A New Year

Community Service
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A VOLUNTEER AT LIS

The Community remembers
A NIGHT OF FEAR – REICHSPRÖGROMNACHT

Caring Community
LIS INTERACTS WITH REFUGEE CHILDREN

Teamspirit
GOOD START FOR OUR GISST TEAMS

Arts and Culture
SECONDARY STUDENTS GOT SUPER-POWERED
What it means to be a volunteer at LIS

Almost a 180 teachers and support staff are working hard every day to provide a caring atmosphere where our students can learn and grow. This would not be possible without the active support of our volunteers (Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr – FSJ, Bundesfreiwilligendienst or interns). In the last issue we announced that we would take a closer look at the work of our volunteers. We talked to Onno Block, who is currently working in Primary School/Hort.

How did you get to know about LIS? What was your motivation to apply for this position?

I was looking for a volunteer year in Leipzig. So I came across Herbie e.V., an organisation which helps volunteers to find appropriate spots for their volunteer year(s) and to help different employers find the right volunteers.

The LIS seemed quite interesting to me. Not only because it allows me to work with kids, but also because I love the English language and the LIS has a different school system than the schools in Germany.

How far have your expectations been fulfilled? Was there anything in particular that really surprised you?

So far: It is awesome. It’s also quite exhausting and I’m really happy to climb into bed at the end of the day, but I still enjoy going to the LIS every morning. Working with kids is a lot of fun for me, even if sometimes there are situations when the kids are quite demanding, and not always in a good way. It really is a lot of fun after all and I’m already NOT looking forward to leaving the school next summer.

Your future plans – How could your experience at LIS help you in the future?

Actually I am struggling to find the best job for me. I’m trying to use this year as an orientation. Could I imagine working with kids longer than just a year? Do I enjoy the work? Should I work with kids of another age group? I am able to answer some of these questions already, but I’m still looking for more answers.

Therefore, I’m simply trying to answer a lot of questions concerning my future and at the same time I’m learning a lot from the educators about how to deal with certain situations, which I am sure will help me in the future.

Onno, thank you for taking the time to talk to us – we wish you a great time here at LIS and all the very best for your future.

Interview: Robert Christiansen
From the Head of School

Not for the first time, a thread running through a colourful Observer is ‘community’. This word can sometimes trip too easily off the tongue, leaving an impression of self-satisfaction – unexamined, perhaps insular. These pages show that far from being a couple of cosy islands in Schleußig and Plagwitz, our community has been eager to construct bridges and causeways, and is never satisfied that it has done enough to help, and learn from, other peoples’ communities and realities. In this edition we talk to one of many volunteers who have joined us for a short and mutually beneficial time; we see our students taking to the streets of Leipzig to keep historical memory alive; we celebrate the exploits of Lions sports teams in tournaments all over Germany; we revisit the action-packed camping and residential excursions of Grades Seven, Nine, and Eleven... and we even highlight that rite of passage, a first school-trip tram ride into town, enjoyed by the ECC’s Lions and Frogs in December.

Teachers at LIS frequently lead their students beyond our own community to bring their talents before a wider public. The chairman of the board speaks for all of us (page 4) in praising the musicians whose Christmas concerts, held this year outside school at the Schaubühne Lindenfels, were such a delightful celebration of that time of year. In addition, Visual Arts director Steve Lewis helped secondary students to figure prominently in this year’s Super!MACHT exhibition, as described on page 13.

Not featured in the magazine – for this is too traditional a medium to do justice to such a project – is the prizewinning film produced by Primary class 5PS under the guidance of Paul Smith. Many students nowadays can beguile us with wizardry on devices of which their parents could not have dreamed. But not every group can put their skills to work with the flair and sophistication of 5PS, whose team effort won first prize at the Saxony Student Film Awards, in competition with many other local schools. More important than the prize they brought home, is the certainty that in Grade Five as elsewhere in the school, technology is being used to enhance traditional learning activities and create new ones.

So: plenty of cause for satisfaction here, but none for smugness. “It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied” as a philosopher (go ahead and ‘Google’ it) said. In particular, we have made but a modest beginning in search of a useful role to play in support of our host country’s brave humanitarian response to the current refugee situation. We will not look back with satisfaction on 2016 unless we have been able to build on this beginning.

David Smith – Head of School
Our educational systems measure success in marks out of 100 – translated into 1 to 6, or in our case into A to somewhere very low down in the alphabet. And on the basis of those measurements our children, now young adults, choose or are chosen for, a course of further education or for a job. This is a cause for concern because most of us know from experience that success in a profession, let alone in life, does not correlate closely with marks achieved at school exams. There is much more to life than that, and school is – alongside the family, and all too often in place of the family – where the “more” needs to be learnt. That is the essence of what your school is about. So it was with particular pride that we witnessed the Christmas Show, held this year for the first – but not the last – time in the Schaubühne Lindenfels. It was exhilarating to see our children and young adults performing on stage with confidence and self-assurance – as well as with skill –, to hear the various choirs of singers creating music together, to see teachers performing in front of, and then also together with their students. This is what education is also about. And indeed, if some God, or some Minister of Education, forced your Board to choose between teaching the 3 R’s (reading, ‘riting and ‘rithmetic) on the one hand, and having a Christmas show on the other, the result would not be a foregone conclusion! Irrespective of the outcome of that vote, our heartfelt thanks and admiration to Paul Foulkes and every single one of the participants. This is what school is about, and I doubt whether there are many schools in this world that do it better.

Just a word about the refugee situation, where we perceive that we have a role to play. Our willingness to support the City and the relief organisations by providing schooling and any other forms of assistance has been properly communicated. We have been able to provide support, for instance by contributing a classroom set of computers, which we had recently replaced but which were still fully operational, to a home for unaccompanied under-age minors in Connewitz. However, the organisational and legal impediments to providing support have to date proved insuperable so that our offers of assistance have not been able to be accepted. Our willingness to assist remains, but we are still waiting to be asked to provide support.

We continually need to remind ourselves of how fortunate we are, and indeed that most of us are looking forward to our prospects improving. May we, and our children, continue to appreciate how lucky we are. And even to share our prosperity and good fortune with those amongst us who are less fortunate. In this vein, we wish you a Happy New Year.

Jana Näther, Dr. Nikolaus Petersen, Christopher Smith, Dr. Skadi Beblo
Dear LIS-Parents,

of all, we four “new” Parent Representatives wish you and your families a very happy, prosperous and successful new year.

According to the school’s guidelines, the role of the parent representatives is to “represent the views, opinions, thoughts and concerns of parents to the School Leadership Team, Board of Governors and the Trägerverein”, for a period of two school years.

We’ve taken on this work in November 2015, starting with regular meetings with the Head of School as well as being part of the working group that is currently drawing up the strategic goals for LIS for the period from 2017-2021.

In order to work effectively and to be able to represent as much of the parents as possible we depend on your input. We need to get to know your ideas and work out what matters to you and what subjects you want to be addressed at our regular meetings with the management and at Board meetings.

We’re therefore planning some sort of a “round parents table”, held about every two months, where we can meet and discuss anything that’s on your mind. Dates and times will be announced via the LIS-Ticker as well as in the following Observer editions.

This open forum will take place at the Sancho Pancha, commonly known as the “Mexican Place”. There we can meet in an informal atmosphere, exchange and share experiences, develop new ideas, take on your suggestions and find out what’s going on within the different LIS-departments (ECC, Primary, Secondary) – and of course take on your positive feedback, too, to make it known to the management and the Board.

This round table is open to every parent, who’s interested in establishing a steadily developing flow of cooperation and communication between parents and the school.

We’re looking forward to seeing you there and working closely together towards the aim of continuous improvement for LIS and everybody involved.

Warm regards

Your Parent Representatives:
Renata Pocajt, Stefan Maidatschewski, Stephanie Gacek, Gabriela Rzepecka-Weiß
night of 9 to 10 November 1938 was a night of fear and persecution, of vandalism and destruction, of injustice and hatred, of fire and broken glass. The Sturmabteilung (SA) under orders gave their Anti-Semitic loathing free reign as Synagogues were laid to waste, Jewish homes attacked and shops destroyed. When the dust settled 91 Germans had been killed. What was the reason? They were Jewish. Anti-Semitism was a key element to Nazi ideology and this was to continue through to the end of the Second World War, when the concentration camps, work camps and death camps designed and implemented by the Nazi regime were liberated.

Throughout Leipzig you will find Stolpersteine, literally translated “tripping stones”. These stones have been laid in memory of those who lost their lives. They are designed to stop pedestrians in their tracks and remind them of the past and to draw their attention to the fate of those who lived amongst them.

Each year on the 9 November, these stones are cleaned, candles are lit, flowers are laid and a vigil is held in memory of these victims. For by remembering, the lessons of History are not forgotten.

On 9 November 2015, Nele Lieder, Greta Drews, Selina Curti, Clara Gieseke, David Usbeck, Matan Bone, Aaron Falke and Mr Bell took part in the memorial event by cleaning four “Stolpersteine” in the Waldstraße. Aaron told us the life history of the victims, as the stones were cleaned, candles were lit and flowers were laid. Later that evening, Mr Bell and students attended the vigil held at the site of the Synagogue in the Gottschedstraße which had been destroyed in Reichspogromnacht. Candles were left as a symbol of remembrance and of hope for the future.

Gary Bell – Grade 10 Form Tutor
LIS interacts with refugee children

It is a phrase, a banner, a sign, a sticker that we have seen and heard often over the past months. Leipzig International School has taken opportunities to be welcoming to refugees this fall. As a school, we thought it particularly opportune to help the young people living in OFT Mühlholz in Connewitz. These boys are in Germany as unaccompanied minors, sometimes in contact with parents in their home countries including Syria and Afghanistan by smart phone, sometimes truly alone. OFT Mühlholz is their first station in Germany before moving on to foster families or other care situations.

With our charity run, “Run for a refugee child” on 9 October 2015, we gave all students the opportunity to help raise money for the cause. By the time the event came, we wished the runner badges said “I run with a refugee child.” To our delight, a busload of youngsters from the refugee Mühlholz centre ran with us – and we with them. LIS students demonstrated their world citizenry and genuine hospitality. Refugee children were not left to stand in a separate circle. They were greeted by LIS students and welcomed to the run. In particular it was the Grade 8 students, most notably Zeid Alshasni and Zahra Hany Hunain, who led the schools engagement by taking on organisational activities and helping other year groups focus on the day.

We did indeed raise a modest sum which we are using to support operations at the Mühlholz centre and similar facilities where children are being cared for. On 2 December, LIS opened a language learning lab at the Mühlholz centre. Computers the school was no longer using are programmed with language learning software purchased from monies raised at the run. Users have microphone headsets that they use to practice hearing and speaking German. This work, at their own place, complements small group instruction.

Ten LIS students travelled to Mühlholz to open the lab. They paired with ten residents of the centre and got them started using the software. There were some pairs that had Arabic or English as a common language. Other pairs had no common language. The communication seemed to work equally well in pairs with and without a common language. All groups demonstrated openness to each other, which seems to be more crucial for communication than a common language. Certainly that’s the way it worked when the group played billiards a little later on. “They learned from us and we learned from them,” as one student summarised the experience.
Sports programme at LIS – GISST season 2015-16

Good start for our teams

The LIS Lions have completed the first season of the GISST sports year. After coming into the school year with lofty goals and high hopes, the LIS teams did not disappoint.

Sports kicked off with our cross country team traveling to the Berlin British School for the ten school GISST Cross Country race. Our LIS athletes came second in the varsity boys and girls team categories, with Sophie Hirsch capturing the individual first place trophy in the varsity girls’ race. Our U14 teams wrapped up the day with 4th and 5th place respectively, with a first place finish by Al Buchr Saleh in the U14 boys division.

All four of our football teams were next to compete in their GISST tournaments. The U14 boys travelled to the Franconian International School where they finished in 10th place, while the girls’ football squad played to a 5th place finish. Varsity boys followed the U14 girls’ lead with a 5th place finish at the Bavarian International School. The LIS Varsity Girls had the unique opportunity to play in a GISST tournament on their home soil in Leipzig. They took full advantage of having the chance to field two separate teams in the tournament by battling their way to 5th and 8th places, including winning the tournament Sportsmanship Award.

Badminton was the first sport of the year to capture a 1st place team trophy. The varsity girls did exactly that by fighting their way against outstanding competition to a gold medal.
WAY TO GO LIONS!
We at the Leipzig International School are truly proud of our students. Not only with their many successes on the competitive fields and courts but also, the way they continually excel at representing our school in such a positive manner when they travel to different schools; when they set and reach their team goals and display the behaviour that we as educators, coaches and parents try so hard to instil.

finish at the Berlin International School. The boys’ varsity team also represented the LIS well, displaying great effort and solid sportsmanship, ending the tournament in 4th place.

The U14 Badminton Lions travelled to the newest member of the GISST Conference, St. Georges International School in Duisburg. Both of these young teams gained valuable tournament experience. The girls took home 7th place while the boys grabbed 4th place in the ten team tournament.

Varsity Volleyball wrapped up the fall season in early December. Our Girls took their talents to the International School of Stuttgart and finished the two day tournament in 5th place while the boys made the short trip to Dresden and won their bronze medal match.

In addition to the individual places a school is awarded at tournaments, there is also an overall score for every school in the GISST conference. This overall score reflects the success of the school in all the sports combined. Now that all of the fall competitions are done and the points have been tallied, LIS finds itself in 3rd place out of the eleven schools involved in the GISST.

Eric Newton – Athletics Director
We’re on an expedition in Autumn

Holiday Hort

In the first week of Holiday Hort the kids focused on gaining orientation and team-building skills, which were needed during their final quest at the end of the week. This included growing and working as a team to discover hidden clues that would help them to be prepared for the big scavenger hunt. A huge highlight during this week was the canoe trip, which the kids documented themselves. Their wonderful display can be seen hanging in the Hort building. So, please, be sure to check it out.

The second week of Holiday Hort brought many challenges and tested the kids’ survival skills. Many abilities were discovered, such as crafting bows and arrows, building a ladder and making a hut, all out of natural materials. The kids were also visited by Ronny from the GeoWerkstatt and, from him, learnt about different kinds of soils and how to filter clean water from the ground. On our field trip this week we went to the Labyrinth House in Altenburg, where the kids put their orientation skills to good use.

We are looking forward to some new adventures with you in our Winter Holiday Hort.

Beth Konrad and the Hort team
12 November 2015 saw the whole Primary School enjoying International Day. Each of the classrooms was turned into a colourful and often delicious celebration of a country’s food, art and culture. Primary students ‘travelled’ from country to country and from activity to activity throughout the day, ending with dance and music in the Auditorium.

Our thanks to all the parents who helped make the day so enjoyable!
5 November 2015 a large group of ECC children and their families met at LIS to take part in the much anticipated lantern walk. Children proudly caring lanterns of every size and colour gathered excitedly on the steps outside the cafeteria for a couple of traditional songs that were led by Miss Dana. Then everyone set off for a walk through the park. It was dark but a perfect evening for being outside with lanterns. At the end of the walk families were invited to enjoy the refreshments provided and there was enough soup and plenty of sausages to go around.

The community atmosphere during the whole evening was very obvious and it was lovely to see children, families and staff enjoying their time together.

Sarah Brannon – Primary School Principal

In December the Frogs had their first ever field trip!

For our first ever field trip, we joined the Lions leaving the Early Childhood Centre and headed for the Märchenwald at our Leipzig Christmas market. Leaving right on time, we were soon at the tram stop on Karl-Heine-Str. waiting to travel into town on the tram. We walked so fast that we had plenty of time to while away at the stop, so we practised our “Hello Winter” song for the upcoming Christmas concert, delighting all the passengers waiting alongside us!

How exciting it was to board the tram – for some of us it was the first ride ever! We got off at the Augustusplatz, walked over to the Märchenwald and enjoyed looking at the different fairy tales. After that we were tempted by nearby roundabout, and when we approached it, the lady there gave the children a wave and made us a special offer. We educators couldn’t possibly deny the children a chance to have not one, but two rides! Everybody was smiling as they happily shared cars, fire engines and helicopters! Then it was time to go back. We waved good bye to the lady and the roundabout and hurried all the way back to the ECC for a well deserved lunch!

Kristina Wolf
Secondary students got super-powered Super!MACHT

For over 20 years Leipzig has been the home of "GalerieRieRiemann’s" 24-hour-exhibitions. It all began back in 1993 when three Leipzig artists displayed their art for 24 consecutive hours in an unrenovated apartment. Successive groups of art minded people have kept the concept alive by organising the 24-hour-exhibition in different locations throughout Leipzig.

The seventeenth edition of the 24-hour-exhibition titled Super!MACHT took place at the MONOPOL gallery in Leipzig-Eutritzsch. While considering what to do for Super!MACHT, I quickly came to the conclusion that the power of education and the student/teacher relationship was a topic to explore. Working together to create visual art pieces and installing an exhibition at an art event would be an experience that my students and I have not had before.

In the classroom we began by researching artefacts that related to the students’ ideas of power. Various drawing techniques and collages were explored. Individually, we interpreted the meaning of Super!MACHT and created visual art pieces especially for this exhibition. Older students reviewed recent work and also selected pieces to display. The show was a great success. Our young LIS artists produced amazing art that held strong among the great collection of artists participating in the exhibition. We also had a great bunch of students who worked together to set up the elaborate show.

The Super!MACHT artwork has since been on display at LIS in the corridor leading to the cafeteria and on the second floor near the elevator.

Steve Lewis, Visual Arts Department

Congratulations

We would like to thank our art students from Grades 9 – 12 for submitting art for the selection process of the Leipzig Youth Art Exhibition, entitled Richtig Wichtig (21. Leipziger Kinder- & Jugendkunstausstellung).

Five of the thirteen pieces submitted were selected to be exhibited at various locations in Leipzig from 09.01. – 28.02.2016. The five students and their families have been invited to attend the opening reception/award ceremony at the Leipzig Museum of Fine Arts (Museum der Bildenden Künste Leipzig).

Congratulations to the following Young Artists of LIS who will have their art shown with that of 300 other Leipzig students at the following institutions: Jonathan Engler Untitled, Galerie fuer Zeitgenoessische Kunst (Gfzk) | Clara Schreiner Books, Haus des Buches | Sundes Randhawa Sisters, Galerie fuer Zeitgenoessische Kunst (Gfzk) | Felizitas Upmeyer Verbunden, Halle 14- Spinnerei | Veronika Bartl Submerged, Haus Steinstrasse e.V.

An online catalogue of Super!MACHT including our contribution to the 24-hour-exhibition can be seen at: http://24-stunden-ausstellung.de/supermacht/
Don’t build triangular rafts – they sink!

Grade 7 residential trip with outward bound to Schloss Kröchlendorff, Nordwestuckermark

Upon a time, in a beautiful castle surrounded by nature... This is how a fairy tale could begin.

Even though our means of transport to Schloss Kröchlendorff was neither a horse and carriage, nor did we have enchanted witches with us (if you leave out the teachers), we still had a fantastic four days. Activities like making fire, using maps, climbing or raft building certainly enriched our life skills. We enjoyed playing games, especially 'Capture the flag'. In the evenings we sat by a wonderful campfire, where we had the chance to experience nature at night and to eat marshmallows.

On the residential trip, Grade 7 students developed their community and social skills, strengthened their self-confidence and came home with an increased environmental understanding. They lived happily ever after...

Isabella Haase 7 FV, Julia Bierkämper 7 GWB, Wilson Woltersdorf 7 PG, Tanja Kröger-Foulkes – PLL Grades 6-8

Don’t build triangular rafts – they sink!
Grade 9 outward bound camp

Three days, four instructors, three houses and more than forty students ready to be risk-takers in a country afar. As we arrived at Vysoka Lipa, we all got together. Thoughts, hopes and fears crossed our minds. What was awaiting us? Why were we tying our shoelaces to somebody else’s?

Though before any of our questions could be answered, we were separated into various groups as well as being settled into our apartments. Afterwards, in small groups, we started to plan an 8 km hike along uphill and downhill paths from Vysoka Lipa to Jetrichovice, for the next day.

After exhausting hours of hiking, we reached a campsite at Jetrichovice, where we prepared our own food using backpack-stoves and alcohol for fuel. Some of the braver ones among us tried to build a campfire for cooking. As the sun went down, an amicable atmosphere was present. Individuals were playing harmonious tunes on a guitar while others sang along. In the background, some students were aiming to prepare crêpes while others were rinsing stoves and cutlery. After the incredible social time, we started to get ready to sleep under the “tarps” we had built at the campsite — regardless of the weather.

On the third day, we hiked back 7 km to Vysoka Lipa. In total we hiked 15 km; these were more tiresome than anything most of us had ever experienced during any hiking trip. Yet, the scenery we had been rewarded with, during the trek, had been spectacularly alluring. Returning to our apartments, after having completed an abseiling activity from a 35 m high rock, we learned that: “Corny” energy bars are some of the most valuable pieces of equipment on a hike. 35 m of vertical abseiling may be frightening and will take several minutes to complete, but you can look back proudly in future and mapping skills are needed if you want to avoid hiking additional kilometres.

If we were asked to describe our trip in one word, we would say that we couldn’t. Imagine this: you and a group of your classmates are sent into the wild with only a map and a destination. Some of us made the mistake of getting a clunky backpack or wearing thick clothing in the heat, too. When you are on your own and have to overcome your fear, which means leaving your comfort zone, you are going to want to be as comfortable as you can. We were lucky to join this Outward Band camp and have the chance to get to know our classmates in more depth, and strengthen our teamwork by participating in some hilarious, interesting and useful group activities.

Garen Gregorian 9 GD, Henry Fahrenkamp 9 BR, Sarah Dufau 9 GD and Hai Ly Nguyen 9 EN

Grade 11 field trip to Czech Republic

Photographs chosen by Veronika Bartl and Arthur Dufau. Captions written by Wessel Bekker and Mathilda Frohloff

[1] The woods in which we went hiking: beautiful scenery and fresh air. The hike was exhausting, but worth it.
[2] The camp where we slept. We really did get closer over the trip and it was an amazing experience. We were all united.
[3] The return journey after a long week of bonding with our fellow classmates. We had a lot of fun on the bus ride back to Leipzig!
International Flavours at a Picnic in the Clara-Zetkin-Park

Tower Bridge Tavern

On a late summer Sunday in September, the sun was shining over a British-Victorian picnic in Leipzig, of all places, with many famous British personalities attending. Present were such illustrious figures as Winston Churchill, Miss Marple, Dr. Watson, James Bond and even Mary Poppins, who flew in with her umbrella. Many classical British culinary delicacies were accompanied by the sound of the bagpipes while brave highlanders displayed their sword skills and got the whisky barrel rolling. Photographers and even LIS’s own artist-teacher, Steve Lewis, were enthusiastically trying to capture the scene with cameras and paint brushes.

This splendid picnic was to announce to the public the exciting plans to revive the derelict building near LIS at the edge of the park, and to give them a taste of the culinary and cultural meeting place it could become. Steve Lewis’s painting depicts an artist’s hand transforming the ruin into the Tower Bridge Tavern, an old-English tavern with the dark and nostalgic charm of the late 19th century. Inspired by Ms. Anlauf’s (mum of a Grade 11 student) vision, this is a place far from the rush of everyday life, serving food and drink from Great Britain with a dash of spice from the Commonwealth.

The building is currently more of a ruin and desperately needs to be brought back to life. The location is rich in cultural history. Back in 1972, East German youths turned the venue into a nightclub called the “Rote Diskothek”. Since the early Nineties it has been empty and abandoned. It is time to bring new life into its hall and your support and helping hands are always welcome.

Yvonne Anlauf & Steve Lewis

www.towerbridgetavern.de | www.stevelewisart.com

Grade 8 students painting the walls with style

Graffiti Art at the ECC

During the month of September 2015 Grade 8 students were challenged to create graffiti designs for the wall surrounding the ECC. In this graffiti based unit they learnt valuable art and design skills, reflecting on the elements and principals of art and design, as well as developing unique lettering and 3D elements. Prior to painting we were fortunate to have had the opportunity to visit Westwerk ‘community space’, where students saw a demonstration of, and then practiced, spray painting techniques. This site specific work presented an opportunity that engaged some excellent problem solving and team work skills. The art department would like to thank all the staff that supported this trip and Peter and Betty Sterzing for introducing us to the Westwerk community space.

Kylie Duncan, Visual Arts Department

www.towerbridgetavern.de | www.stevelewisart.com