POP Movement - Newsletter May 2019

May is possibly the busiest month since we set up the POP Movement.
The installation of the smartbench (see newsletter April 2019) is one of the two projects we are focussing our efforts on this month. We have many conversations with various institutions, all of which need to be taken into consideration when planning the installation of the above mentioned bench in our school yard. We organise an inspection date, at which school management, the janitorial team, the climate protection manager of the city of Neukirchen-Vluyn, as well as representatives of the local council responsible for building and construction. We discuss our preferred location for installing the smartbench, as well further necessary steps to be taken (removal of existing paving, pouring the foundation). Norbert Grein of greinsmartenergy (www.greinsmartenergy.de) has already ordered the smartbench from Croatia, with an anticipated lead time of approx. six weeks. We receive positive feedback from the company ENNI (www.enni.de), who are amongst other things, a local energy provider, the school's Förderverein (parent association – www.jsg-foerderverein.de), as well as from Stephan Baur (climate protection manager) regarding our query for financial support for the additional costs the smartbench installation incurs. We are very grateful, as this covers the costs for the wireless services (transmission of the smart bench's collected data into the internet), as well as the purchase of a screen for the school in order to present and display the energy data. Two members of POP Movement are invited to represent our team at a focus meeting for the Climate Challenge Ruhr in Essen. This is the event organiser's opportunity to receive first-hand praise, criticism, improvement suggestions etc., which will be taken into consideration for any potential future Climate Challenge events.

Our second big project is the introduction of the weight models we built (see newsletter October 2019 and January 2019). We work for 70 minutes at a time, with students from either year 5 or 6, in order to increase their awareness of CO_2 emissions caused by car journeys. We use actual journeys and destinations from the students' lives. The show-stopper: we don't read out the emission numbers, instead that they are "visualized" through experiencing physical effort, i.e. lifting, holding and carrying of the weights. It is an organisational challenge to excuse the POP Movement students from their lessons in various years, courses and classes in order to enable all eight classes of years 5 and 6 to spend one school hour each at the stations. This way our team members (aged 15-18) increase awareness of CO_2 emissions in 240 children aged 10-12 years for over an hour each. The feedback from participants, the accompanying teaching staff, as well as the invited press (see newsletter June 2019) is phenomenal.
A further May highlight is the installation of the fine dust sensor we built (see newsletter July 2018). This is now finally located at the window front of the school building facing the road. After patiently waiting for our preferred location becoming available (due to ongoing renovation works within our school building), and some teething problems regarding the online transfer of data, we can now finally continually measure the find dust concentration at our school complex. We expect the data (the sensor transfers the collected data online every two minutes via a connected mobile) to mirror the chaotic traffic situation between 7:30am and 8am (the start of the school day). We are curious to see whether crucial limits will be reached or even exceeded during this time. All data can be seen at https://maps.luftdaten.info/#15/51.4475/6.5504 or via our homepage www.pop-movement.de (→ Aktuelle Projekte → Feinstaubsensoren). There, you will also find the relevant limits set by the Federal Environmental Agency.

We participate and involve ourselves in many other actions.
Representatives from our team are present at a further meeting of the working group “mobility”; a forum for the active engagement and design of the future mobility concept for the City of Neukirchen-Vluyn.
We build a team at the annual “Stadtradeln” (urban cycling), where you add up all the kilometres you cycle over a period of three weeks and try to avoid using motorised means of transport as much as possible (https://www.stadtradeln.de/neukirchen-vluyn).
Herr Forsthövel has a meeting with Jessica Koch of Open Grid Europe – the company which had substantial involvement in enabling us (Herr Forsthövel and his Higher Geography class) to participate at the Expo World Exhibition „future energy: solutions of tackling humankind’s greatest challenge“ in 2017. This excursion was the start of founding the POP Movement in Germany (for further information see http://www.expo-exkursionnachkasachstan.com/index.html).
Jessica Koch is really interested that we will present our movement and our projects at the exhibition gat/wat (www.gat-wat.de) to both the employees of the company, as well as the visitors of this trade show, just as we did in November 2017. With this we are hoping to reach a different audience and encourage more people to change their habits to be more sustainable. We share ideas, and put a date for a meeting for after the summer holidays with the entire group in the diary.
Together with Stephan Baur (climate protection manager), we visit the ENNI solar park Mühlenfeld in Neukirchen-Vluyn (https://www.enni.de/energie-umwelt/umwelt/enni-solar/anlagen/solarpark-muehlenfeld.html) at the end of May. The area with some 14,000 solar modules is impressive. We inform ourselves about the technical implementation of the installation of photovoltaic systems, as winning our smartbench was only ever meant to be the start of something bigger: Through our efforts and conversations with the ENNI in particular, we continue to plan the installation of solar panels on the roof of our school after the end of the renovation work.
Time and time again we discussed that the documentation of our efforts and goals already achieved, must not be neglected while we are busy with our many projects and important appointments. For some time now we have wanted to have a logo, which would make us into a recognisable brand. After discussions with the founders of the international POP Movement, two female students gave this international logo a German touch. We are happy with the result.
The international Protect Our Planet movement has reviewed its website fundamentally (www.thepopmovement.org). We are happy with our mention within the section ‚stories that inspire’ amongst other national teams.

May is the month in which the fridays for future movement really takes momentum in Neukirchen-Vluyn. Even though this cannot distributed to the POP Movement, we would like to mention it here, because Antonia Leffers, one of the more recent members of the POP Movement, is part of the organisational team of the fridays for future movement. She succeeds in mobilising many young people and young and encourages them to actively engage with the concept of sustainability. (For further information re the local group Neukirchen-Vluyn see: https://fridaysforfuture.de/regionalgruppen/)
We are grateful to have her as part of our team, while we are aware that her engagement with the fridays for future movement means she struggles to increase her active role within the POP Movement.

A. Forsthövel

Philo, Magdalene (2019), *When green life lessons and climate actions began from school.* Online at https://thepopmovement.org/pop_stories/when-green-life-lessons-and-climate-actions-began-from-school/. Website of the international Protect Our Planet movement. Clicked on 29/05/19.

The smartbench, manufactured in Croatia and safely packaged.

Preparations for the smartbench installation in our school yard.

The fine dust sensor mounted to our school building.

Our logo.

Excursion to the solar park Mühlenfeld.

Use of the weight models in Years 5 and 6 to increase awareness of CO_2 emissions caused by car journeys.