



This newsletter is a publication of Sister Cities of Arlington, Texas

www.arlingtontx.gov/sistercity/index.html

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2012

NO. 19

GREETINGS, SISTER CITIES OF ARLINGTON MEMBERS AND GUESTS

We are off to a great year for 2012. Welcome to our new members and with many joining after attending Arlington's First Annual Christkindl Market that was a huge success. The date for this year's market event has already been set for November 30 – December 16, 2012 at The Ballpark in Arlington. We have a steering committee to discuss feasibility of our group hosting a booth for the two-week period. It can only be accomplished with help and concerted efforts from all of us. We are still working on our capital campaign goals, which will help sustain our upcoming events. Continue to invite friends to our events and to join our organization. In March, we are hosting four guests from the National League of Cities who are from different cities in Germany. An Italian buffet is on the menu for the evening of March 14, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. Our friends from Bad Königshofen are scheduled to visit us in September and plans are underway for a big celebration. We are still working on our exhibit space at City Hall. Updates will hopefully come soon. We are excited about this upcoming year and will need all of your support for great success.

Bis dann,

Bruce Maxwell, President Sister Cities of Arlington



ARLINGTON'S FIRST CHRISTKINDL MARKET

By Ellen Brooke

We did it! After years of planning, Arlington held its First Annual Christkindl Market at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington on December 8-11th. The market was a joint effort by the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, the Arlington Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the City of Arlington.

Vendor Klaus Abt in Rothenburg, Germany provided the beautiful lace ornaments and decorations for our Sister City hut. Due to the

overwhelming response, we sold out of our product in 2 ½ days! The quick thinking of our members enabled us to continue selling German chocolates while having the opportunity to share information about our organization and our history with Bad Königshofen.

By all accounts, the market was a resounding success. And due to the hard work and efforts of our volunteers, the Sister Cities of Arlington cleared \$4,369! This was definitely the largest project we have undertaken but it won't be the last!

Thank you to all the volunteers who made Sister Cities of Arlington shine!



Photos of Market and Sister Cities Booth by Bruce Maxwell

IMPRESSIONS: ARLINGTON'S 1ST CHRISTKINDL MARKT

“An old friend told me about the Christkindl Market, and I am so glad I had a chance to attend. When I got there I was excited, and it really felt like being back home and having a piece of my history being alive and made my Holidays more special. Being able to sample the foods and strolling from booth to booth and enjoying the Gluehwein and eating roasted almonds was more than special to me; vital and important parts of my Holiday experience that I have not found since moving to the United States more than 20 years ago.

I am very much looking forward to participating this year as I hope to get a schedule early so I can attend some of the stage shows at the next Markt. Thank you for bringing this beautiful event to our area!” *Ortrud Jaeger-Jones*

“Wow! What an exciting event! The attendance was phenomenal and everyone appeared to have a good time. And the strudel – YUM!” *Ellen Brooke*

“I had hoped to help with the Christkindl Market but at the time of sign-up I had several events that were pending for schedule so could not offer assistance. I must say that I thought the market was awesome. The cold weather on should have been”. It definitely put you in the holiday spirit. The Arlington Sister Cities booth was the best! I was so excited that it was near the front and the first one that shoppers crowded in. The offerings were beautiful and I treasure the angel that I purchased for my angel trees collection. It is just perfect!” *Vicki King*

SISTER CITIES OF ARLINGTON CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway Foundation made a \$1000 contribution to the Sister Cities of Arlington Capital Campaign. This generous donation helped our organization meet the matching funds required by the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation for the building of the permanent display at City Hall. Joseph Faust, Regional Director of Public Affairs, presented the check to President Bruce

Maxwell. The presentation took place at the Friendship Monument in December, with Council member Sheri Capehart and Ellen Brooke attending.

FEATURE STORY

By Fred Weekley

Oskar Sontag And Bad Königshofen's First Post-War Manufacturing Facility

On our recent trip to Bad Königshofen Lynda and I were honored to be hosted by Marc and Martina Jean Richard. Yes, I know. Jean Richard doesn't sound like a German name, and it's not. Marc grew up in Switzerland, and his father was of French descent; hence, the derivation of the French sur-name, Jean Richard.

Marc and Martina live in a two-story building in the industrial area of Bad Königshofen. They utilize the downstairs area of the building for their personal use, and their daughter lives upstairs, coming downstairs, as young people do, when it's time to eat. In a way, the residence reminds me of two "flats" – one downstairs for the senior members of the family, and the upstairs "flat" used by their daughter.

There is a reason Marc and Martina live in the industrial area. Their "flat" is part of the first industrial tract that was dedicated by the city of Bad Königshofen following the war. The flat adjoins the factory that was built on that tract by Marc's uncle, Oskar Sontag. Oskar is now deceased, and Marc and his family now own the factory and the adjoining residential building in which they live.

But how Oskar Sontag came to build the manufacturing plant in Bad Königshofen is part of the interesting history of post-World War II Germany, the division of East and West Germany, and how the Communist influence impacted the lives of the German people that happened to live on the East side of the line separating East and West Germany.

Oskar Sontag and his family were among those unfortunate families that lived on the

East side of the Iron Curtain. Prior to and during World War II, Oskar Sontag was a well-known German manufacturer of glass vials for the pharmaceutical and chemical industries. He was prosperous and respected both by his customers and his competitors. After the war, as the Communists took over East Germany, Oskar's plants, money, and home – indeed, everything he owned – was taken from him, confiscated by the State. He and his family went from great wealth to becoming destitute.

Objecting to the new regime, Oskar was thrown into prison as a political prisoner. Times were really hard, and many formerly wealthy German families, including Oskar's, suffered. In fact, several members of Oskar's family didn't survive. When Oskar got out of prison, he immigrated to West Germany where he found friends in Frankfurt. In fact, the chemical and pharmaceutical industries needed his manufacturing ability, and those industries helped him finance the construction of a new vial plant in West Germany. It was successful, and he built additional plants for the manufacture of glass vials. Eventually, Bad Königshofen arranged for him to build an additional plant within their town limits, giving him the land on which the plant and the house in which Marc and Martina now live were built. When Oskar was ready to retire, he asked Marc to move to Bad Königshofen with his family to manage the plant. Marc, who was living in Switzerland at the time, accepted the challenge.

The plant process is very interesting. The vials begin as long tubes of glass of various sizes and colors and slowly go through a series of steps. First, each tube is cut into smaller tubes of the appropriate length. Next, each of these smaller tubes moves through a firing process that melts the bottom of the tube, forming the bottom of the vial. Next, each vial is moved into position for the "squeezing" of the top into a "neck." Then, if the neck is to be threaded, it's threaded and moved down the conveyor belt to a heater and out of the heater to be cooled. Along the way, each vial is photographed by a software program, which Marc developed, that locates defects, even those too small for the human eye to detect.

Defective vials are kicked off the conveyor belt, and the good vials are preserved for shipping. The whole process results in production of about 500,000 vials a day. This plant in Bad Königshofen is only one of twelve similar plants in all of Europe.

In addition to having developed the software program to photograph vials to find defects, Marc also developed a similar program to ascertain the proper location for cutting diamonds. The vial photo process has been licensed to Marc's competitors. He and his brother sell the machines that are used to cut diamonds.

When Marc isn't busy inventing software programs, he distributes Gideon bibles, preaches at his church, and serves on the church's Board of Deacons. In addition, he goes for a two-hour bike ride almost every day. He's a very busy guy. Martina stays busy as well. She is taking two foreign language classes; established and tends a beautiful floral garden; designs and crochets many of the family's sweaters and outerwear; and is one heck of a culinary artist, specializing in delicious deserts like "crème brûlée."



Martina and Marc with Fred

We felt fortunate to meet this interesting couple and to learn something of their family history.

THE JOHN J. MC CLOY FELLOWSHIP

*By Kim Herman Probasco
Sr. Performance Analyst. City of Arlington*

The John J. McCloy Fellowship through the American Council on Germany and National League of Cities was an amazing experience. It provided a lens through which to see the unique nature and historical significance of each city. Four of us representing the cities of Arlington, Texas, Grand Forks, North Dakota, Cleveland, Ohio, and Fort Wayne, Indiana visited the German cities of Köln, Osnabrück, Nürnberg, Stendal, Tangermünde, Magdeburg, Leipzig, and Berlin. Some of the variances and similarities observed relate to administration, culture, environmental and planning policies, population accountability, housing programs, redevelopment, and the continuing importance of open markets in the downtown areas.

The American Fellows also had the opportunity to experience several cultural activities or events. For instance, in Nürnberg we attended the "Internationaler Nürnberger Menschenrechtspreis" (Nürnberg International Human Rights Award) honoring Hollman Morris of Columbia for his contribution over the past seven years to the human rights of Columbians caught in the crossfire of the Columbian war.

The architecture in each city was beautiful. Some of the more picturesque structures were beautiful churches, ancient ruins, castles, and historical buildings in every city, sometimes the old and the recently built vying for equal attention. Markets are a very important part of the community in Germany and have been a common practice across the centuries. Not only are food items sold in centrally located markets squares, but also quality goods.

I learned that the people of Germany are also environmental enthusiasts, which is prevalent in their recycling and planning efforts. Strong regulations are enforced for energy efficiency as well.

Planning projects not only focus on the economic development aspects of a project, but on building a sense of community. Bringing people together for a common good is often a focus that determines what projects are built. For example, one project placed single mothers in the same housing as senior citizens; the idea being that the seniors could help watch the children for the single mothers.

Participating in the McCloy Fellowship was an amazing experience providing a rich exposure to cultural and policy differences between Germany and the United States. I am looking forward to having the German Fellows in Arlington this month. Preparations are in place and a full schedule is planned to provide as much exposure to our great city as possible.

FIRST TIME VISITOR

By Vicki King

I'm sure many of us are reflecting on the magnificent time we had in Bad Königshofen and the friendships that were made during the preparation and travel. Mary Belle and I were so honored when Amy Tinch shared her past experiences and asked us to join the Arlington Sister Cities organization.

I had never traveled to Europe making the trip to Bad Königshofen a fantastic journey. I continue to think of the people there and the gracious hospitality extended to all of us. It was a very remarkable and memorable happening in my life.

Mary Belle and I had a delightful stay at Hotel Ebner. Klaus was a cordial host and made us feel so welcome. I loved walking the streets and taking in the local sites as we walked to the different venues. It truly gave me a very personal feeling of the city.



This photo is of the flag presentation to the Hotel Ebner. Bürgermeister Thomas Helbling was in attendance and took the photo.



This photo is of "my dear sweet lady" whom I met at breakfast at the hotel on our first morning.

She spoke only one word of English - Austin! Of course, I spoke no German but we had the most delightful conversations each morning! I believe that she may have actually been someone that benefited from the donations made to Bad Königshofen from Arlington some sixty years ago.

I am excited about the travelers from Bad Königshofen being in Arlington in 2012.

A SMALL WORLD

By Shelia Gibson

Don and I had the good fortune to make a trip to Spain in January. A serendipitous encounter occurred in the lobby of the Marriott Beach Resort in Marabella, Spain, where we were staying, that in only a matter of a few hours had reverberated around the world.

It began as I came out of the spa and was looking through the travel brochures in the rack; I spoke casually to another woman, also coming out of the spa. Although our respective languages limited us, we quickly established an unbelievable common connection, Bad Königshofen.

Renate Baumann, the woman with whom I had only intended to pass a casual comment, is the wife of Father Alfred Scheller, a German Catholic priest, who had been assigned to the Costa del Sol area of Spain on the Spanish Mediterranean. In fact, he is the only German Catholic priest in Spain, transferred for humanitarian reasons due to his health from his previous post in Bad Königshofen, Germany.

Our mutual connection with Bad Königshofen was all it took to break the ice of our limited German-English communication! Us girls were still struggling with our limited communication skills when Fr. Alfred, who speaks very good English, happened by, and real communication began.



Renate, Shelia and Alfred

Alfred and Renate lived in our Sister City for 25 years prior to their transfer to Marbella. Further, Fr. Alfred served many years with Father Linus, the now retired Catholic Priest in Bad Königshofen who many of us remember from his participation in our partnership.

Overwhelmed with this opportune encounter I sent a video of our meeting to Germany. The speed of modern technology allowed my video to bounce from Spain to Germany to Arlington, Texas and then back to Spain, in a matter of less than a minute. Additionally, the day of this communication travel was the same day that our friends in Bad Königshofen were meeting to begin their plans to visit Arlington in 2012.

It is truly a small world.

REQUEST FROM CCI

Center for Cultural Interchange (CCI) has German and other foreign exchange students seeking a host family to live with during their junior year in high school. These students need to be selected by a host family now, so high school enrollment can be secured and travel arrangements can be made for their arrival in late August.

I have hosted 5 students and believe me, it has been one of the greatest joys in my life. CCI has a broad range of host families, including single adults, young married couples with children, married couples with no children, and married couples with grown children and grandchildren. Each household brings much joy and fulfillment to these students' lives.

If you and your family would consider hosting, or if you know of a family who might want to host an exchange student for the academic year starting (August 2012-May 2013), please contact me.

Karen Mullins, L.C.
Center for Cultural Interchange
2112 Wimbledon Drive
Arlington, Texas 76017
817.465.6064 (office)
817.300.7835 (mobile)
mullinsd@sbcglobal.net



Sister Cities of Arlington says "Thank You" to Sheri Capehart for her efforts in bringing the Christkindl Markt to our city.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

By Magda Shafer

Joining Sister Cities of Arlington at our meeting on February 25th were Paul Windsor, Johnny Walker, Johnique and Steve Reeves. Also welcome to Michael Vatter who just joined.

Coming on board during 2011 were Christa Tracey, Ortrud Jones-Jaeger, Alfred Williams, Will Latham, Pat Cappelletti, Beverly and Paul Windsor.

Welcome to all of you; we value your membership.

By the way, it's not too late to join or to take care of your membership dues for 2012. The year ahead is going to be a busy one and our group needs your help and support. Dues are \$20 per individual; \$30 per couple. Please send your check to:

**City of Arlington
Sister Cities
MS 01-0310
PO Box 90231
Arlington, Texas 76004**

CONGRATULATIONS TO MEGAN

Megan English found out about a week ago that she was accepted to Texas A&M in this year's freshman class. When asked what she

expects to study, she responded, "I am in general studies because I have no idea what I want to do yet. I'm hoping I can take my required courses first along with some random ones; then maybe I'll fall in love with a major. Thank you for thinking of me!"

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 14th @ 6:30 PM, Dinner at Ventana Grille with German visitors

September 5-10 (TBC) – Bad Königshofen Visitors

November 30-December 16 - Christkindl Markt*

***In order to assure successful operation, every SCA member should volunteer to serve at least one 4-hour shift during the markt.**

UPCOMING EVENTS –

Thanks to Klaus Driessen

April 27 – 29, Muenster Fest

Wilkommen (Welcome) to the 37th annual Germanfest, sponsored by the Muenster Chamber of Commerce.

Muenster, a unique German community located in North Texas, throws one of the biggest parties in Texas the last full weekend in April.

Events include a 5k and 15k Germanfest Fun Run, a Metric Century Bicycle Rally, a Sausage and Rib Cook-Off, and other assorted competitions; non-stop entertainment for the whole family.

Munster is located on U.S. Highway 82, 14 miles west of I-35, about 70 miles north of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. <http://www.germanfest.net/home/> for more information.

The Dallas Opera's 2012 Cowboys Stadium Simulcast of [Mozart's The Magic Flute](#) will take place on **Saturday, April 28, 2012 at 7:30**

PM (doors open at 6:00 PM). Patrons will be able to enjoy a complete, unabridged live performance on the world's largest high-definition video board structure.

Parking and seating are **FREE**, though seating is reserved. To obtain your tickets, please go to the website listed above.

Every Tuesday night the UTA German Department will be showing German Movies in Room 200 of Trimble Hall on the UTA campus. This week we will be watching "Coneheads" in German. For more information about the German Language Society at UTA go to <http://www.uta.edu/modl/german/club.html>

Rammstein - the German Rock Band - will be performing at the American Airlines Center in Dallas on May 22nd. Tickets are available at <http://rammsteintour.com/>

October 13: 50th Annual German Pioneer Ball in Irving. Save the date and stay tuned for details.

Editor: Lynda Freeman, lyndaathomenow@aol.com

Asst. Editor: Martha Liehsel

Contributors: Bruce Maxwell
Fred Weekley
Vicki King
Shelia Gibson
Ellen Brooke
Ortrud Jaeger-Jones
Magda Shafer
Karen Mullins
Klaus Driessen