers and others display their work. There are also acrobats, dancers, choirs, jugglers and fire-breathers performing at this lovely Christmas Market. The food varies from traditional Christmas snacks to gourmet menus and so that you don't have to freeze yourself there is an indoor dining area. Part of the entrance fee goes to Berlin charity for people in need.

Opening time: 25th Nov. – 30st Dec. from 11 till 22 / Entrance Fee: 1€

### **Second place is the Alexa Christmas Market**

It is located by the Alexa shopping mall between Alexanderplatz and Jannowitzbrücke. This Christmas Market is the biggest Christmas Market in Berlin with a "Voodoo Jumper" as this year's biggest attraction, a ride that makes your heart drop to the floor. There are also other rides such as "BoosterMaxx" and "Black Hole", which is Europe's only dark indoor rollercoaster. A 60 meter Ferris wheel will be there as well. Along with all its heart racing activities, the market also offers great Christmas shopping.

Opening time: 25th Nov. – 23rd Dec. from 14 till 22

### **Third place is the Rote Rathaus Christmas Market**

It is located by Rathausstr. 15. One can already see this Christmas market from far away due to its glowing 50-meter Ferris wheel. The market offers varieties of Christmas food such as caramel

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## ENTERTAINMENT

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apples, gingerbread and roasted almonds, as their sweets smell floats air. There is also a huge ice ring around the Neptune fountain with great music playing.

Opening time: 25th Nov. – 29th Dec. from 12 till 22

### **Fourth Place is the Schloss Charlottenburg Christmas Market**

My favorite thing about this market is the way the Spandauer Damm buildings are illuminated at night. The festival of lights may have ended in October, however at Schloss Charlottenburg they continue until the end of December. There is a carousel and even a petting zoo, where pony rides are possible. New works of art and themed tents can be found at almost every stand.

Opening time: 25th Nov. – 26th Dec. from 14 till 22

### **Fifth place is the Opernpalais**

This market exhibits art by artists from around the world. With over 150 stands, it's nearly impossible not to walk away without something. As always there are a great variety of baked goods, roasted almonds and Christmas drinks. If you are new to Berlin, this is an especially interesting market, as it is located right in the middle of . There are even carriage rides that go around the city center, equipped with blankets for those cold winter evenings.

Opening time: 25th Nov. – 26th Dec. from 12 till 22

We hope this has given you an idea of where you can go this season. Happy Holidays!

*-Alexandra von Anhalt and Elsa Kienberger*



pictures courtesy of [berlin.de](http://berlin.de)

## COLUMN -ARTS AND LITERATURE

### DEAR MOVIE SEEKERS,

It's that time of year again when frost bites your cheeks, nibbles at your toes, and creeps through every possible gap. When you wake up and leave school in darkness. When the only thing you feel like doing is cuddling up under a big fat blanket, wrapping it all around you while savoring the taste of a nice hot, sweet cocoa and afterwards taking a nap with a warm and filled belly. The only problem is time. Time is a curious thing. Whenever you need it, it slips away, and when you don't, it decides to keep you company. Well, why not try keeping yourself wide-awake by watching a movie and keeping those brain cells

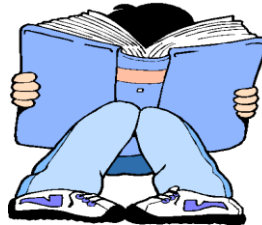


going? This can be accomplished within exactly 90 minutes;

The action-thriller Gravity starring Sandra Bullock and George Clooney and directed by Alfonso Cuarón is about how Dr. Ryan Stone (Sandra Bullock) fights to survive in space, after the space shuttle, on which she is working with Astronaut Matt Kowalski (George Clooney), is hit. Cuarón captures the beauty, as well as the vastness and darkness of space perfectly in this motion picture. The feeling of utter loneliness and helplessness evolves capturing you in its ban and ensuring you to never think of the universe the same again. We recommend this movie, but you should know what you're letting yourself into...

### DEAR BOOK FREAKS,

Who knows this quote? "And may the odds be ever in your favor." Yes, thank you Effie! But somehow the odds are not in Miss Everdeen's favor. Yes, she won and survived the Hunger Games...but here comes the Quarter Quell and she's back in the Arena –with Peeta. We absolutely loved Catching Fire and of course had to go see the movie. And...wow. We were completely blasted away and in a different



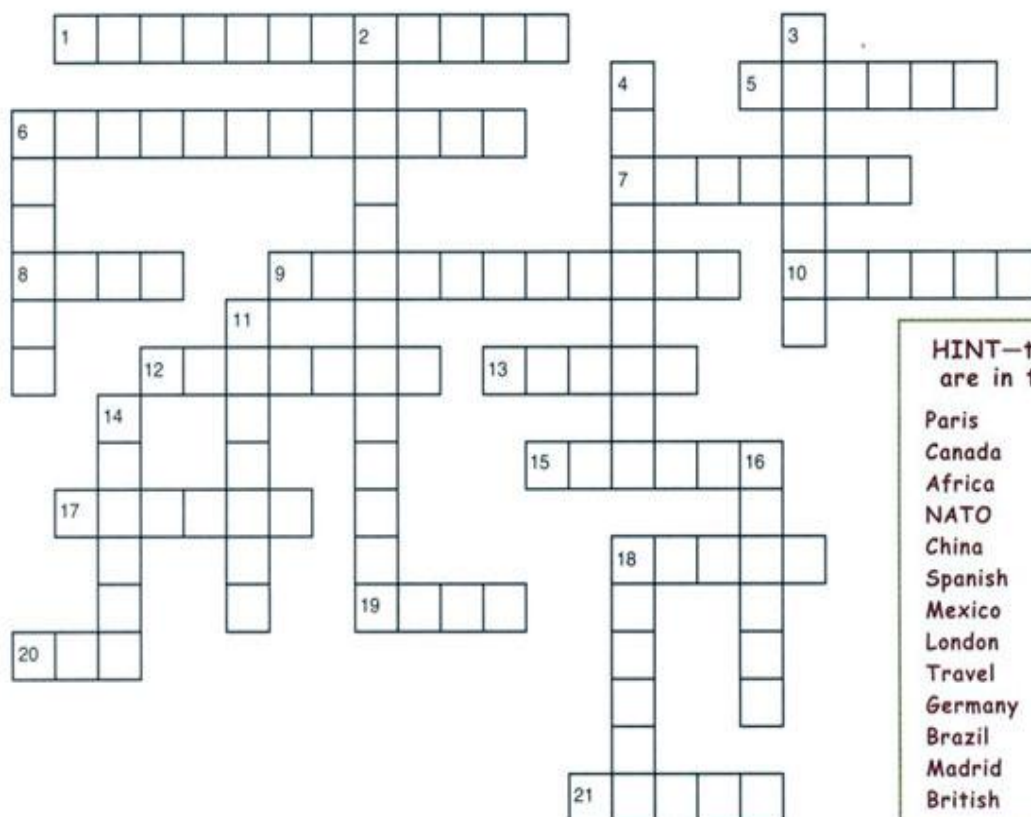
universe for almost three hours. So, if you have time GO SEE THE MOVIE. And we recommend you watch it in the IMAX because of its three-dimensional depiction. The movie Catching Fire captures the original novel by Suzanne Collins as well as any movie can capture a book. The effects and costumes are spectacular (Effie Trinket!). AND you get to see more than one kiss with Gale.

Warm regards,  
*Mary Poppins & The Wizard of Oz*



## ENTERTAINMENT

*Use the clues to fill in the words  
in the crossword puzzle.*



**HINT—these words  
are in the puzzle:**

Paris	USA
Canada	South
Africa	America
NATO	Australia
China	Buenos
Spanish	Aires
Mexico	Maple
London	Capital
Travel	Mount
Germany	Everest
Brazil	Iraq
Madrid	Ankara
British	European
	Union

### ACROSS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Continent where Ecuador, Chile, and Brazil can be found    | 13. Type of tree leaf found on the Canadian flag                 |
| 5. Capital of Spain   | 15. To go to other places  |
| 6. Highest mountain in the world                              | 17. Largest country in South America                             |
| 7. Most commonly spoken language in Central and South America | 18. Country with the largest number of people in the world       |
| 8. Country whose capital is Baghdad                           | 19. North Atlantic Treaty Organization                           |
| 9. Capital of Argentina                                       | 20. Country whose flag contains thirteen stripes and fifty stars |
| 10. Capital of Turkey   | 21. Capital of France  |
| 12. Country in which Berlin is the capital                    |  |

### DOWN

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 2. Organization of European countries that uses the same money, the Euro | 11. People in the United Kingdom are called this |
| 3. City where the central government of a country is located             | 14. Continent south of Europe                    |
| 4. Only country in the world that is also an entire continent            | 16. Capital of the United Kingdom                |
| 6. USA's Spanish-speaking neighbor                                       | 18. Neighbor to the north of the United States   |







