



The American-Austrian Society

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From the Editor:

Dear Members & Friends:

I hope you enjoy Washington's cherry blossoms as much as I do. Year after year, it is my passion to walk around the Tidal Basin to admire nature's beauty. Let's look forward to just as much sunshine on the day of our long awaited and planned HEURIGEN. We are still investigating various opportuni-



ties of locations. We are open to every suggestion from your side! Please write to us!

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had get-togethers more often, like the Wiener Kaffeehaus Jause at The Historic Clark House?

Today, I want to take the opportunity to say many thanks to a number of volunteers for their generous help during our past (and future) events.

*Warmly,
Gerda Merwald*

SOS Children's Villages Helps Children in Need

By Ulrike Wiesner, Executive Committee Member



As many of you know, SOS Children's Villages, the North American chapter of a worldwide non-governmental organization (NGO), has been the charity of choice for the American-Austrian Society for many years now. Thanks to the generosity of you, our members, our Society has over time contributed financially to the efforts of this worthwhile organization.

After a recent meeting with Dr. Heather Paul, the organization's CEO, and Kristin Backstrom, the Director of Donor Relations, we thought you might

be interested in learning a little bit about the organization's mission.

SOS Children's Villages was founded in 1949 in Austria, in the wake of the terrible devastation left behind by World War II, to provide families and homes for orphaned or abandoned children.



Herman Gemeiner

Its visionary founder, Hermann Gemeiner, who gave up his medical studies at the University of Innsbruck to pursue his dream, was subsequently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Today, there are more than 450 villages in 132 countries around the world.

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Christa and John-Paul Cook of Helco, Ltd. offer an array of all natural Austrian grown imports including pure pumpkinseed oil, and a breathtaking variety of fruit and balsamic wine vinegars, juices, jellies and honey. **NEW!** Helmut Sachers Kaffee.

Visit their Web site at www.austrianpumpkinoil.com

John-Paul offers discounts for members of the American-Austrian Society.

Introducing the Members of Our Executive Board: Prof. Dr. Peter Y. Evans



Dr. Evans was born in 1925 in Tokyo; father Japanese, mother German-English. Childhood in Jena and Berlin, Germany. Since 1938 in Austria. In 1944, after matura in Ptui (Pettau), he began medical school in

Vienna. 1951 MD, Univ. of Innsbruck. Residency in ophthalmology 1951-55 in Innsbruck and Frankfurt/Main. In 1957, he emigrated to the USA. Since 1958 at Georgetown University; Department of Ophthalmology (Center for Sight); Chairman 1969-83. Holds the German, American and Austrian Boards of Ophthalmology. In 1963 established the first two-year ophthalmic technology training program in the USA, and in

1969 co-founded the North-American Commission for examination and certification (JCAHPO) of this new profession, now numbering about 17,000 internationally and representing a vital link in the prevention of blindness. After retiring from full-time academia in 1992, he continued as full-time EVP of JCAHPO for another four years.

Prof. Evans was President of our Society from 1988-90, and agreed to serve as 1st Vice President this year. He and his wife Helga have seven children and (at this point) 16 grandchildren, none of whom speak German very well, but they all understand most of it. His hobbies include the violin, bridge, philately, photography, skiing, and travel.

Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund Memberships

We recently mailed membership cards to our registered "Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund Mitglieder."

You can request new membership applications or additional cards for family members by sending an email to: American_Austrian_Society@yahoo.com

Please refer to www.weltbund.at for additional information. There are many advantages including member discounts for various Austrian-operated airlines, accident insurance, mobile rentals and selected hotels in Austria. Membership also includes a subscription to "Rotweissrot," Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund's official magazine.



Members are also invited to Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund's Annual Meetings. This year's meeting will be held in Bregenz from September 6-9, 2007.

Austrian Embassy Concert on March 5, 2007 Featured Tibor Kovac and Lambert Orkis

By Cecelia Porter, Classical-Music Critic, "The Washington Post"

After an intense set of Vienna Philharmonic concerts in New York, violinist Tibor Kovac gave a stunning recital together with pianist Lambert Orkis at the Austrian Embassy in Washington. A longtime member of the Philharmonic, Kovac has also won renown as a soloist in Vienna's magnificent Musikverein and as a violinist in the famed chamber ensemble, *Die Wiener Virtuosen*. Orkis is a highly recognized pianist, fortepianist and harpsichordist as a soloist, accompanist, chamber music player and member of Washington's National Symphony Orchestra.

Kovac's and Orkis's intriguing, though demanding, program at the Austrian Embassy in early March ranged from Mozart's Sonata in B-flat Major, K. 454, and that in E-flat Major, K. 481, to Beethoven's Sonata in D Major, Op. 12, No. 1, and



From the left: Lambert Orkis, Tibor Kovac and Cecelia Porter

Prokofiev's Sonata in D Major, Op. 94bis. Kovac's violin sound is a unique blend of sweetness flavored with an eastern European touch of nostalgia — a mixture not unheard of in Vienna, a city of

many ethnic and national cultures.

Orkis worked with Kovac in a perfect partnership, following Kovac's phrasing and refined nuances, finely adjusting their style for quite different composers. At one point in the second Mozart, Kovac's E-string suddenly snapped, requiring him to shift his fingering and adjust his touch on the remaining three strings in order to complete the final movement. He ended triumphantly. Generous applause won the audience an encore, Fritz Kreisler's memorable "Liebesleid," which Kovac and Orkis played with warmth, intensity and sophistication.

Book Corner

We want to thank you for your interest in the book "Nani, Memoirs of a Peasant Girl," by Mr. Rudolf Ennikl, a collection of stories about his mother's first 52 years as a poor peasant girl.



If you are interested in purchasing a copy, please contact us: via email at American_Austrian_Society@yahoo.com; or write to American-Austrian Society, 5618 Dover Court, Alexandria, VA 22312.

The German edition is of quality print and priced at approximately \$18 (depending on the exchange rate).

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SOS Children's Villages*



Approximately 60,000 children are in the villages, and there are about 600,000 beneficiaries from SOS community-outreach programs.

The mission of the SOS Children's Villages is based on the principle that each child should have the right to grow up in a safe and loving environment to reach healthy adulthood. Some of the basic ideas include:

THE MOTHER: Each child has a caring parent

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Siblings always stay together, and family ties are built

THE HOUSE: Each family creates their own home.

THE VILLAGE: The SOS family is part of the community.

A village typically consists of about 10 - 15 family homes in an integrated setting and raises approximately 150 children until adulthood. Additionally, these villages serve as anchors for community services for thousands more children and families through education and training, prevention

programs and disaster relief. SOS mothers are rigorously trained and screened before they take on their responsibilities.

Additionally, the villages often provide basic medical services to the community, in addition to counseling support and emergency nutrition to families at risk.



One of the core values of the organization is to promote understanding of all races, religions and cultural diversity and to transcend political and sectarian strife.

Typically, SOS children are abandoned infants, destitute street children, child soldiers or orphans due to HIV/AIDS and sibling groups too burdensome for extended family care.

Oftentimes, SOS villages are established in the wake of natural or man-made disasters: 7 new villages were built in South East Asia after the tsunami of 2005. The most recent addition is a village in Lebanon.

The offices of SOS Children's Villages USA are located in downtown

Washington DC. Its CEO and staff work actively with the various American-Austrian societies and organizations across the United States. Major part of the organization's income stems from private donations (about 90%), whereas the remaining 10% are contributed by corporate sponsors.



The Executive Board of the American-Austrian Society of Washington DC intends to intensify its contact with SOS Children's Villages USA to explore possibilities for deepening and strengthening our support.

As always, we greatly welcome your comments, ideas and suggestions.

**For more information on
SOS Children's Villages,
please visit their Web site at
www.sos-usa.org.**



Spending Your Summer Vacation in Austria?

In our previous Newsletter we introduced the "Festspiele



*Miriam Portmann,
Reinhard Alessandri
in Die Fledermaus*

Reichenau" and want to continue helping our travelers to Austria by letting you know about another worthwhile event, the Lehár Festival in Bad Ischl.

"In Bad Ischl operetta is alive as never before,"

which is one of the reasons the critics of the renowned year book of the magazine "Opernwelt" (Opera World) nominated the Lehár Festival Bad Ischl as the "Opera house of the year 2006."

In 2007 the festival opens with one of the all-time favorite operettas "Die Fledermaus" (The Bat) by Johann Strauss Jr.

The second production will be Franz Lehár's masterpiece "Giuditta." As usual we will do our best to fulfill the high expectations of our audiences. If you plan to visit Bad Ischl, we wish

you many enchanted operetta evenings in the imperial surroundings of Bad Ischl!



Kongresshaus

For more information contact the Büro des Lehár Festival Bad Ischl, Kurhausstraße 8, A-4820 Bad Ischl, Tel.: +43 (0) 6132 23839, Fax: +43 (0) 6132 23839-39 or visit their Web site at www.leharfestival.at.

2007 Events:

- April 22: 3 – 5:00 pm** Kaffeehaus Jause, at the exquisitely restored historic Clark House, 6332 Barcroft Mews Drive, Falls Church, Virginia
- May 23: 7 – 8:30 pm** Annual Meeting at the Embassy of Austria
- May/June** Heurigen
(venue to be determined)



The Clark House is a 1902 Victorian farmhouse in Falls Church, Virginia.

Places to Discover:

The Theatre in Washington, Virginia

If you've never been to Washington, Virginia, located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, you're in for a treat. Just a short one and a half hour drive west of the District of Columbia you will discover a quaint little town with a rich theater and arts scene.



The Theatre, located on 291 Gay Street, features a surprising array of programs sure to please almost any performing-arts lover. Performances at **The Theatre** include chamber music recitals, jazz and theater productions. In addition, The Rappahannock Association for Arts and the Community presents a twice-monthly film series at The Theatre on Friday nights.

For more information visit their Web site at www.Theatre-Washington-VA.com or call: (540) 675-1253.

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