



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

[www.arlingtontx.gov/sistercity/index.html](http://www.arlingtontx.gov/sistercity/index.html)

## NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2010

NO. 14

### SAVE THE DATE

**Monday, Dec. 6, General Meeting and Christmas Party, 6-8 pm at the Arlington Museum of Art.**

### GREETINGS

Greetings, Dear BK Friends –

Happy Fall All!!! So nice to be able to get out and about and enjoy this beautiful, cooler fall weather. Perhaps you attended one of the many outdoor fall Oktoberfests in the area or made it to Oberammergau, Germany, to see the Passion Play like Martha and Jim Stiebing (see their article in this newsletter). Or perhaps you were able to attend the October 9 German Pioneer Ball, where our BK Friends were represented by the Capeharts, Driessens, Liehsels, Schoppes and Pat Cappelletti.

Arlington even had two visitors from the Bad Königshofen area in October. Mr. Klaus Wendt and his wife Waltraud were visiting their daughter, Arlington resident Conny Rhoades, and the three of them stopped in to meet Mayor Cluck and Council Member Sheri Capehart, conveying greetings from Bürgermeister Helbling as well.



Work continues on planning a possible Christkindl Market in Arlington for next year, with the project being spearheaded by the Arlington Chamber of Commerce. We'll keep you posted on developments. There is much excitement in Arlington with our Texas Rangers baseball team being in the World Series playoffs and the city of Arlington being recognized nationally and internationally on television broadcasts. GO RANGERS! The Christkindl Market is just one more opportunity to help get Arlington in the limelight and to also spotlight next year's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Arlington's sister cities partnership with Bad Königshofen.

In anticipation of our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, we are:

\* Beginning work on updating our sister cities website

[www.arlingtontx.gov/sistercity/index.html](http://www.arlingtontx.gov/sistercity/index.html), where our membership form and newsletters also reside.

\* Making available a new Power Point presentation about our sister cities partnership. If you know of a community group that would like a program to be presented by one of our BK Friends members, please contact Shirley Volluz at [shirley.volluz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:shirley.volluz@sbcglobal.net) or 817-860-6794.

\* Progressing with efforts to actively involve Arlington and Bad Königshofen students in exchanges, including communication over the Internet, working on art projects and possible actual student exchanges. Northstar School and local artist Celia Munoz are helping Arlington this year to do its part in getting these activities underway.

\* And lastly, collaborating with the City of Arlington and the Arlington Chamber of Commerce to identify potential authentic German vendors to participate in a possible 2011 Christkindl Market.

With the excitement of our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary fast approaching, many hands will be needed to assist with the events. We will also be electing new leaders for our sister cities organization at the beginning of 2011. Our Board is made up of three Directors, plus the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. Next year we also want to add board members for membership duties, public relations and fundraising. We need your help. Do you see where you can help out? Please contact, by November 19, Bruce Maxwell at [brucemaxx@bigfoot.com](mailto:brucemaxx@bigfoot.com) or 817-542-3981, or Ellen Brooke at [ellen.brooke@arlingtontx.gov](mailto:ellen.brooke@arlingtontx.gov) or 817- 459-6143.

We have been blessed with many dedicated people in Arlington over the past 60 years who have helped keep this sister cities partnership alive and well. One of those committed individuals is Lynda Freeman, who has been involved with our sister city since the 1980s and is retired from the Mayor's Office. It is with great sadness that we inform you of the death of Lynda's son, Joseph Brent Freeman, who passed away on September 10, at age 48.

Besides his love for his students and his Texas Rangers and Dallas Cowboys, one of Joe's loves was supporting and volunteering his time for the Arlington Museum of Art. If you would like to contribute to a donation to the Museum in Joe's memory, on behalf of the Friends of Bad Königshofen, please send your check *by November 30 – payable to the Arlington Museum of Art* – to:

Ellen Brooke, Council Coordinator  
City of Arlington  
MS 01-0310

P.O. Box 90231  
Arlington, TX 76004-3231

We plan to make a single gift presentation from our Friends group to the Museum in Joe's memory at 7 p.m. at our December 6 meeting and Christmas party.

That evening we will also be decorating a Friends of Bad Königshofen Christmas tree in support of the Museum's second annual "Festival of Trees." Various organizations have been invited to decorate trees to make the Museum look more festive in preparation for the December 11 Arlington Parade of Lights and also to give the organizations a chance to promote themselves. On the evening of the parade the Museum will have an Open House, with cookies and hot chocolate for those stopping in.

I look forward to seeing you on Monday, December 6, between 6 and 8 p.m. at our General Membership Meeting and Christmas Party. Please bring your family, an ornament for our tree, and your favorite snack, dessert or wine to share that evening. Dress: business casual / holiday.

Happy Holidays to you and yours until we meet again!

Shelia Gibson  
President, Sister Cities of Arlington

**Attention:** If you have a Christmas tree that Friends can use during the Festival of Trees, please contact Ellen Brooke by November 24. The tree will be decorated on Dec. 6, and can be returned after the holidays.

# THE PASSION PLAY

*By Jim Stiebing*

The Passion Play in Oberammergau is held every ten years. It is a tradition that dates back to 1633 when the village was threatened by the plague. They committed to perform a play portraying the Passion of Jesus if the village was spared. Tradition has it that thereafter no one died of the plague. Through the centuries since, the people of Oberammergau have kept their commitment.

Martha and I joined a tour which included one optional day to attend the play. It can be difficult to get tickets but the tours seem to have no problem with that. We enjoyed our tour group but would have liked to have more control over where we went and how long we stayed. Still, if you plan to attend the play in 2020 we would recommend a tour.

The play is about eight hours long with a 90 minute break. For the first time this year the play was held in the afternoon and evening instead of during the day. Not having seen the daytime version, we don't really have a way to compare them, but the night scenes including the Crucifixion were very moving. We heard others who had seen the daytime version echo our impression.

The play has more than 2000 participants including the orchestra, choir, and actors. It's hard to see how a small village of about 5000 can put on the event of this magnitude without help from outside but they do. During the ten years between plays the entire village is engaged in some part of the overall effort to prepare for the next play. There is much to be done and it is a testament to their skill, dedication, and organization that they always are ready when the decade ends.

The play is presented in eleven acts. Act I is of Jesus entering Jerusalem and Act XI, the last act, is of Mary Magdalene at the tomb of Jesus. Throughout the play the music and the chorus add much to what is already a moving performance. The chorus is huge and very powerful. The music is all original to the play and is played beautifully by a 180-piece orchestra. There are also a number of solos

by strong, beautiful, voices. The music and song could be performed as a stand-alone concert well worth attending.

Another feature of the play was the "Living Images." These were ten scenes from the Old Testament which normally followed the Prologue that opened each act. In the back center of the stage there is an opening which was closed with a stage curtain. The images would be composed behind the curtain which would be opened to reveal the scene. In the scene everyone is perfectly still. At first you think they are statues but you soon realize they aren't. The sets for these scenes were often complex and beautifully painted. How they quietly get the set, the people, and the props on and off behind those curtains is a mystery.

For me there were two acts in which there were the most moving scenes of all. In Act IX, Scene 1, Jesus is before Pilate and some in the crowd begin to shout "Kreuzige ihn."; which translates "crucify him." Others shout "Gib ihn frei. Er is ohne Schuld."; which translates "Free him. He is without guilt." The chorus of those calling for Jesus' death grows and drowns out those calling for his freedom. It was mob justice. Of course you know the rest of the story.

The most moving scene of all, which occurs in Act X, has no dialogue. It is the nailing of Jesus to the cross. There is the very realistic sound of the driving of the nails and the screams of pain. When the cross is pulled up vertical, you see Jesus suspended there nailed to the cross beam. There is faux blood and the actor's body clearly appears to be hanging heavily by his arms. It was a difficult scene to watch.

The play is all in German, which is as it should be. Our tour provided us with a book that had both the German dialogue and an English translation. I found it very difficult to continually refer to the translation and follow the flow of the play on stage. After a time I was able to recognize most of the major characters. I still remember that Nicodemus was costumed in all black and the high priest was in all white. Others whom I have now forgotten were easily recognized by their costume. Jesus of course

was no problem. Recognizing who was speaking and, knowing a little German, I was surprised that it was relatively easy to follow what was happening on stage.

I don't expect to go back and see the play again but if it were convenient I would. They always make changes in costumes and dialogue from one year to another. It would be interesting to see what the new, old play would be like in ten years. The music does not change. It doesn't need to.

If you get the chance, go see the play. Unfortunately, commercial interests now are the easiest way to do it. I don't like it but that's the way it is.

## IN BAD KÖNIGSHOFEN

*By Martha Liehse*

On October 3 this year, 20 years of unification were commemorated in Germany. It was on that date in 1990 that the former East and West Germany officially became re-united. One commemorative event sponsored by the German federal government this year invited German youth to participate in an original-poster contest. They were to express in their artwork what a unified Germany means to them. Contest entries were received from more than 300 students from all over Germany, and ... now this is how our sister city fits into this story ... Bad Königshofen students won the first and third place prizes!

First place winner Kristina Daniel, 17 years old, designed her poster around two "little green men" who became well-known during the re-unification process. These little men are the lighted symbols on pedestrian "walk" signals, the traditional West German one being sort of a stick-figure symbol of a man walking and the East German one a more filled-out figure wearing a hat. Both "walk" signal designs are still in use in Germany. Kristina's poster has the title "Together into the Future" and shows as its middle-point the two figures reaching out to shake hands.



Julia Zehe, also 17 years old, received the third place prize with her poster titled "Leap into the Future." She included historical quotes and pictures, including the well-known picture of an East German guard jumping to freedom over a section of the Wall that was under construction.



Kristina and Julia, as well as the second place winner, were invited with their parents to Berlin as guests of the federal government for two days. Kristina won a laptop and Julia a digital camera. Kristina also received the first printed copy of her poster.

## FEATURE STORY

German Heritage: Dialect

*By Eric English*

An article in the November 4, 2010 issue of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* prompted me to forward this information for our newsletter. The article stated that German-Texans are proud of their heritage; however, their dialect is gradually fading away. It is very distinctive and can be heard nowhere else. The article went on to explain that a hundred years ago there were about 110,000 people speaking Texas-German in our state, and now the number is down to about 7,000. Hans Boas, a linguistics professor at the University of Texas, stated that most of these speakers are over 60 years old

and predicts that, in the future, this unique dialect will be gone forever.

Most of these folks are very much like my mother, who is a 5<sup>th</sup> generation descendant of Anton and Mary Hoelscher. The Hoelschers were from Olfen in Westfalen, Germany and arrived in Galveston in late 1846. They currently celebrate the largest family reunion in Texas. Like most earlier German-Texan descendants, they grew up in a German-only community. They spoke German at home, to the neighbors, and to vendors in town. They attended church where sermons were in German and they read German newspapers. There were 24 German-language newspapers with a combined circulation of 70,000 in the state in 1914. At home, my mother and her siblings spoke German, and they didn't use or attempt to perfect their English until they attended the first grade. However, teachers wanted the lessons in English, and when students slipped back to the old language, the teacher would soon have them monotonously writing on the blackboard "I will only speak English."

It is as if our ancestors were on a deserted island. They had carried their language here, to Texas, and have had no outside German influence since. For example, I wanted to impress my host on my first trip to Germany. So I called my mother often, requesting her assistance as a teacher. When I got to Germany, my hosts were impressed with my efforts, but were a little confused. They asked where I had studied my German and wondered if I had used a very old book. "No," I responded, "My mother taught me." They told me I was speaking the equivalent of Old English, by saying in German things like "Where goest thou?"

It is very interesting to note that these German-Texan folks did not have proper German words for the new innovations that came along. In a past article Professor Boas used an example about a Texan of German descent who flew to Germany. His host asked how he got there and he responded in German that he came by "Luftschiff," of course. The German host was astounded. There had been no word for

airplane in the 1840s, so German-Texans later made up their own German word. The word they put together means "airship," as in "dirigible." They did not know the real German word "Flugzeug."

Other examples:

<u>English</u>	<u>Tex/German</u>	<u>German</u>
helicopter	der Helicopter	der Hubschrauber
skunk	die Stinkkatze	das Stinktier
to fight	fighten	kämpfen
for sure	für sicher	sicherlich

Why are we losing the dialect? The majority of these communities spoke German until the 1950s. At that time, people and society in general became much more mobile. This, in turn, led them to dating outside of their area. And the demise of the German clans of Texas started when these folks eventually married outside of these tight-knit communities.

It saddens me to know that I will soon no longer hear that distinctive dialect I associate with so many good times at my grandparents' house. Remembering the dialect that I can recognize immediately, anywhere, and in any crowd brings back wonderful memories of family get-togethers and talking to my grandparents and their friends. It especially reminds me of observing my mother and her sisters while they spoke in German – like the cackling of hens as they chattered up my grandmother's bedroom with their animated stories. Like many other descendants, we asked them why they did not take the opportunity to teach us German. They "never thought of it" is their reply. But we think it's simply that they didn't want us to know what they were talking about.

You can read more about Professor Boas, and listen to examples from his Texas German Dialect Project at [www.tgdp.org](http://www.tgdp.org).

## NEWS

### Through the Eyes of Teens

*By Tabatha Knickerbocker*

In honor of the 60-year anniversary celebration of the Sister City Friendship, Celia Munoz and the students at Northstar School will

collaborate to document the life of Arlington teenagers through words and art.

Over the next few months, Celia will encourage teens to dig deep and get in touch with their emotions and determine who and what brings the most value to their lives. They will then take their newfound insight and use poetry and block print images to depict life as they know it in Arlington, Texas. The final collection of art will be displayed and bound into a book to share with the Bad Königshofen teens working on the Kraut 2.0 Project.

Through this project, we hope to bring the teen groups together and help them realize that even though geographically our communities are worlds apart, their everyday lives have many commonalities. Through these projects and digital technology, we hope to lessen the distance between our communities and encourage a new generation of citizens to nurture the 60-year friendship between Bad Königshofen and Arlington.

(Editor's note: The Kraut 2.0 Project referred to above was launched earlier this year for Bad Königshofen teens to depict their life and their environment using different media, and then to communicate the results of the project to Arlington youth.)

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- Monday, December 6, 2010, our General Membership Meeting & Christmas Party, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Arlington Museum of Art.
- First General Membership Meeting of 2011 will be Saturday, February 26, noon.

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