

# THE MUCKRAKER

the students' voice since 1997

THE INDEPENDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL STUDENTS' NEWSPAPER

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PAGE 1



In the past few weeks, JFKS classrooms and hallways have been emptier than usual, perhaps due to the waves of sicknesses, 8th grade ski trip or, more realistically, the pressing deadlines and due dates for homework, projects and research papers. However, with Easter right around the corner we'll all have a chance to catch up on work and enjoy our time away from school, even if that seems unthinkable for some people at the moment. The last weeks have definitely been a colourful mixture of hockey tournaments, the SCCS, Bermun2, yearbook sessions and quite a few bake sales. Add a little retro and the incredible barbershop Valentine's Day grams to that, and there you go: school life à la JFKS.

Taking a look at this issue, avid readers will notice we haven't neglected the "usuals". You can find that a Teacher Feature with Frau Freymadl (page 2), our foreign correspondent's Zeidler Zappt! (page 7), an Alumnus Feature with Sean Hepner (page 3), and Anna Zychlinski's column (page 6) have found their way into the issue as usual. Furthermore, all of you wishing to be intellectually inspired may turn to page 5 and read about a truly mind-blowing holiday: pi-day (and no, that was definitely not a spelling error). Also included in this issue is another U.S. Election Update, giving readers a little more information on Ralph Nader.

With the weather going haywire on us and students experiencing snowfall and sunny temperatures within the same week, things surely won't become boring. In the case of temporary tedium, just pick up this copy of The Muckraker and let yourself be entertained. We wish you wonderful Easter holidays. See you in three weeks,

The Editors.

## Little Brother Gets to Shine

### Third Annual BERMUN2 Conference an Undisputed Success

Life is full of runners up and bridesmaids, like the 4th place finisher at the Olympics or the 21st man on the 20-man roster. But the way the third-annual BERMUN2 conference went this year, the "little brother" of BERMUN surely got a significant turn in the spotlight, which will only get bigger in the future.

This year, the conference had more than 200 participants and took place on the 6th-8th of March at the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in the diplomatic quarter of Berlin (very appropriate). Throughout the two days, the delegates wrote, merged and debated many resolutions, all on the conference topic A Threat to Mankind: Freshwater Conflicts.

Almost every country of the UN was represented, so the General Assembly was divided into the Regional Committee of Africa, of "Asia and the Pacific", of Latin America, and of "Europe and Others". They all came together on Saturday to merge the resolutions that each region had passed. Since its founding in 2006, BERMUN2



photo: Therese Wiskott

has been an opportunity for Berlin-region schools to get their shot at BERMUN. Now part of the UNA-USA's "Global Classrooms" program, BERMUN2 is ready to break out of the BERMUN shell and come into its own. And it did.

A unique set of procedures, with new features such as the "Moderated Caucus" and voting on everything under the sun, set this conference apart from "BERMUN 1". The conference started Thursday afternoon, when student-delegates poured into the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) for the opening ceremony. The conference

**Bermun2, continued on page 4**

### $\pi$ -Day

March 14th is a holy holiday to a fraction of the world's population. It represents the first three digits of  $\pi$  and the hearts of many math geeks. Do you want to know what  $\pi$  is, where it comes from, what it's used for and other fun facts about  $\pi$ ? Then read Eileen Wagner's short history of  $\pi$ !

*on page 5*

### Kinderschutzensel

Not being able to afford the operation that could save your child's life- how much worse does it get? Find out what the Kinderschutzensel of Berlin and JFKS 13th graders are doing to help parents and sick children out of this terrible situation.

*on page 4*

### Election Update

While Barack and Hillary are still in a dead heat, the Muckraker spices up the race: Independent candidate Ralph Nader is relentless in his fight to open the American political platform to more voices than the Democrats and Republicans. Find out what "America's toughest customer" has to say on the issues at stake.

*on page 6*

### Math Crossword Puzzle

Instead of asking you "who brings the Easter eggs", we decided to test you with a geeky math crossword puzzle. If you can answer all these questions without using [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org), you have the potential of becoming a math professor (no guarantee, though). What better way to spend the holidays

*on page 8*

# MUCK of the Month

## SCHOOL NEWS

- The principals are back. They were on a trip to recruit candidates for elementary school principal and new American high school teachers. The good news is that only very few replacements are needed: As of the end of December 2007, the American government has adopted a new policy on taxation of American citizens in Germany. Our teachers used to leave us after two years because those first two years were tax-free; in the third year they had to start paying taxes and pay the sum of taxes they missed in year one and two. Now, they live two years tax-free and start paying taxes in the third without paying back the first two. That means more continuity in our staff for us...more stability and a chance for teacher to integrate themselves and contribute to the JFKS community.

- Upon return from the Easter Break, we will notice that adjustments have been made to school gates. They will be equipped with a new lock system by a company that has been hired to improve school security. Opening times for the gates will also change. The schedule isn't completely thought-through yet, although it looks like all gates except the main gate will close shortly after eight in the morning.

-In addition to that, there will be a type of level-crossings (Schran-

News, continued on page 3

## Teacher Feature: Fr. Freymadl

*Bitte erzählen Sie uns kurz etwas über sich.*

Ich bin verheiratet, 38 Jahre alt, habe 2 Kinder und wohne in Charlottenburg.

*Wann haben Sie sich entschieden, Lehrerin zu werden?*

Eigentlich schon in der Grundschule, aber zu Beginn des Studiums dann endgültig.

*Wo haben Sie studiert?*

Ich habe an der FU Germanistik studiert und an der ehemaligen HDK Musik. Mann muss nämlich, wenn man Musik in der Oberstufe unterrichtet, ein zweites wissenschaftliches Fach lehren, und Deutsch und Musik passen sehr schön zusammen.

*Seit wann lehren Sie an unserer Schule?*

Seit 2002. Mein Referendariat habe ich an der Gabriele-von-Bülow Schule in Tegel gemacht. Das war eine doofe Schule, besonders die Kollegen. Dagegen kam es mir, als ich hier ankam, vor, als ginge die Sonne auf.

*Also gefällt es Ihnen hier?*

Ja, es gefällt mir. Für Musiklehrer ist es hier wie ein Paradies. Das Music Department ist geradezu luxuriös ausgestattet, und Musiklehrerin zu sein ist hier auch etwas wert. Natürlich sind die Schüler und Kollegen auch sehr nett und es herrscht allgemein eine gute Atmosphäre.

*Was sind ihre Hobbies?*

(lacht) Ach, da fragen Sie mich als Mutter von zwei kleinen Kindern! Das ist schwierig. Ich habe einen Garten, um den ich mich gerne kümmere, ich gehe wahnsinnig gerne in die Oper. Ich lese natürlich auch gerne, und schwimme gerne. Für Handarbeiten habe ich nicht viel Zeit, und Geige spiele ich als Musiklehrerin sowieso jeden Tag.

*Wo sehen Sie sich in zehn Jah-*



photo courtesy of www.lms.de

*ren?*

Ach Gott. Hoffentlich in der Selbstständigkeit. Ich würde gerne eine eigene Schule aufmachen. Ich habe jahrelang von einer eigenen Musikschule geträumt, und mittlerweile denke ich, dass ich sie vielleicht auch zu einer Grundschule mit Schwerpunkt Musik erweitern würde. Ansonsten vielleicht als Dozentin für Methodik im Geigenunterricht – also an der Uni werdende Geigenlehrer ausbilden.

*Was wünschen Sie der Menschheit am meisten?*

Nicht so viel Neid, bitte. Neid ist meiner Ansicht nach die Wurzel allen Übels.

*Welche zwei Bücher sollte jeder mal gelesen haben?*

„Krieg und Frieden“ von Leo Tolstoi und „Die Odyssee von Homer.“

*Letzte Frage. Was wären ihre letzten Worte an die Welt, falls Sie einen heroischen Tod sterben würden?*

Leckt mich am Arsch.

Kirstin Lazarus  
Stefanie Lehmann

Comments, Replies?

send your opinions and articles to:

**themuckraker@gmail.com**



# JFKS Life

## MUCK of the Month

### SCHOOL NEWS

**News,** continued from page 2

ken) built on the ramp entrances. The makeshift barriers will be removed.

- As many of you have already noticed, our bathrooms are being locked by cleaning staff at 15:00. Only the first floor white building bathrooms are still available in the afternoon. This is a means of graffiti prevention; it is believed that most vandalism happens after 3 o'clock.

- Damage or vandalism of the lockers is getting to be a problem. Ms. Krull says she is disappointed that the trust she has in students is abused.

- And a piece of good news for a change: The administration and library staff are pleased to report that the library situation is improving! We are making good progress!

- SC announcements:

The SC Hockey Tournaments took place this past week. The next SC Sports discipline will be volleyball. Girls and boys are encouraged to sign up.

Now's the time to start thinking about possible Seminar Day speakers. If you have any people in mind, contact your SC representatives.

The Student Lounge debacle is making good head-way. We are to keep our ears open for developments. The SC and the mediators worked together this past Wednesday to refurbish and repaint the mediators' room.

Lena Walther

## Alumnus Feature: Whatever Happened to... Sean Hepner?

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

I graduated in 2002 with my high school Diploma.

*Where did you go to university and what did you study?*

I went to Suffolk University in Boston and graduated in three years with a BSBA in International Business with minors in Marketing and German. Yes, the German minor was cheating, I know.

*What do you do now?*

I am the Operations Analyst for a hedge fund in Boston for a \$3.7B private equity firm concentrating on middle market companies. My specific product concentrates on the corporate debt issuance assumed with corporate acquisitions and buy-outs.

*What are your hobbies?*

My hobbies are much the same as they were when I was at JFK: music, sports and drama, although I'm not actively in a band or barbershop quartet in Boston, I still make it a point to enjoy what Boston has to offer in the arts and sports, except for the Patriots.

*What activities were you involved in during your school time?*

During my tenure at JFK, I was in barbershop, thanks to dear old Dad, on the basketball team (the year I was on it we made it to the German Finals and came in 4th), a plethora of musicals and plays starting from Mr. Poland's 5th & 6th grade rendition of Clowns, symphonic band and jazz ensemble (ask Mr. Germann about my behavior in each, he'll have some good stories), and leadership class. I think that about does it, I may be missing an activity or so here and there.

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

There are so many opportunities that I had being at JFK, the jazz ensemble playing for Bill Clinton during one of the political summits in Berlin, playing at the Kanzleramt and hearing Henry Kissinger speak, going to the German finals with Herr Hoedt and the rest of the team... the stories are endless.

*What was your favorite subject? Favorite teacher?*

My favorite subject and teacher combination would have to be Mr. Felt's leadership course. I have fond memories of that class and it helped me on my decision to become a business major. I still remember one of the lessons that I carry with me to this day, "In whatever you do, always keep in mind what people will say about you at your funeral."



*What were your AP courses?*

I took AP English Lit. and American Lit., German, European History, US History, Psychology, French and Biology.

*How has your time at JFKS influenced your life?*

Well as soon as I left I had to 'act-up', having your dad be the vice-principal and your mom the head of the English dept. / school shrink, they would know if I did anything before I even got home. It wasn't all that bad though, it kept me in line. It has definitely given me some of the best friends anyone could ever hope for, and shown me how small the world is, I run

into former JFK students everywhere I turn, be it the Commons in Boston or the subway in DC.

*What was the most valuable thing you learned in school?*

The most valuable thing I ever learned in life or in school is taught in most kindergarten classes: take time to sleep every day (there's no napping in the corporate world and when you are working 60+ hrs a week you wish there were), share your toys because you'll always want to use what the other kid has and chances are they won't let you if you don't share what you have, and learn how to barter for the other kids lunch because you know he has some sort of pudding or sweets in his lunch box.

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

Take full advantage of everything the school has to offer and don't worry about how cool you are, because if you want to make anything of yourself you need to apply yourself. Too many people are caught in that tricky spot of wanting to do something like an activity but choosing not to because it's not cool. Well being 30 and still living with your parents is even less cool, so put your egos aside for a minute and think about your future. I'll get off my soap box now.

*How soon can we expect to see the headlines: "Sean Hepner, Ruler of the Universe"?*

I wouldn't hold your breath on that one, this place has gotten a little out of hand, even if it was handed to me on a silver platter I'm not sure I would want that responsibility. I like to keep a low profile in the media, no headlines or glamour shots for me, I prefer to have a positive influence on others' lives in a more private nature.

*Thank you for the interview!*

Farsane Tabataba-Vakili

## JFKS Life / Culture

### Bermun2, continued from page 1

was off to a lively start with speeches by a KAS representative, our own Herr Schürmann, Caroline Meder, the BERMUN2 Secretary General, and Dr. Dombrowsky of the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Studies in Leipzig.

The delegates tried to begin Friday's work promptly at 9 am, but their attempt was hindered by the BVG strike. The committees finally got to work and by lunch, each had at least one resolution finished. Lunch, held at the Hotel Berlin, a short walk from the KAS, consisted of meat and vegetarian options, both with extremely nice presentation.

The day progressed without a hitch except considerable excitement in the morning over two unexpected guests: For about 45 minutes, delegates were confined to their committee rooms, without even being able to go to the bathroom. This "basic human right" was taken because of the presence of a VIP in the building. Angela Merkel herself was at the KAS for a CDU meeting, but security prevented delegates from meeting her. The other surprise visitor was an unidentified man who claimed to have university credentials and permission to hold a speech at BERMUN2. KAS security finally convinced him to leave!

Saturday commenced with a "Moderated Caucus" for each of the passed resolutions,

followed by an "Unmoderated Caucus", or "Lobbying Session", where each of the resolutions were merged into two large resolutions, gaining the support of most of the GA. Closing ceremonies finished off the day.

There were speeches by Max Jürgens, president of the GA, as well as by our favorite directors, Frau Hövermann and Dr. Peterson. Then representatives from participating schools were called up to collect certificates. A closing ceremony highlight was the video summary of the conference put together by the BERMUN2 press team.

Apart from that, there were the usual "Thank-Yous", the best being the Security Council thanking Al-Qaeda for "supplying a crisis" (they had been shown footage of Osama Bin-Laden claiming that Al-Qaeda had obtained Weapons of Mass Destruction). The conference formally wrapped up then, but the last event was the dance, where the delegates relaxed after an intense three days of BERMUN2.

Finally, to use a timeless BERMUN expression, this year's conference had to be "The best BERMUN2 ever!"

Alexander Cohen

## There's So Much You Can Do

Meet Benjamin: He's an 11-year-old boy from Uganda who has a malfunctioning heart valve. This valve prevents the blood from flowing out and therefore causes a blood accumulation in his little heart. In 2005 Benjamin was in such a critical condition that his rib cage was arching outwards, since his heart had grown twice its size to tediously pump enough blood for his entire body. And because his heart was using up all of his body's energy, Benjamin weighed no more than 15 kilos - he was literally skin and bones. Unfortunately, Benjamin came from a destitute family and his parents could not afford to save their child. Benjamin's mother came to Berlin to ask for help. And that's where the Berliner community and the Berlin-based Kinderschutzensengel organization stepped in. This organization, with the help of students, parents, and teachers in Berlin, managed to raise 27,000€ to pay for Benjamin's vital heart operation. Since then, Benjamin has recovered greatly and doctors certify that he is now a healthy boy.

Reading about how one group of people can greatly affect a sick child's life incited us to become active ourselves. We have started a community service project in school in co-operation with the Kinderschutzensengel. Our goal is to motivate the JFKS community to take part in saving sick children not only worldwide but also right here in Berlin. We visit hospitals in Berlin and provide sick children with at least a few moments of comfort

and joy - a few moments in which they can forget in the situation they're in. We read stories, bring stuffed animals, and hope to to bring a smile on a child's face. Our visits also offer the parents of these children time to forget their worrying thoughts such as „Will my child survive the next day?“ or „Will I see my child next summer?“

So as you're reading this you may be thinking of how you can help. We've set up a donation box in the library and will also be coming around classrooms as often as we can to raise awareness about our project. Any donation can greatly help a sick child get an operation, a box of toys, or a visit to his or her favorite zoo!

In addition, we wish to start up a permanent activity at school for students who wish to continue our endeavor next year. If you or your parents wish to become involved, please contact us! You can visit this organization's website for more information ([www.kinderschutzensengel.de](http://www.kinderschutzensengel.de)) or write us an e-mail ([kinderschutzensengel@gmail.com](mailto:kinderschutzensengel@gmail.com)). There's so much you can do to provide direct help to people in your community... the only question is whether you want to. And seeing the smile on the face of a child will make you want to.

Frances Erb  
Samira Lindner  
Robert Reifeld  
Elisabeth Schnitzlein

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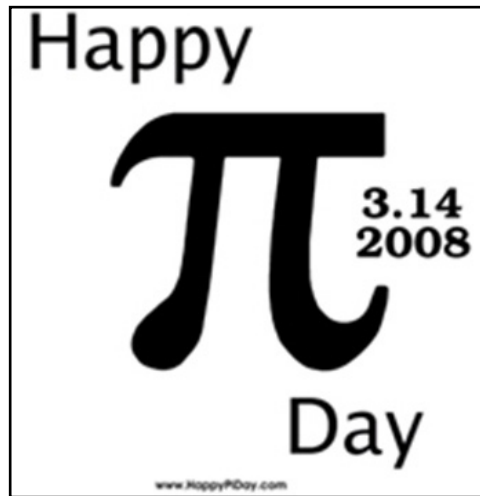
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2. Send in your articles to [themuckraker@gmail.com](mailto:themuckraker@gmail.com)
3. Join the Muckraker Yahoo! Group
4. Drop a note in our mailbox or approach us randomly in the hallways

*Pi Day***Eine kurze Geschichte des  $\pi$** 

Alles ist Zahl – die Uhrzeit, besonders wenn man zu spät kommt, die Geschwindigkeitsbegrenzung, an die sich keiner hält, die IP-Adresse, die anonym bleiben soll, der Zinssatz, auf den man reingefallen ist, und nicht zuletzt die Zeugnisnoten, die bald verteilt werden. Für Zahlen sind meistens Mathematiker zuständig, diese weltfremden Wesen hinter dem Schreibtisch, die mit dicken Brillen und viel Kaffee scheinbar alles (und doch überhaupt nichts) lösen können. Von denen gibt es viel zu wenige, sagt die PISA-Studie, aber anscheinend genug, um hin und wieder eine Muckraker-Ausgabe mit Mathematik aufzufrischen! Im Jahr der Mathematik (kein Witz, 2008 ist zum Jahr der Mathematik gewählt worden!) gibt es häufiger Vorträge, Ausstellungen und Filme über Mathematiker und ihre Arbeit. Aus diesem Anlass erscheint auch am Feiertag der Mathematiker eine kleine Einführung in die Welt des  $\pi$ , und zwar am  $\pi$ -Tag!

$\pi$  ... klar, das ist dieses merkwürdige Zeichen, das auf dem Taschenrechner steht. Schon Achtklässler wissen, dass man damit den Kreisumfang und die Kreisfläche berechnen kann. Manche Zehntklässler wissen sogar, wie man sie herleitet. Sie ist erstens unendlich lang und zweitens wiederholt sich nicht – also auf zweierlei Weise irrational. Sie ist eben nicht nur „unvorstellbar“, sondern auch nicht durch einen Bruch („ratio“) darstellbar. Deshalb lieben es Exzentriker, sie so weit wie möglich auswendig zu lernen. (Der Weltrekord liegt zurzeit bei 67 890 Stellen, aufgestellt von Chao Lu aus China in 2005. Lasst euch aber deshalb nicht erschrecken – der Physiker Feynman meint, man müsse nur bis zur 767. Stellen lernen, denn von der 762. bis zur 767. sind es nur Neunen. Also sage man dann „... neun, neun, neun, neun, neun, und so weiter...“)

Aber  $\pi$  ist nicht die einzige Zahl, die irrational ist. Alle Wurzeln, deren Radikand keine Quadratzahl ist, gehören zum Beispiel auch dazu, wie  $\sqrt{2} = 1,4142...$ , oder  $\phi$ , der Goldene Schnitt. Interessanter sind jedoch die Zahlen, die nicht Wurzeln sind, aber trotzdem unendlich lang sind. Sie lassen sich auch nicht so einfach ausrechnen. In der Mathematik bezeichnet man sie als transzendent, was heißt, dass solche Zahlen nicht als Lösung einer algebraischen Gleichung



dargestellt werden können. Beispiele hierfür sind  $e$  (die eulersche Zahl) und natürlich  $\pi$ . Jetzt fragt man sich aber: warum gerade ein  $\pi$ -Tag? So könnte man doch auch  $\sqrt{2}$ ,  $\phi$  und  $e$  verehren?

Tatsächlich gibt es viel mehr transzendente Zahlen als reelle. Es gibt nicht mal genügend Tage im Jahr, um sie alle zu verehren. Aber  $\pi$  ist was Besonderes. Schon Archimedes hat sich um 250 BC mit  $\pi$  beschäftigt, als er das Verhältnis vom Kreisumfang und Durchmesser genauer untersuchte und die Approximation  $22/7$  präsentierte. Das bedeutet immerhin 2 Stellen nach dem Komma vor 2.250 Jahren! Danach sind viele gefolgt, und es entstanden unter anderem auch die Approximation  $355/113$  aus China (6 Nachkommastellen). Eine schlechte Approximationen dagegen findet man in der Bibel – die behauptet,  $\pi = 3$ . Aber man muss ja nicht alles glauben und andererseits reichen zur Kontrolle der Kirchensteuererträge die vier Grundrechenarten. Der berühmteste der Mathematiker, die sich mit  $\pi$  beschäftigten, ist wohl William Shanks, der 1873 seine Berechnung bekannt gab. Darin veröffentlichte er 707 Nachkommastellen, für die er 15 Jahre gebraucht hatte (ungefähr eine Stelle pro Woche). Leider fand man in den 40er Jahren heraus, dass er in der 528. Stellen einen Fehler gemacht hat und alle Zahlen danach falsch waren. Heutzutage

kann man dies wesentlich schneller. Der aktuelle Rekord für den Pi-Sport ist von Yasumasa Kanada mit mehr als einer Billiarde Stellen. Zur Bestimmung des Erdumfangs mit der Genauigkeit einer Atomlänge werden vergleichsweise nur 42 Nachkommastellen benötigt...

Inzwischen wissen wir, dass  $\pi$  nicht nur für alles, was rund ist, ganz brauchbar ist.  $\pi$  benutzt man neben der Geometrie auch in der Algebra, Analysis, bei den trigonometrischen Funktionen und in der Zahlentheorie – zum Beispiel bei der Verteilung von Primzahlen, oder die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass eine Nadel beim Fallen auf eine Ebene mit parallelen Linien eine der Linien kreuzt. In der Physik benutzt man  $\pi$  auch für Anwendungen wie Strömungsverhalten oder Schallwellen. Berühmt ist  $\pi$  auch in der Formel  $e^{i\pi} = -1$ , die von Euler, dem Namensgeber des  $\pi$ , aufgestellt wurde. Natürlich gibt es viel mehr skurrilere Formeln, bei der  $\pi$  vorkommen (schon mal was von der Bailey-Borwein-Plouffe-Formel gehört? Nein, das hat nichts mit Alkohol zu tun!)

Übrigens: Am 14. März geschah noch so Einiges in der Weltgeschichte:

1879 - Einstein wurde geboren.

1883 - Karl Marx ist gestorben.

2002 - Der Deutsche Bundestag wählt Linux als Server-Betriebssystem im elektronischen Parlamentsbetrieb

Na gut, zugegeben: Mathematiker feiern nur den  $\pi$ -Tag, um ein Stück vom Apple- $\pi$  abzukriegen!

Zur Feier des Tages findet heute in der 20-minute break ein  $\pi$ -Wettbewerb statt – und man muss nicht mal einen neuen Weltrekord aufstellen, um den apple pie zu gewinnen!

Eileen Wagner

**Der offizielle Spickzettel zum Wettbewerb:**

$\pi = 3.14159265358979323846264338327950288$   
 4197169399375105820974944592307816406286  
 2089986280348253421170679821480865132823  
 0664709384460955058223172535940812848111  
 7450284102701938521105559...



## Culture / Opinion

### Election Update

#### While the Democrats' Fate Lies in the Hands of the Super-delegates, the Muckraker Joins the Race!

While Hillary Clinton achieved a tremendous come-back on Tuesday, March 4th, winning all three states at stake, Barack Obama is still slightly ahead in delegates and states. In other words: the race continues; the two hopefuls now have to try their luck with the super-delegates. Obama will argue that he has more public support and will be the more "electable" when it comes time to face McCain, because he was against the war on Iraq from the start; Hillary will base her electability claim on the fact that she won all the important big states.

...That pretty much leaves us no smarter than last issue. The interesting piece of news comes from the little-known (believe it or not, it exists) realm beyond the Democratic and Republican parties: the independent Ralph Nader, a.k.a. Muckraker (!), announced that he is also bidding for the White House...for the fifth time.

The 74-year-old is a consumer advocate, a lawyer, an author, and an ex-Green Party, now No-Party, presidential candidate. Judging by election outcomes, Nader plays quite an insignificant role on America's political stage. However, one would be surprised: Democrats accuse him of being responsible for Bush's 2000 election. They say he "stole" essential votes that otherwise would have gone to Al Gore.

It is not only in election season that Nader has sparked controversy. He's successfully stirred up Capitol Hill throughout his political career: his books have led to the introduction of bills ranging from car safety laws to the Safe Drinking Water Act to the Freedom of Information Act, which improves government transparency. He is the founder of countless agencies, many of which deal with environment and consumer protection. For his work for consumer protection, Time Magazine granted him the title of

"US's toughest costumer".

Ralph Nader was an active citizen early on. His father would tell him, "If you don't use your rights, you'll lose your rights". Now his motto is that "there can be no daily democracy without daily citizenship".

- So far, the other candidates would agree. But a closer look into Nader's political stances reveals grave differences: he wants to reverse US policy in the Middle East; military attacks on Iran and Pakistan are not an option to him. In fact, if it



photo courtesy of wwwimage.cbsnews.com/

were up to Nader, the Bush administration would be held responsible for torture and illegal war; Bush and Cheney ought to be impeached, he says. He wants to cut military spending and move away from nuclear power. He would also push for the repeal of the Patriot Act, a carbon pollution tax, legalization of gay marriage, and, of course, opening the presidential debates to more than two parties. Standardized testing should be abolished, he says; policies on crime and drug abuse should shift from incarceration to focus on rehabilitation - he opposes the death penalty.

"Crime in suits is worse than crime in the streets" leads us to another one of his key topics, one he lectures at universities on: the "imperialism of multinational corporations". Nader views globalization as a betrayal of the worker and the environment. "The reality of Big Business today", he says, "is our big dirty secret," and, "The use of solar energy has not been opened up because the oil industry does not own the sun."

His election website proclaims him as a fighter against "corporate greed, corporate power, corporate control"...And the only fighter: He calls Hillary Clinton a panderer, a "corporate Democrat". Barack Obama, he thinks, is too abstract and general in his political visions.

Whether one considers Ralph Nader a danger to left-wing success for taking Democrats' votes or a radical for his stances, no one can deny that he is one of the most effective social critics in the US. What keeps him "fresh", he says, is seeing the terrible events in the world like his 19-year-old self; with passionate disgust for injustices and youthful hope that better is possible.

Lena Walther

### The Fourth of the Nothings

When we are young, we are imbued with the false impressions that life is fair, that people will share, and that questions have explanations. Then adolescence approaches, and the rosy picture fades. The slow and painful process of unlearning all the simple, idealistic lessons of kindergarten begins, and lasts, usually, for the rest of our lives. Always searching for truths lost, always dissatisfied with the reality we encounter. How often, walking through the school hallways, people are moaning about the fickleness of friendship, love, and grade point averages. Our modern lives are defined by envy for the more fortunate, frustration over unanswered questions, and the certainty that somehow, someday, we are being wronged. So that, at some point, too many wounds accumulate. To protect ourselves, to make it hurt less, we invoke the shield of a powerful guardian: Cynicism. How much easier not to care, to expect the worst and be ready when it comes, then to have faith. A little trust in justice, and that virtue is its own reward. A little belief in humanity, in people, and that sometimes they can be kind. A little hope that someday we will find the answers, some of them, at least, if we look in the right places. All it takes is that little leap of faith. To find the courage to journey forth, risking getting lost, risking getting laughed at, risking disappointment, but setting out nonetheless. Perhaps we should aspire to be more like the minuscule bundles of clothes attached to huge backpacks that trundle around the JFK campus, making their way through a sea of knees on little legs, looking forward to finger painting, vaguely aware that the world is, somehow, going to be alright...

Anna Zychlinsky

### The Cynic's Dictionary

#### VACATION

"a fleeting moment of supposed relaxation that can only seldom be truly relished..."

Farsane Tabataba-Vakili

Feeling cynical, too?

Then submit YOUR definition of the word EASTER BUNNY

The Muckraker will publish the most cynical definition.

Send it to themuckraker@gmail.com by Apr. 11th.

Eileen Wagner

## Culture

# Zeidler Zappt - Sturmflut

Ich weiß nicht wie es euch in den Ferien geht, aber bis zu diesem Sommer waren meine Ferien eher langweilig, öde, ereignislos. Die Aufmerksamen unter euch werden sicherlich bemerkt haben, das ich betonte: „Bis zu diesem Sommer“. Denn dieser Sommer war ein besonderer, einer, an dem etwas geschah.

Es ist an einem sonnigen Sommernachmittag geschehen, der Himmel war blau und die Möwen flogen auf der Knysna Lagune umher, stets auf der Suche nach essen, und so machte auch die eine oder andere auf der Spring Tide, dem Schiff auf dem meine Familie und ich uns befanden, Zwischenhalt. Es war ein eher zur Flaute neigender Tag, und wir bereuten es schon beinahe, diesen Tag gewählt zu haben. Langsam glitt der Einmaster über das spiegelglatte Wasser, und trotz trister Segelbedingungen war die Laune gut, es wurde gelacht, gesungen, und immer wieder hörte man ein sanftes „Klick“, als sich eine weitere Dose darauf gefasst machte, ihren Inhalt in einen Menschenrachen zu ergießen.

So segelten wir langsam aber sicher durch die Landschaft, befreit von allen Sorgen, ohne auch nur die leiseste Vorahnung darauf, was wir in Kürze erleben würden.

Als die Spring Tide schon in „The Heads“ war, der Eingang zur Lagune, bot sich uns in der Ferne ein faszinierendes Schauspiel, das, hätte man nur den Himmel auf Leinwand festgehalten, hätte ausgesehen, als hätte der Maler seinen Eimer blauer Farbe über das Bild ergossen, und nur einen kleinen, schwarzen Strich ganz unten übrig gelassen: Das ganze Bild ist Blau, ohne auch nur den kleinsten Schimmer einer Wolke, nur ganz unten türmen sich die furchteinflößendsten Wolken die in den äußerst beschreckten Schädel eines Menschen hereinpassen wollen, oder, wenn ich mich korrigieren darf, sogar noch fürchterlicher. Es kommt einem vor, wie das Dunkel am Anfang des Tunnels.

Doch es sollte nicht so bleiben: Mit rasanter Geschwindigkeit wechselte der Wind von einer schlappen Windstärke 1 zu einer schauerhaften Windstärke 9, und das Bild, das wir noch bis vor kurzem vor Augen gehabt hatten wechselte in Windeseile vom umgeworfenen blauen Farbeimer zum umgeworfenen schwarzen Farbeimer, und wir hatten nicht mehr das Dunkel am Anfang des Tunnels vor uns, sondern waren mitten drin, und hatten nur noch das Licht am Ende des Tunnels hinter uns, das uns wie ein breites, blaues Grinsen, dass sich über den Horizont erstreckte, und uns auslachte: „Ätsche-bätsch! Hier ist gutes Wetter, bei euch nicht!“

Doch nicht nur der Wind nahm zu, zu allem Unheil goss es nun auch noch, als hätte der Maler diesmal einen Eimer Wasser nicht über seinem Bild ausgegossen, sondern über uns.

Wenden ging nicht, da der Durchlass viel zu eng war, und so konnten wir nur weiter in den Sturm hinein fahren, bis wir

schließlich auf dem Meer waren. Doch inzwischen war das schrille Pfeifen des Windes, das ohrenbetäubende Flattern des Segels (da keiner mehr genug Kraft hatte die Schoten (die Seile, mit denen die Segel festgehalten werden) festzuhalten und die Curryklemmen (sehr praktisch: Damit kann man die Schoten festklemmen) schon vor langem herausgerissen waren) und die Peitschenschläge des Regens, der auf den Ozean trifft so laut, dass man sich nicht mehr verständigen konnte. So hörte man nur noch Schreie meines Vaters wie „Klar zur Wende?“, und „Rhe!“, die bevor sie uns erreichen konnten auch schon verschluckt wurden. Doch, wie heißt es so schön in „Murphy's Law“: „Everything that can go wrong, will go wrong“ – Alles was schief gehen kann, wird auch schief gehen – und so machte mein Vater den Katastrophalen Fehler, abzufallen anstatt anzulufen. So warteten wir alle (zumindest die, die kapierten was los war) vergeblich auf den kurzen Moment in dem man im Wind steht, bis meine Schwester plötzlich die volle Wucht einer Patenthalse zu spüren bekam, nämlich in Form des herüber schwingenden Baumes.

Für die Nicht-Segler unter euch: Anluven ist, wenn man das Boot so dreht, dass das Vorderteil direkter in die Richtung, aus der der Wind kommt, dreht, Abfallen ist das Gegenteil davon. Eine Wende ist, wenn man so weit anluvt, dass man „mit dem Bug durch den Wind dreht“, also so weit dreht, dass der Wind kurzzeitig von vorne kommt. ine Patenthalse ist, wenn man unbeabsichtigt mit dem Heck den Wind durchquert, ihn also im Rücken hat. Bei einer Patenthalse schwingt der Baum (die Latte unterm Segel) mit extremer Geschwindigkeit auf die andere Seite, wodurch schon manch ein Segler plötzlich ein Brett vorm Kopf hatte.

Durch den – wörtlich zu nehmend – einschlägigen Effekt der Patenthalse flog das zweite Kind meiner Eltern aus dem Boot. Natürlich waren wir alle wie vom Donner Schlag getroffen, und wären sicherlich wie in Trance weitergesegelt, hätten wir nicht die Hilferufe meiner Schwester gehört. So gelang es uns dann schließlich mit einigen Mühen ein Mann-über-Bord Manöver durchzuführen und sie an Bord zu ziehen. Im Vergleich zu den vorherigen Ereignissen wurde die Rückreise trotz mühsamem Vor-Wind Kurs ein Klecks, und so will ich darüber auch nicht mehr erzählen, außer dass wir schließlich Hundemüde an der Boje ankamen, das Boot zusammenpackten und irgendwie, vermutlich mit Hilfe eines fremden Motorbootes (so genau weiß das keiner von uns mehr), uns zum Auto schlepten, in unser Miethaus fuhren und uns dort, wie müde Kartoffelsäcke, in die Federn warfen und schneller eingeschlafen waren, als ihr „Ende“ sagen könnt.

Moritz Zeidler

# No Country For Old Men



Javier Bardem

“No Country For Old Men” is the latest film from the brothers Joel and Ethan Coen, who won three Oscars (for writing, directing and producing) and were nominated for one more (editing, under the odd-sounding alias of „Roderick Jaynes“) for their achievement.

Based on a novel by Cormac McCarthy and set in the 1980s, the film is about Llewellyn Moss (Josh Brolin), a Vietnam veteran living near the Texas-Mexico border who, while hunting antelope, comes across the remains of a drug deal gone wrong - and a satchel with \$2.4 million inside. Moss is followed relentlessly by the psychopathic hitman Anton Chigurh (Javier Bardem) and the aging sheriff Ed Tom Bell (Tommy Lee Jones). The script focuses mainly on dialogue; the characters don't advance the story forward as much as they are helplessly tossed around by it. This, as well as the empty landscapes and dry humor, are reminiscent of the Coens' 1996 film “ Fargo”.

First and foremost, the film is excellently directed; every shot has some kind of meaning to it. The naturalistic cinematography, shot by the fantastic Roger Deakins, evokes the feel of the desert and small town settings, as well as capturing the moments of foreboding. There is barely any music at all; instead, the sounds of running feet and weapons dominate.

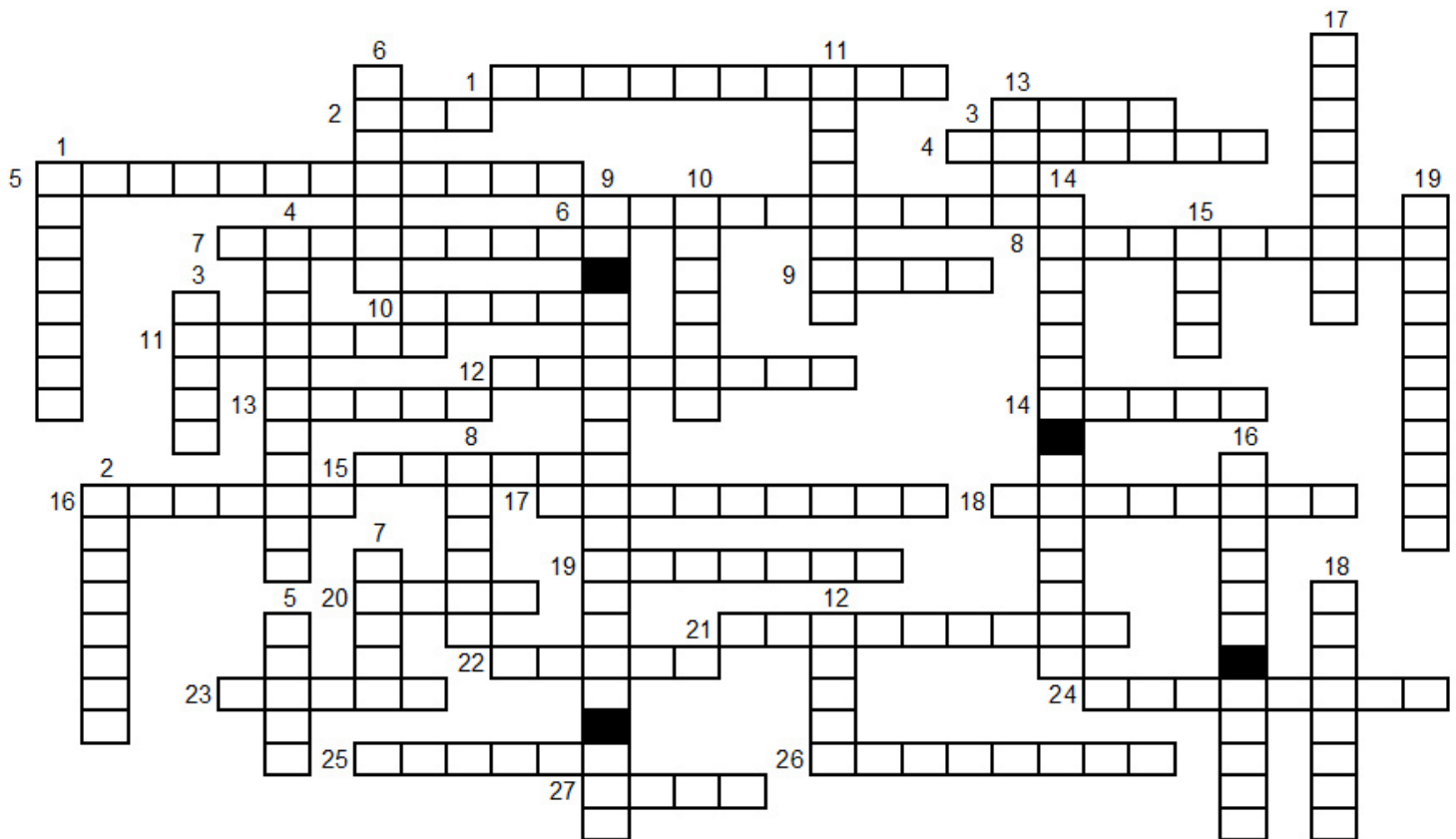
Like “There Will Be Blood”, its counterpart at the Oscars, the film is dark and morally ambiguous. This may not be to everyone's liking, but it's a great cinematic achievement nonetheless.

*Released on February 28th, currently playing in theaters.*

Nikolas Jaeger

# Crossword Puzzle

## Math Crossword Puzzle



### Vertical:

1. A line segment joining any two non-consecutive vertices
2. An ordered set of objects; also a musical term
3. Angles that are smaller than  $90^\circ$ ; a victim of many corny math jokes
4. One of the five Platonic solids, its dual polyhedron is the dodecahedron
5. A German mathematician who's face was on the 10 Deutsche Mark banknote
6. The fifth letter in the Greek alphabet; something really small...
7. These numbers are only divisible by 1 and themselves
8. A geometrical entity representing a multilinear function; also a muscle that stretches or tightens a body part
9. Another name for July 22nd
10. A line that has one and only one common point with a circle
11. The area of the space included between the axes
12. The space between two lines or surfaces that join, measured in degrees
13. Abbreviation of linear algebra; also a female first name
14. Mathematical induction only works with them; they usually contain  $n$
15. the average of a group of numbers; not nice
16. The Nobel Prize of mathematics
17. A type of cone section
18. The answer to life, the universe, and everything.
19. The bottom part of a fraction

### Horizontal:

1. "I wish I were your \_\_\_\_\_, so I could lie tangent to your curves!"
2. The golden ratio (not to be confused with the golden mean)
3. A zero-width, infinitely long, perfectly straight curve containing an infinite number of points
4. This mathematician formulated a program; he also owns a very, very large hotel
5. An expression in the coefficients of a polynomial that involves roots
6. (3;4;5) and (5;12;13) are \_\_\_\_\_ triples
7. A mathematician who liked natural sequences and bunnies
8. A line that a curve approaches infinitesimally closely, but never exactly touches; another proof that math is a highly sensitive subject
9. A Norwegian mathematician who died very young, and talented, and good-looking
10. A proven statement used as a stepping-stone toward the proof of another statement; the best friend of most mathematicians
11. The ratio of the length of the adjacent side to the length of the hypotenuse is the \_\_\_\_\_ of an angle in a right triangle
12. A small, raised number that gives you power
13. A three-dimensional, twisted shape; often associated with the DNA
14. Your knowledge converges towards a \_\_\_\_\_ (usually 0)
15. A rectangular table of elements which

may be added and multiplied

16. A regular quadrilateral
17. Parameter(s) that describe the position of an object
18. An entity that associates an input to a corresponding output according to some rule
19. Numbers can be added; summands
20. A number that when raised to a power yields the original number; during your midlife-crisis, you will feel a strong urge to go back to them
21. Complex numbers that you can only dream of
22. A convincing argument that a statement has to be necessarily true; also a movie featuring Anthony Hopkins, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Jake Gyllenhaal
23. A Swiss mathematician with bad eye-sight who has a number named after him
24. A line segment that passes through the center of a circle
25. A Greek mathematician, referred to as the Father of Geometry; his *Elements* became a best-seller, being one of the first books produced with the printing press
26. A statement that two things are the same
27. The quantity of a surface