

Calendar of Events

- Sun. Jan. 3 "Wister and More!" presents Claire Huangci, piano, 3.00pm
- Sat. Jan. 9 Women's Auxiliary Appreciation Party, 11.00am
- Sat. Jan. 9 Buchclub: Joseph Roth's "Radetzkmarsch/ Radetzky March", 1.30pm
- Fri. Jan. 15 Friday FilmFest presents: Der Prozess, 6.30pm
- Sat. Feb. 6 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10.00am
- Sun. Feb. 7 "Wister and More!" presents Elissa Koljonen, viola, and Natalie Zhu, piano, 3.00pm
- Fri. Feb. 19 Friday FilmFest presents: Die andere Heimat, 6.30pm
- Sat. Feb. 27 5th Annual Bierfest
- Sat. Mar. 5 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10.00am
- Sun. Mar. 6 "Wister and More!" presents Amit Peled, cello, and Elizabeth Borowsky, piano, 3.00pm
- Fri. Mar. 17 Friday FilmFest presents: Die geliebten Schwestern, 6.30pm
- Sun. Mar. 20 "Wister and More!" presents The Wister Quartet, 3.00pm
- Sat. Apr. 2 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10.00am
- Sat. Apr. 2 Hamburger Abend, 7.00pm

In this Issue

Veterans Day Parade Honors George Beichl	1	German Heritage Festival	8
Frankfurt and Philadelphia as Sister Cities	2	FilmFest Preview	9
President's Report	4	"The Magic Flute" at Overbrook	9
VP of Development Report	5	Library News	10
Welcome New Members	5	"Wister and More!" Updates	10
PhillyKinder Junior Authors Contest	6	Konversationsabend Report	11
PhillyKinder Celebrates Deutsche Einheit	6	Meet our New Admin Assistant	11

# The German Society of Pennsylvania

## Neuer Pennsylvanischer Staatsbote

CELEBRATING  
1764 **250** 2014  
YEARS OF  
**GERMAN HERITAGE**

Winter 2016

### Philadelphia Veterans Day Parade Honors Dr. George Beichl

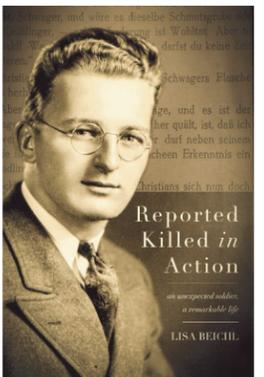


German Society and Women's Auxiliary Members march in the Philadelphia Veterans Day Parade

The City of Philadelphia on November 8th reinstated the Veterans Parade and Dr. George J. Beichl was specifically honored for his national service – he was a veteran and prisoner of war in Germany who also worked as a chemist on the Manhattan Project. After the war he began a fifty year career as a professor and Department Head of Chemistry at St. Joseph's University. Representatives of the Society and the Women's Auxiliary marched in the Parade and carried a large tapestry with his embroidered image and a banner of the Society, where he served with high distinction as the President for nineteen years (1974 – 1993). Dr. Beichl was a preeminent spokesperson for the German-American community for many decades.

Lisa Beichl, his youngest daughter, has self-published his memoirs about a truly remarkable life. She took the opportunity on November 8<sup>th</sup> to launch the sale of this book - "*Killed in action: An Unexpected Soldier, a Remarkable*

*Life*", which includes his diaries from 1939 and 1945. His perspective focuses upon appreciating unique cultures without judging them. The book can be purchased at Amazon.com – paper copies and kindle editions are available. Lisa has purchased a large number of copies and will make them available as well. She can be reached at: [lisa@transparentborders.com](mailto:lisa@transparentborders.com).



As reported earlier, we established *The George J. Beichl Memorial Fund*, which is now a significant component of our Endowment. Thirty-two individuals and organizations have donated \$51,388 and since the last listing of contributors, we received a donation from Dr. and Mrs. J. Snyder. A sincere thank-you to all who have contributed.  
-Ernie Weiler

## Philadelphia and Frankfurt Partner as Sister Cities

*Die Chemie stimmt zwischen Philadelphia und Frankfurt!* (The chemistry is right between Philadelphia and Frankfurt!) These were my parting words to the large delegation which accompanied Dr. Peter Feldmann, the Lord Mayor of Frankfurt, to our City of Brotherly Love for a four-day visit during the week of November 9 – culminating in the ratification of our new sister-city partnership.

The first working session took place at the Chemical Heritage Museum where – after an introduction by its President, Dr. Carsten Reinhardt – a lively discussion ensued regarding Philadelphia's strategic position for the future when the (controversial) pipelines for Western Pennsylvania oil and gas have been installed. I interjected that Philadelphia has long been the geographic center of the US chemical industry, particularly as it relates to organic chemical products.

There were many small chemical companies started in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in this region, many by German and French chemists – from Wilmington, DE all the way up to Northern Jersey – along the present-day NJ Turnpike corridor. Fifty years ago, this stretch was commonly called "Cancer Alley," due to the utter disregard for environmental concerns – until Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* brought this matter to public attention.

At about the same time, petrochemicals became the new feed stock for that industry. Many chemical processing companies relocated to the US Gulf region. Also, the textile industry moved south, when synthetic fibers became popular. However, the manufacture of higher value-added chemical products, such as pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, hair dyes and the like, remained in our region.

Historically, a similar development occurred in Germany. One hundred and fifty years ago, the three major chemical companies (BASF, Bayer and Hoechst) were formed in the Rhine corridor – with Ludwigshafen in the South,

Leverkusen in the North, and Frankfurt in the center. The latter location became the headquarters of the IG Farben cartel which after WWII was broken up into its erstwhile constituent companies. While I did not expound too much on those details, a Frankfurt newspaper reporter, nonetheless, filed the following report on this first working session with our visitors from Frankfurt. It was sent to me by Gregor Disson, regional head of VCI (Chemical Industry Association):

*In der neuen Partnerstadt Philadelphia präsentiert sich Frankfurt mal nicht als Finanzstandort, sondern als Hauptstadt der Chemieindustrie:*

*Wenn es um Chemieunternehmen in den USA geht, macht Hardy niemand etwas vor. Der 78-Jährige, der mit Nachnamen von Auenmüller heißt, aber in der Stadtgesellschaft von Philadelphia nur Hardy genannt wird, lebt seit 56 Jahren in den USA. Hingeschickt hat ihn sein einstiger Arbeitgeber, die Hoechst AG. Hardy sollte den US-Markt erkunden. Das macht er in gewisser Weise bis heute. Zwar ist er längst Rentner. Aber als die Frankfurter Delegation, die sich derzeit in der neuen Partnerstadt Philadelphia aufhält, am Mittwoch die Chemical Heritage Foundation besuchte, war das für Hardy ein Pflichttermin. „Ich kann nur jedem Frankfurter Unternehmen raten, zumindest eine Partnerschaft mit einer Firma in Philadelphia einzugehen – es wird sich lohnen“, sagte er in den Räumen der Stiftung, die sich mit der Historie der Chemie auseinandersetzt.*

In the ensuing days I was able to provide Dr. Feldmann and his entourage with background and context on matters of history and culture whenever I felt they were in danger of overdosing on the "touristic" rhetoric of the local guides. Unfortunately the Philadelphia organizers *de-scheduled* my planned speech on the

historic role of the German Society in Philadelphia, which was to have been given at a breakfast meeting hosted by Harry Schaub of the Montgomery McCracken law firm.

Since then I have visited Frankfurt, and met with various Board members of the Steuben-Schurz Gesellschaft (SSG), the oldest German-American cultural institution based in Germany. It was founded in 1930, on the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Baron von Steuben's birth. Its headquarters is in Frankfurt – with subchapters in Magdeburg, Potsdam and Berlin. Dr. Thomas Young, its Vice President, and his wife, who visited us while the Hamburg-Flottbek Church Choir was here, have since become life members of our Society, and I in turn became a member of SSG.



The Hamburg-Flottbek Church Choir performing in our Auditorium in October.

A delegation of SSG, headed by its President, Dr. Ingrid Countess zu Solms-Wildenstein, will be coming to Philadelphia in the Spring – most likely late in May – when we are planning a special Frankfurt social event on our new Leidy Terrace. We also established an important link with SSG's long running program on internship exchanges across the Atlantic. This could enhance our scholarship program for local students pursuing a German major.

In addition, there are opportunities for us to exchange music ensembles (including opera singers from AVA) with the two hundred year old Frankfurter Museum Gesellschaft (FMG). This society has long ruled the *Tonkunst* (music scene) in Frankfurt. A visit with Dr. Burkhard Bastuck, president of the FMG, lead to the invi-

tation of David Kim, concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra, to their Sir Georg Solti Conductors Competition next year. I am sure the Curtis Institute of Music will be just as happy to partake in these transatlantic exchanges.



A framed copy of the Declaration of Independence in German was handed to Countess zu Solms, in the presence of Frankfurt Deputy Mayor, Mr. Michael Paris.

Stay tuned for further news by yours truly.

-Hardy von Auenmueller

## Philadelphia Becomes First World Heritage City in the U.S.

The past three months have been dazzling for most folks here in the City of Brotherly Love. First, Pope Francis came to town, attracting more than one million visitors from around the world. Then German Federal President Joachim Gauck paid us a visit, and finally, Lord Mayor Peter Feldmann came here from Frankfurt to sign a sister city agreement with Philadelphia. With all this commotion you may have missed the fact that Philadelphia became the First World Heritage City in the U.S. – putting it on par with Jerusalem, Cairo, Paris, and other places recognized for their impacts on the course of human events. Our Independence Hall, the Constitution Center, Barnes Foundation, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the remade Navy Yard reportedly left a favorable impression with the UNESCO select committee.

-Hardy von Auenmueller

## President's Message

Preparations for Christmas and the rest of the holiday season are upon us and make it clear that the year 2015 is quickly coming to an end. We celebrated another wonderful and well-attended Women's Auxiliary Christmas Market last weekend and I cannot resist this opportunity to stress how important the Women's Auxiliary activities are to the life of our organization. Let me take this chance to say a personal thank you to outgoing Women's Auxiliary President, Christel Tillmann, and all her team of volunteers for their dedication and service.

The planning of our activities for 2016 is almost complete and the calendar will show an increase in our events for the coming year. In late May we will hold an event focusing on Philadelphia's new sister city, Frankfurt am Main; the Lobster Feast will return in October and, for November, we are discussing expanding the *Martinszug* celebration to a "Laternenfest" with food and other activities.

This year we celebrated our German Heritage Festival for the third time. This event grew out of the Oktoberfest in cooperation with other organizations such as PhillyKinder and the Society for Creative Anachronism. Don't misunderstand me, there is definitely a place for Bier, German food, and traditional costumes in our programming, but I am pleased that we can also move past stereotypical expectations by representing a breadth of German history and the diversity of contemporary culture as well as highlighting a variety of German regions.

We accomplished many things around the building this year - the basement waterproofing project was finished this month (making the "musty" scent in some basement areas a thing of the past) and we replaced the main sewer line, thus eliminating a backup problem which had existed for more than one hundred and twenty seven years! The upcoming replacement of our entire heating and cooling system that began last week will be another milestone in creating a better environment for our future activities.

Looking forward to 2016 we will be able to enjoy a wide variety of activities including events on the new *Leidy Terrace* with its convenient entrance to the lower level. We are also looking forward to a point in the near future where we will be able to air condition the auditorium, opening up a wealth of summer possibilities. These improvements not only make life more enjoyable for our members but also make us a more attractive destination for visitors and open up additional rental opportunities. Our profile in the community and beyond continues to grow.

In diesem Sinne wuensche ich allen Mitgliedern und Freunden der Deutschen Gesellschaft ein frohes Weihnachtsfest und ein glueckliches neues Jahr. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

P.S. You may have received, in a separate letter, our request for your support for the GSP in the form of a monetary contribution to the Annual Fund. As much as we rely strongly on our volunteers for their valuable participation, we also need your financial support to maintain our operation. If you have not yet received the document please don't hesitate to call the office.

-Tony Michels

## VP of Development Report

As has been my practice, I will first talk about our Endowment Fund and then add a few comments about grant applications.

The Philadelphia Foundation has amended our contract and we will be charged a 0.85% management fee now that our two funds (Endowment and Scholarship) have combined assets over \$ 1.0 MM. The next break point in the rate structure will be at \$ 2.5 MM. The yields in the past quarter, just like your own equity holdings in the market, were negative, but should recover as we close out the year. We expect the Endowment Fund to close out the year around \$825,000 if we include the current commitments. At our November Board Meeting we reconfirmed that we do not plan to take any distributions until we have reached our interim goal of \$ 2.00 MM and that once we withdraw funds, they will be used to enhance operational excellence and to establish a capital reserve fund; the split would likely be 50:50.

We also presented a recommendation to the Board that it is appropriate to consider a separate endowment fund to provide ongoing support for the Library. We believe there are friends and members of the Society who truly cherish this magnificent collection (which has been painstakingly assembled since 1817) and who would consider a special donation. As is the case with all special collections, our Library will never be in a position to self-fund its operation and special needs and this is why we believe a separate endowment would be most helpful. The Board accepted this recommendation. We will start by establishing a giving category titled *Friends of the GSP Library* under the Linden Society summary. We are hopeful that the Library Committee will initiate this effort and once we have collected \$ 25,000 or \$ 50,000, we would open a separate account with The Philadelphia Foundation.

We reported earlier that the William Penn Foundation, which in prior years has generously supported a number of our key capital projects, will no longer honor such requests.

However, the Foundation is open to applications which, if granted, will provide 'flexible working capital through unrestricted core organizational support'. The application process is significantly different and if funded will require us to measure yearly growth of our programs and attendance through 2018. The focus is on audiences served and not necessarily financial results.

To help us fund the anticipated expenditures for a new heating system for the auditorium and a new heating and air-conditioning unit for the library, as described in the prior issue, we have reached out to three organizations that have been most supportive in prior years - The Max Kade Foundation, The Cannstatter Foundation, Inc. and the German Society of New York City. Our Annual Fund letter will be mailed to our members in the next few weeks by our President and it might be appropriate to include a special donation to support these critical projects at the Society.

-Ernie Weiler

## Welcome New Members!

Names removed from online edition.

## Five Students Receive Award in First PhillyKinder Junior Author's Contest



To acknowledge their impressive accomplishments, our finalists Jasmin, Isabel, Nina, Finn, and Maya each won a subscription to a German language magazine.

Our first-time Junior Authors Contest was held over the summer months and drew a variety of stellar submissions. The children, who were encouraged to compose pieces in a genre of their choice, submitted entries such as summer journals, compositions on vacation and summer adventures as well as fiction writing.

The writing contest was launched to encourage written creative expression and to make it a fun, enjoyable experience. The discipline of re-writing and editing helped boost the children's confidence in their German spelling and grammar skills.

As it turned out, the long summer months presented the perfect opportunity to hold the contest with an added bonus for some of them who were traveling to visit German-speaking grandparents: they got to record their precious summer adventures and share those first-hand with family and friends.

When YOU think of "summer," what comes to your mind? What did you experience last summer? We look forward to hearing from you in the next contest.

-Manuela Sieber-Messick

## PhillyKinder Celebrate German Reunification

Moving, touching - those would be the first words coming to mind when I think back to October 3rd. That Saturday afternoon, to commemorate *25 Jahre Deutsche Einheit*, a group of children from the PhillyKinder program performed a *Musiktheater* at the German Society, entitled *Ein Land ohne Mauer - da ist keiner sauer!* As you know from previous editions of the *Staatsbote*, for the past year the older students at Overbrook had been working on the events leading to the fall of the Wall and the subsequent reunification of East and West Germany, and it all culminated in the most beautiful way in that Saturday's performance.



In the spring, Sonja Srama Souder had adapted Hanna Schott's book *Fritzi war dabei* into a play, and the many gifted actors among the *Schlaue Füchse* were amazingly diligent in learning their lines over the summer. Given that fall classes at Overbrook only began on September 10th, there was precious little time for rehearsals, but everybody rose to the challenge. Within three weeks, Sonja and Birgit Splitt brought the *Schlaue Füchse* to the point of having their stage routines down pat, and just as amazingly, Jessica Tremblay assembled a group of the younger students plus the actors into a choir that would integrate songs typically sung by GDR children into the action on the stage.

Birgit added a slide show with a selection of pictures and documentary videos, and all of these aspects came together in a truly memorable performance. I think all of those present will agree that it captured a special moment.

The children were excited to be on stage, in costumes, before a large audience, in a play that had come to resonate with them over time. Initially, they had thought the book was a bit boring, but as they learned more about the historical events behind the story, they changed their minds. And for many of the parents it brought back memories, good and bad, since a number of the PhillyKinder families have their roots in what used to be the GDR, and among the "unplanned" results of staging this play were the discussions of the different experiences, depending on whether you had been in the East or West.



Which brings me back to the "moving" part: it was emotional to see those kids acting out scenes that you remembered from your own childhood, and it was touching to witness a new generation being on stage honoring one of those turning points in history - in the case of October 3rd, the end of the division of Germany which had been the result of World War II and the Cold War. For those children, there has always been only one Germany, and the events of the 20th century that led to the existence of two Germanys are fading into history.

And what better place to build this bridge between generations than the German Society -

itself a manifestation of many phases of history, from a time when its members came from the "German-speaking parts of Europe" because there was no German state, to a time when it is a mix of the descendants of those early immigrants, those who came as refugees after World War II, and those who arrive today as part of an increasingly cosmopolitan world - maybe just to stay for a few years, maybe longer, maybe forever.

Over all these years, German events and the



German language have reverberated throughout the Society's buildings in one form or the other, and I am glad to have witnessed the latest example of this long tradition of combining the old and the new of Germany and America, and seeing this next generation of German-Americans on a stage that the previous generations built for them.

-Maria Sturm



## German Heritage Festival with the Society for Creative Anachronism

On Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, the German Society travelled back in time to the Medieval and Renaissance periods in German history. With the help of our friends from the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), a medieval and Renaissance re-enactment group, the Society's building came alive with a variety of presenters who showed the arts, culture, and food from various periods in German history. We seldom discuss such fascinating subjects at the German Society.



An SCA member displays some medieval leatherwork.

SCA volunteers spoke about and demonstrated a variety of topics throughout our building, from performing traditional medieval *Minnesang* in the library to demonstrating Renaissance German fencing techniques in the auditorium, to teaching attendees how to play Renaissance board games. Activities were available for the whole family, and members of all ages attended.



Demonstrating medieval fencing techniques in the auditorium

One of the highlights of the day was, of course, the food. Using recipes from extant 16<sup>th</sup> Century cookbooks, SCA chefs came up with a full menu of delicious treats. Lunch included a roast with asparagus and baked apples, while bread pudding, spinach tart, and other foods were available for sampling. SCA even had some home-brewers with beer brewed from medieval recipes.



Serving and explaining food and drink made from authentic medieval and Renaissance cookbooks.

Until now, The German Society and the Society for Creative Anachronism had a relationship based solely on rentals – they rent our building every winter for one of their events. This was the first time that our groups have collaborated on an event, and we both look forward to doing it again. It was exciting to see so many different people in the building, and it was exciting to explore a time that is often overlooked at the German Society.

-Caroline Martin-Tumasz

## Friday FilmFest: 2016 Preview

The Friday Film Fest series will be offering a variety of intriguing films in the coming months, so be sure to mark the dates on your calendar. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, you can experience Franz Kafka's *The Trial* as instantiated via the imagination of Orson Welles. For his film, Welles assembled a stellar cast, including Anthony Perkins, Romy Schneider, Jeanne Moreau and of course, Welles himself! On February 19<sup>th</sup>, we will be screening Edgar Reitz's *Die Andere Heimat*, the prequel to his renowned *Heimat* television series. This time, Reitz tells a tale of village life in the years leading up to the revolution of 1848. One of the more fascinating aspects of this production is Reitz's use of unknown actors, and in some cases, even non-actors to bring his characters to life.

On March 18<sup>th</sup> we will see Dominik Graf's *Die geliebten Schwestern*. If you are a Friedrich Schiller aficionado and think you know all about this great classical playwright, you may be in for a surprise. Consult the French cognate for *Dreisamkeit*. Hannah Herzsprung and Florian Stetter star in this imaginative bio-pic. On April 15<sup>th</sup>, Oliver Hirshbiegel (of *Der Untergang* fame) gives us his take on Georg Elser, the humble German carpenter who came closer to assassinating Hitler than all of the generals and aristocrats put together. *Elser – 13 Minutes* is structured around the poignant flashbacks of Georg Elser as he endures imprisonment and interrogation. We will round out the 2015-2016 Film Fest Series on May 20<sup>th</sup> with *Die Mannschaft*, a documentary which takes us along with the German National team in their quest for the World Cup championship of 2014. Soccer lovers in particular and sports lovers in general should not miss this gripping narrative.

So please come out and bring a friend. You will love these films and revel in the renowned Film Fest *Gemutlichkeit* in the Ratskeller.

-The Film Committee

## A Thank You!

Some of you might remember that Nancy Fox and her Operafest International brought their bilingual opera productions to the German Society in the past, and Hardy von Auenmueller arranged to bring them to Philadelphia again this year, but with a twist - their performance of *The Magic Flute* on October 15 took place not at the Society, but at Overbrook Presbyterian Church, in order to take advantage of all the bilingual children enrolled in the PhillyKinder program! The high school students from Hachenburg, Germany, and Ocean City, New Jersey, found a very appreciative audience there, and a special highlight was the recruitment of several PhillyKinder students to participate in the performance as various animals, complete with masks! The children and their teachers enjoyed the playful and colorful production tremendously, and were delighted by the interplay between English and German that they know so well from their own lives. Thank you, Nancy and Hardy, for making this special experience possible!



## Library News: Digital Collaborations

The library has been approached in recent months by several institutions interested in digitizing and hosting some of our unique holdings online. Villanova University's Falvey Library has a "Digital Library" section on its website where it shares select images and documents from both its own holdings and other institutions. Librarians from Villanova have taken several visually appealing items from our manuscript collections to their digitization lab for scanning and will be loading them on their website in the coming weeks. Users will be able to see our contributions among those of several other libraries, and will also be able to link to the finding aids and catalog of our complete collection. This will be an ongoing collaboration where we can continue to select portions of the manuscript collections we wish to highlight.

We were recently contacted by Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C., which is mounting an online exhibition of responses to Lincoln's assassination for the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of that event. Two of our library holdings will be included: a tribute to Lincoln given by Rev. Adolph Spaeth in the Zions Kirche in Philadelphia four days after the assassination, and a section of the autobiography of H.H. Fick, a German immigrant in Cincinnati, recounting his reaction to the assassination.

We will also be collaborating with the University of Pennsylvania, which is publishing a book of essays related to an 1864 pamphlet we own titled: *Testimony of a refugee from East Tennessee*, by a German immigrant and GSP member, Hermann Bokum. Several other pamphlets by Bokum and from the same time period will be digitized by Penn and hosted on its website.

The Philadelphia-Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries, of which we are a member, will be digitizing one of our manuscripts as part of its PACSCL diaries project. Our contribution to this venture is the diary of Arno Silge, titled *Mein Tagebuch* - the story of a German

immigrant who makes an "illegal" and difficult trek into the U.S.A. via Mexico in 1922. Overall, we see these digital partnerships with larger institutions as a great way for us to gain free exposure for our collections, by giving the public a small taste of some of the treasures in the Horner Library.

-Bettina Hess

## "Wister and More!" Updates

On the Sunday before Thanksgiving, a distinguished visitor came to our establishment to witness and critique the works of two British composers who were contemporaries of Frederick Delius. Their names, Herbert Murrill (1909-1952) and Norman O'Neill (1875-1934) are almost completely unknown, particularly here in the US. Had it not had been for Bill Marsh of the **Delius Society**, with whom we have been presenting special concerts in a joint production for the past five years, their music would be unknown to us still. He picked up the scores at an antiquarian bookdealer in London some time ago, and thus the US premieres of two pieces were presented at the German Society on Sunday, November 22, 2015. **David Patrick Stearns** of the Philadelphia Inquirer was sufficiently intrigued for him to come and see us again – after he had given us the honor of his presence in March, 2014 when the Bethlehem Bach Choir and Orchestra performed Chuck Holdeman's *Young Meister Bach*.

Our next two upcoming concerts, both piano recitals, are sure to be show-stoppers as well. On Sunday, December 13, 2015, the **EStrella Piano Duo** will return to the Society with a four-handed piano concert, presented by Elena Doubovitskaya and Svetlana Belsky. They burst on the musical scene barely four years ago with a series of concerts celebrating the great Russian masterpieces for piano duos. They share their Russian heritage and training and an enthusiasm for playing together. This time, they will present a program full of the best known German composers, such as J.S. Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Schubert and Schumann, plus George

Gershwin's famous Rhapsody in Blue, in an arrangement by H. Levine. I am sure you do not want to miss their breathtaking, artistic performance!

And for New Year, it has been a tradition for the past six years that **Claire Huangci** is coming "to our fore" – with her lightning finger movements on the keyboard of our beautiful grand piano. However, this year we will have a surprise in store: not only will she perform Bach's Goldberg variations, Schubert impromptus, opus 142, no. 1 and 4 and Chopin's sonata no. 2 in B flat minor, opus 35, but all these pieces will be played on **Boesendorfer's 50,000th Jubiläums-instrument**. This 225 (7ft. 4in.) masterpiece in craftsmanship is presently being shipped to the US, and will be loaned to us by the Cunningham Piano Company, from whom we bought our more modest *Konzertflügel*, for Claire's performance on **Sunday, January 3, 2016**.

We certainly hope to get good press and television coverage for this special concert. I hope to see many of you on the first Sunday of the new year, and wish you all the best of the season, and a joyous Christmas holiday.

-Hardy von Auenmueller

## Konversationsabend Report

Just to let you know – in September Karl Moehlmann led a great discussion of world summer news ("Actualities") and then introduced us to a sample of the "Heute-Show", a regular satirical news show at the ZDF Mediathek (which you can find online whenever you need a good laugh at the oddities of modern life, German variety).

In October we welcomed back Prof. Juergen Overhoff from the university of Muenster who enlightened us with a wonderful seminar style introduction to Montesquieu (remember, he coined the key principles of all democracies: liberty, equality, fraternity).

In November, on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month which happens to be the yearly beginning of the Carnival season in Koeln, we had a delightful evening with a variety of social games, guessing games, mathematical games, some little charades, and more.

Our December meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup>, was a more quiet evening with poems, Gluehwein, some deep thoughts, good cookies and a bit of music – it was very nice.

And then there will be 2016 with more great programs - we will keep you informed.

-Helga Halbfass

## Meet our New Admin Assistant!



Last Monday, I began working as the new part-time Administrative Assistant at the German Society and am excited to finally be working in a setting where I can use my language skills on a daily basis! I have

been passionate about the German language and culture for most of my life (the Cologne-Düsseldorf rivalry is close to my heart) and have had the lucky opportunity to study in Germany on three exchanges. I hold a Bachelors degree in German from the University of Pennsylvania and am finishing an Associates in Aviation Science from Portland Community College. Outside the GSP, I enjoy spending time devoted to my other passion, flying, and work as a flight instructor on my off-days.

-Ariel Connolly-Smith