

THE BEACON

Issue #1. September 27th 2025



A DROP INTO THE UNKNOWN

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We will never be understood as we know ourselves. As daring children we often find ourselves in unknown situations, pushing the boundaries of our ability. Childhood scars become mementos that we keep for life, little reminders of a simpler time. We rely on our guardians to guide us through these moments of doubt and fear; it is during these times we learn to trust. We begin to understand that there are people who will be there standing by our sides; there will be hands reaching to steady us when we stumble. As we grow older, these people by our side change from family, to friends, to partners and beyond. And yet, what I think we never seem to understand is that the people by our side have no say over what defines us; they are with us through everything but our own thoughts. So although I am as close to my best friend as one can be to another person, she will never truly know me, nor I her. I say this because I sometimes find myself frustrated with my friends. It annoys me that they cannot understand what I am trying to say, the emotions that bubble under my skin. I forget they do not hear the things I think while day dreaming, the adventures I go on, and the decisions I make.

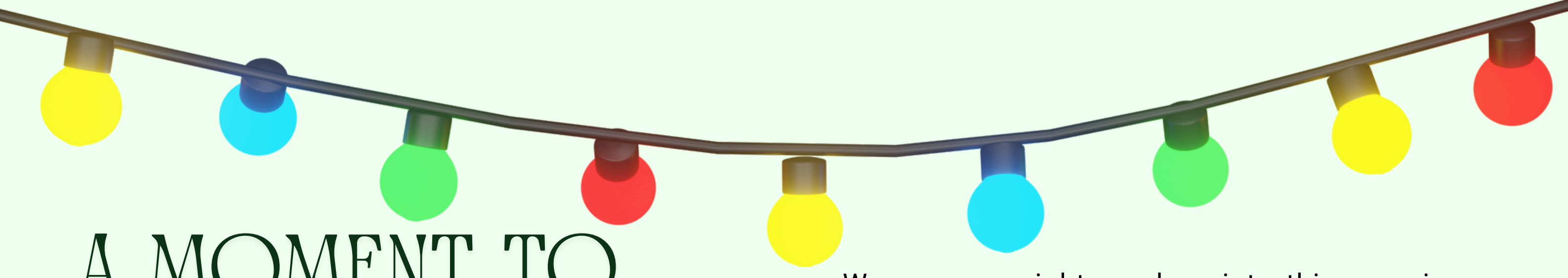
That being said, by embarking on Class Afloat every student before me has stood on the same precipice, looking over the edge of a cliff, steeling themselves before the jump we all take, the unspoken decision to embrace every unknown that confronts us. By doing so, our lives split in two, suddenly divided into the time from before Class Afloat and the time that will come after. It leaves the very year before us in limbo, as if reality isn't fully connected.

So how do we begin to navigate such a strange time when our guardians are all across a world that has just grown before our very eyes? In this new time of great uncertainty who could we turn to but the very people surrounding us? The people that decided to take the very same leap of faith. I believe it is the uniqueness of Class Afloat that brings likeminded young people together, peers that chase uncertainty and adventure. I cannot speak for everyone, but there seems to be a common sense of needing a new direction in our lives, of the need to shake things up and explore places most people would never go. At times, this may leave us feeling directionless, something that ultimately, will change the course of how we each grow as a person.

Truth be told, I don't think any of us will be able to fully comprehend what we are doing until we're back in our hometowns trying to replicate what we manage to capture in these next nine months. The culture and community that has been created in the last few weeks is unlike any school I have been a part of before. Even though I know drama and adversity will eventually find its way to us, my crewmates seem to be the very people I used to want to be when I grew up. In these next nine months, a want for adventure and a need for discovery seem prevalent in everyone's mind. I'm sure I will not be the only one wondering at the end what our story will be, for even though we know only a small part of it now, the uncertainty we face all but guarantees it will be a story worth telling.

— Claire Cuddihy





A MOMENT TO FOLLOW ANOTHER

One foot in front of the other. Baby steps was all I had to do. Yet soon enough everything was going to be striped away. No more mom's shoulder to cry on or dad's silly pep talks; just me. My own backbone to push my legs, arms, and mind forward.

The gravel was cold and wet. The rain was trickling down onto our heads, and my hair was curling into itself similar to the way my stomach was trying to untie the knots that had formed. The heaviness of our collective tears were hard to wipe away but I had at least 702 steps back, onto the bus, to my seat, on the way to Natura.

I felt my mom's hand push my upper back towards the bus, and my heart dropped. Even though I knew she was helping me, the idea of her needing to say goodbye, not only for my sake but also for hers, felt like even more bits of a shattered glass bottle breaking smaller.

It's kind of a blur now looking back at those five minutes on the bus. On one side, a new friend comforting me and on the other, an umbrella floating above a person who knows me inside and out. Letting go is a weird thing, especially doing a program like ClassAfloat, setting sail on a tall ship oceans away from home to explore and dive into different cultures. I was leaving everything I have ever known to grow as a person at the age of sixteen-not a normal teenage experience.



We are now eighteen days into this experience. My body still doesn't know the difference between here and home. The trees map out the same sky during the day followed by the big galaxy of stars that remain constant no matter your location at night. However, there is one big difference: the new wandering voices that flow in between the hellos and goodbyes and a mixture of wonderful worlds colliding through stories and connection.

The days have gone by fast yet in the moment, it feels like the minutes are as long as years. I get caught in the trap of getting too comfortable because just like on a ship, things change so fast. A twenty minute break rolls into a two minute sprint to the bathroom and back. The everchanging days are what keep me engaged in the new experiences. However a new lesson learned: find your personal time. It's equally as important as the socializing time. Despite the lingering worries lying behind the eyes of 48 students, there is now a unique bond that ties together our lives from here on out. Of course my mind will still be full of nerves and a slight bit of fatigue everyday. Certain words that will make me fall over laughing when soon no one else will understand. The panic has started to turn into excitement. I feel like I should be sad except weirdly enough the pure enjoyment of the present has taken over my system. The loose structure of my days has been teaching me what I'm capable of and the daily challenges of metric vs imperial systems in chemistry has reinforced my personal grit.

It is safe to say that the worries that had followed me for the past few months have been proven wrong. The constant state of smiling faces, learning dances, rigorous volleyball games and community meals have taken my attention. Yes, there are still moments when the idea of family dinner still shows up, followed by the idea of one of my long isolated walks to recap my day in the peace of my own brain. There is no "all of me" now without the "rest of them." I am simply a pebble on a beach measured by kilometers (because that's what they use here) and from here on out, this experience will lie with our whole crew.

At the end of day eighteen, my bed is sounding very good to me after a long day of classes followed by prepping our breakfast for tomorrow. The smell of fresh croissants and apple jam is making my mouth water, especially when you pair it with a side of crispy bacon and ooy-gooy cheese. Just twelve more hours until I will be sitting in the mess ready to indulge in yet another good meal filled with even better people. But for now, another couple steps to my cabin, to the shower and to bed. Goodnight to you moon and before I know it, it will be good morning to you sun.

— Amelia Lincoln



OUR JOURNEY SO FAR



Time: 0600 UTC

Date: 27.09.2025

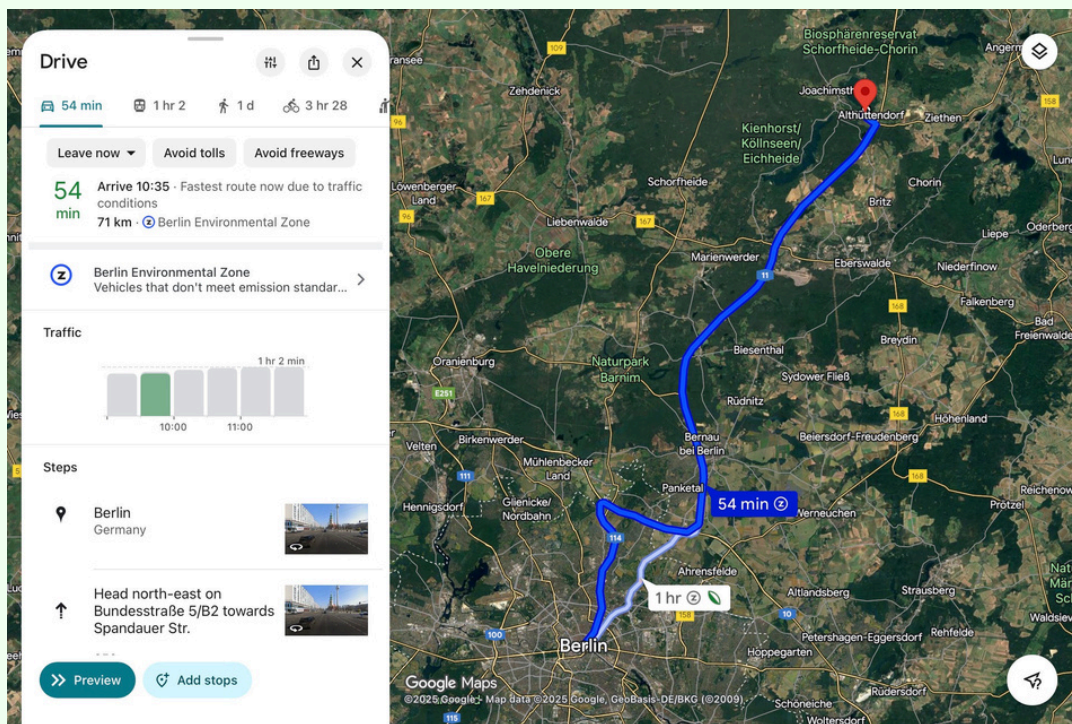
Weather: 18 Degrees Celsius, Partly Cloudy, Light easterly breeze

Location: Natura Fereinpark, Germany

Kms Travelled: 71

NM Travelled: 0

Days till Graduation: 239



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Currywurst

- bratwurst
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1/4 teaspoon bakingsoda
- 4-5 teaspoons curry
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teadpoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 teaspoon worcetershire suace
- 4 tablespoons beef broth
- 2 tablespoons water

mix ketchup + baking soda in a sauce pan on medium heat. stir thouroughly until

turn to low heat and combine all remaining ingredients and stir.

grill bratwurst and serve the sauce warm over it.

History:

Currywurst was invented by herta huewer in berlin in 1949.

The dish in recognised as a cultural symbol in berlin with their even being a currywurst museum existing in germany.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

- Teagan, who turned 17
- Ezra, who turned 17
- Aiden, who turned 18
- Jacob, who turned 18



“YOU GOTTA GET BACK INTO THE
WORLD! GET BACK OUT ON THE
ROAD! THE CORE OF MAN’S SPIRIT
COMES FROM NEW EXPERIENCES.”
- CHRISTOPHER MCCANDLESS

