

Celebrating and working together Schule macht Schule Newsletter January 2020

Dear supporters and friends of the Medical Centre School in Jharkot, dear students and teachers at the Musisches Gymnasium,

The new year has only just begun for us. Nepal is far ahead though: in the middle of year 2076. For them, the new year begins with 1st Baisakh 2077 – at which point our calendars will be on 13th April 2020. The western new year is still celebrated in Nepal. Sometimes they mark Christmas too: you'll read about that in this newsletter, as well as project workers – those we need urgently, and those active on both sides of the world.

As always, enjoy the read!

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1) Wanted: volunteers!

Would you like to spend six weeks or more with children in an almost familial project, living, working and playing high in the Himalaya? Helping to shape their future and have your own exciting experiences too?

Many, often young, people look for such opportunities, including via commercial operators. At *Schule macht Schule* nobody makes money from the volunteers: they are already giving enough!

There is a gap in our chain of volunteers between mid-April and mid-August 2020. It's a great opportunity for people who could cover at least a portion of this period. Experience in working with children and young people is an advantage, English to Matura level (B2) is required. *Schule macht Schule* naturally does not require any money for placing and supervising the volunteers.

If you're interested, please email team@schule-macht-schule.at and introduce yourself. We'll reply straight away!



Jeroen from Salzburg last summer, in an English lesson with Class 1. Teaching English is the main duty for our volunteers



Please share this message with as many people as possible, those who might be interested, or might know someone else who's up to the task. We're hoping to be able to complete the chain of volunteers in this way. The importance of their work on the ground is confirmed by our project leaders Mohan and Tsedol

Please try to find volunteers! Without them for this period we would have no one to impart the valuable education usually given by the guests, especially English speaking and listening. Our students get such skills mostly from the volunteers, and also with them they are developing confidence.

Street art with the volunteer: in their free time Sonja and the enthusiastic children created a wall at the winter school. "I was given the colours by Tibetans. 'Don't mention it', they said, 'for the kids we're happy to give'".

2) Sonja's Christmas

Sonja, 55, from Germany, has been working as a volunteer in the winter school since the end of November. She shared her Christmas experiences with us:

I am working in the project for three months and was able to celebrate Christmas with the children – my first Christmas without my family.

Since my arrival, the children have asked repeatedly when Christmas would be celebrated. They were all very excited: has the Christmas post from the sponsors arrived? And the letters from the pen pals? Will we sing a song? And, and, and ...

In the run up to Christmas we made a Christmas tree, stars and pictures and on the 25th, we decorated the one big room, the dormitory, and rehearsed Jingle Bells one more time.

In the evening there were sweets and two cakes, giving each child a plateful of treats. Since the children so rarely have anything like this, it was simply wonderful to see with what delight they consume the vast majority of it. But the leftovers weren't abandoned, just because they were full. No, the children organised little packets to safely preserve what remained – that way there was something for the next day too. This made me so happy – food is valuable here!

The highlight was the stack of letters from the pen pals and sponsors, along with little presents. The children's eyes were shining, enchanted by little treasures. Shanti, for example, received a pink plush bag and the very next day she was busy knotting a bracelet for her sponsor. Yumi was given a duck hand puppet – all the children love it! It's so great that everything is shared, and every child can enjoy someone else's gift at some point. I could tell you all about stylish purses, combs, brushes, pictures and more ...

Finally, there was exuberant dancing and the excitement was slow to die down. Yes, and I had a very special Christmas without a Christmas goose and all the bells and whistles – and instead was left with lasting memories and a lot to think about.

There's a taster of Jingle Bells and the dance [here >>](#) on Youtube.



Above: The start of the celebrations

Below: Yumi's duck



Sonja and the project workers Palsang Lhamo, Tsedol, Sita, Deumaya and Anjam (L-R). On the table the Christmas cakes are waiting and below them, the unopened package from Austria

3) Buffets, arts and crafts, and market stalls

In the last newsletter we reported on the project's 2018 accounts: we were able to put nearly 40,000 Euros towards the central project and the further education of former project children. This is only possible with the active participation of many!

There are our donors, who make a substantial contribution with one-off donations, or standing orders. A good number of them have remained loyal to us for years. There are the sponsors, who cover the personal costs for their children and remain in affectionate contact with them. And there are those people who raise money for the project and increase our reach, either now and again, or on a regular basis, with campaigns big and small. Curtain up for a representative few:

Feast for Jharkot: a brand through 8 years

Even in their penultimate school year – when there's already plenty to do with pre-scientific work, Matura exams and the Leavers' Ball – Class 8i at the Musisches Gymnasium served up their legendary healthy buffet for the eighth time under the





brand “Feast for Jharkot”. The young student have consistently taken care of their sponsor child since their first year at the school, at first with a lot of support from class teacher Elisabeth Minimayr, then gradually independently. Beyond their Matura exams: Tsering Lhamo is provided for until November 2022 – that is, until her school leaving exams!

(Note.: Class 8 in Austria = Class 12 in Germany / UK)

A feast for the eyes too: the series of Schlemmen für Jharkot posters designed by Anton Thiel

Surprise from the east of Austria

How did the BAfEP (Educational Institution for Pre-School Education) in Oberwart, Burgenland come to support *Schule macht Schule*?



Angela and the Jharkot children

Quite simple: Angela Strasser, a sports and English teacher worked with us in Jharkot in autumn 2018 and took her experiences with her when she returned to the BAfEP. The school community was inspired: a project where they know there has been personal experience, where you can be sure the good deeds actually benefit their intended recipients – and so many people wanted to help. Students from different classes raised money for example by selling snacks, homemade tealights, or pencils (“Education Against Poverty”).



Part of the BAfEP Oberwart dream team

With the money raised, we'll be able to pay the cook and laundress for six months!

O du fröhliche! – Advent markets from the Förderverein Freundeskreis Jharkot-Projekt e.V.



The advent shop in a large garage in Prevorst is open from 10am – 6pm for three weekends in a row. Every weekend the shop has to be completely reconstructed and dismantled, as the space is used as a car workshop during the week.

If giving presents, then do it with meaning, thought Claudia Canz from *Freundeskreis Jharkot-Projekt e.V.*

Year after year the *Freundeskreis* society has attracted numerous Christmas shoppers to their stalls in Winnenden and Oberstenfeld, Prevorst with high quality shawls, jewellery from Nepal and Tibet, original Tibetan and Nepalese delicacies and much more. They can now count on a proper regular customer base and through conversation further contacts are sometimes made.

The enormous effort is worthwhile: our friends in Germany contribute a considerable amount to *Schule macht Schule* being able to manage the growing tasks in Nepal!



Above right and centre:

Eva's grandson Leonardo runs the advent kitchen.

The momos, made by a Tibetan friend, are a winner.

There's also daal bhat, the national dish of Nepal, chai (Nepalese spice tea), blueberry glühwein and non-alcoholic fruit punch.

Below right:

Claudia and Eva, the two ladies who run the whole thing
Besides shawls made from yak wool, and silk, cotton or cashmere
pashminas, there's also Tibetan tea from the Men-Tse-Khang Institute in
Dharamsala, Himalaya salt, prayer flags, walnuts and walnut oil from Eva,
Tibetan jewellery and various handcrafts (many made by Eva)



4) Unloved and unavoidable: bureaucratic hurdles

For some years now the Nepalese state has been stricter with the many NGOs operating in the country. It can go as far as censoring content – problematic for the development of civil society –, but often seems to make sense in view of the large number of organisations big and small, which unscrupulously do business behind a charitable cloak. In the worst case, they keep children taken from their parents as alleged orphans in unpleasant conditions, in order to take money from well-meaning people ...

This year the new oversight over NGOs began to affect our project too. Mushrooming documentation requirements and checks mean a large amount of additional work and costs for our Nepalese partners *SJTMCS (Shree Jharkot Traditional Medical Center and School)*: the inspection by authorities has to be funded – quite lavishly – by the society itself.

5) Becoming and being a member

Would you like to be a little more connected to *Schule macht Schule*? If so, you could become a supporting member – with an annual donation of at least €50. As a supporting member you would be invited to the annual general assembly and can take part in the discussions. Voting rights at the meetings are only held by the full members. Sponsors can become supporting members without the need to pay anything more than their usual sponsorship fee.

Information about the society, as well as the legal statutes can be found [here >>](#), the application for membership is [here >>](#)

To all those members not yet paying by standing order: at the start of this new year, please consider Schule macht Schule, or perhaps even set up a standing order?

6) Very urgent: Volunteers needed!



Yes, that was the first subject of this newsletter.

But if you've read this far, then it may have slipped your mind in the meantime that you wanted to share our appeal for help. So here's our little reminder!

Please and thank you

On behalf of the children and everyone involved in the project, we say a big thank you for your interest and support. If you would like to support our work, please use our donation account – and let your friends know too!

Pichl-müller

Wolf Pichlmüller

Klaßfinger

Christina Klaffinger

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