

Calendar of Events*

The German Society's administrative office will be closed from July 18 through August 9. We will reopen with normal business hours on Monday, August 10. Use of the Library will be by appointment only through the end of the summer. To make an appointment with the librarian, please send an email to librarian@germansociety.org.

Sun. July 19 *The Word in the Wilderness* - Virtual Book Launch, 4:30pm
 Wed. Sept. 9 Konversationsabend: Actualities, 6:00pm
 Sat. Sept. 12 Dogadelphia, 12:00pm
 Sat. Sept. 12 Buchclub, 1:30pm
 Sun. Sept. 13 Annual Members Meeting and Elections of the Board of Directors, 3:00pm
 Sun. Oct. 4 "Wister and More!" presents Elissa Lee Koljonen and Natalie Zhu, 3:00pm
 Sat. Oct. 10 Buchclub, 1:30pm
 Wed. Sept. 14 Konversationsabend: The Power of Paintings, 6:00pm
 Fri. Sept. 16 Friday Film Fest: *Der Vorname*, 6:30pm
 Sun. Oct. 25 "Wister and More!" presents the Karlsruher Konzert-Duo, 3:00pm
 Sat. Nov. 7 256th Stiftungsfest, 6:00pm

* Events are subject to cancellation based on recommendations from global health authorities due to concerns of the spread of COVID-19. We thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.

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256th Stiftungsfest

The 256th Stiftungsfest has been cancelled due to the ongoing global pandemic. We appreciate your understanding and apologize for any inconvenience.

The German Society of Pennsylvania

Neuer Pennsylvanischer Staatsbote

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

Summer 2020

The New Normal

The year 2020 is one that we will not quickly forget, one chock full of challenges for us at the German Society. We are learning how to survive and even thrive under these new conditions. COVID-19 forces us to make adjustments to our operation and in our programming. Of course, a big part of our programming depends on person to person interaction, but we are implementing new ways to stay in touch with our members and continue our mission. The efforts we made in the last 10 years to improve the building and its infrastructure have made us better prepared to deal with these challenges.

We managed the office and library activities by working from home, and although we had to cancel our spring events and community outreach, we took advantage of an empty building to push ahead with our building projects - for example the German American Collection Room Renovation. We were forced to review our program structure and extended our outreach by using modern technologies. Office and library activities continued from home. Language classes moved online as did the Konversationsabend.

Many members and others thoroughly enjoyed our first live-streamed concert with pianist, Claire Huangci. We created a new forum (KA Contact) to keep in touch - a once a week meeting on Zoom on Tuesday at 8:00pm, to discuss current topics and concerns of interest to our members. Our various committees continue to operate, working on ways to keep us moving forward as we discover what the "new normal" will look like.



KA Contact

As you already know, our office and library operations have been back onsite since June 29, and I can assure you that we are utilizing deep cleaning, disinfection and distancing standards in our operation to minimize any potential risks. My sincere thanks goes out to our staff and our volunteers who have worked so hard to minimize the impact of the pandemic on our organization.

I would love to return to things as they were pre-COVID, but we must face the reality that, for the foreseeable future, we will have to keep discovering ways to stay active and serve our mission and our members. That said, I am really looking forward to seeing you all again after we get through the summer - while maintaining a safe environment, of course.

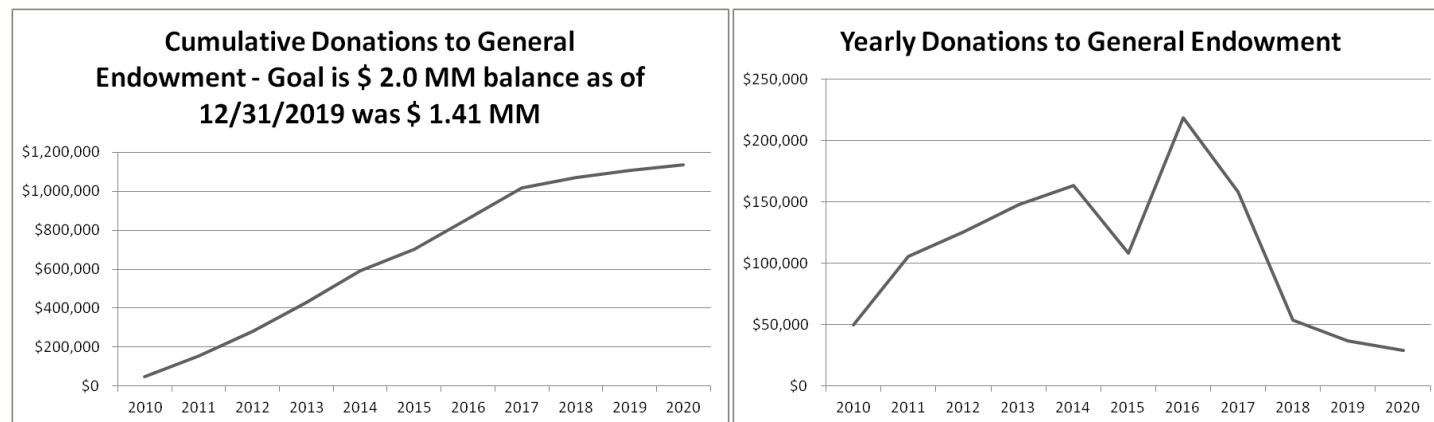
- Tony Michels

Development Report

General Endowment

Our first donation to the General Endowment was a very generous gift by Mr. Ulrich Both in 2010; we subsequently established the first endowment of the Society in the more than 250 years of continuous operation. Ever since we have been soliciting donations and overall have been reasonably successful. Our interim goal is \$2.00MM, and at the end of 2019, the balance in the account was \$1.41MM. We are not taking any distributions until we reach the interim goal, which will provide a continuous stream of \$80,000 per year to support our general operation, expanded programs and activities; this represents around 16% of our annual budget. The longer term goal remains an endowment that will support around 23 to 25% of our budget!

As the graphs show, donations to the General Endowment have decreased significantly in the past few years – this is in spite of an ongoing fundraising campaign. Since 2016, lifetime membership fees have been added to the endowment; and we have seen a slight increase in the number of members that have elected to become lifetime members.



Based on the data presented there are two important conclusions. First, if we are to reach our interim goal in a reasonable time frame, we need to be diligent with our fundraising campaign. And if you are able to make a donation or a multiyear commitment, for any amount, to the General Endowment, we would love to talk to you; call or send an e-mail to the office and we will contact you promptly.

Furthermore, many not-for-profits find that legacy gifts that come through wills or estate plans are an important source of funds for endowments. We are hoping the same holds true for the German Society. Of course, these funds are not predictable and most will come to us many years from now. We currently have thirty-two members that have indicated that the Society is listed in their wills. We are thankful for these commitments, but are hopeful that we can increase this listing significantly in the next few years.

When it comes to legacy gifts none are too small! I am sure that most of us consider our families or our next of kin first when it comes to gifts from our estates. But let me suggest that you might consider a modest percentage of the estate designated for your favorite charities and we hope that the Society is one of these. We will enjoy hearing from you, either by phone or e-mail, and learn a bit more about your intentions and discuss some options for you to consider. Your name or names will be added to the Legacy portion of the Linden Society. The latter was established to recognize all gifts of \$1,000 or more to any of our endowments.

I should add that in 2015 we established the Horner Memorial Library Endowment to support the ongoing needs of Library. At the end of 2019 the balance in the account was approximately \$800,000. The bulk of the funds were provided by the Max Kade Foundation, the Women's Auxiliary and the Arcadia

Foundation; a gift from the Hete and Albert Barthelmes Foundation is expected this summer. The Friends of the Library have collectively donated \$141,000.

Lifetime Memberships

In several issues of the Staatsbote I have highlighted a giving opportunity: to purchase a German Society membership for friends or family members for any occasion. The same is true for lifetime memberships; they are a wonderful way to assure that a family commitment to the Society, its mission and its services to the broader community, is passed onto the next generation. I am pleased to report Lew and Hella Volgenau purchased lifetime memberships for their two children and their spouses. And their children do not live in the greater Philadelphia area – one family lives in California and the second couple lives in upstate New York. It would be great if others would follow this example.

- E. D. Weiler

Books Available for Adoption

Our latest Adopt-A-Book catalog *The German-American Connection* is now available to view at: www.germansociety.org/adopt-a-rare-book

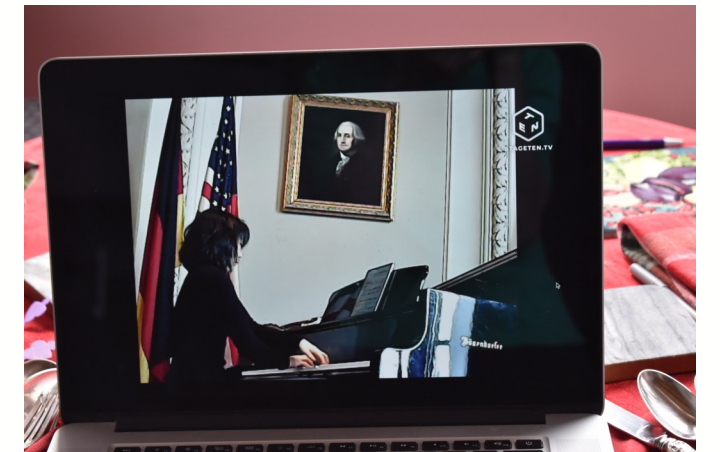
This newest Adopt a Rare Book catalog, assembled by the Library Committee at the German Society of Pennsylvania, features books from our German American Collection. By adopting one of these precious volumes, you will help keep awareness of German influence on American life alive for future generations. Your dollars will pay for Philadelphia-based book restorer Ruth Scott Blackson to repair the book and return it to the Library for readers to enjoy. With your adoption, you will receive a certificate of recognition, which can be made out in honor of a loved one. Please email librarian@germansociety.org with questions or to adopt a book today!

- Bettina Hess

Virtual Music Notes

The cancellation of concerts at the German Society due to the pandemic was a big disappointment, but the GSP rallied under Tony Michels' innovative leadership. Thanks to the groundwork laid by GSP administrative assistant Elena Nahrman, members Hardy von Auenmueller and Ed Cohen completed the team that arranged for a stellar live digital concert by Claire Huangci. Ms. Huangci happened to be staying with her family and came in to the Barthelmes Auditorium on Sunday, April 19 to make her virtual concert debut.

Hardy von Auenmueller dedicated the concert to the memory of Karl Spaeth, one of the most enthusiastic music lovers to ever join the German Society.



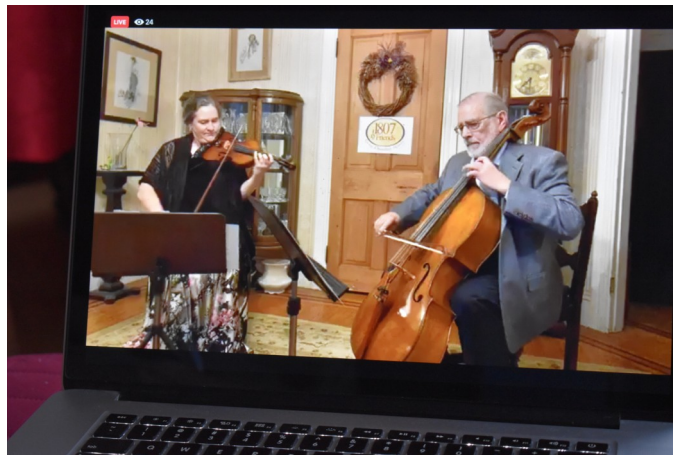
Claire Huangci on my computer live from the GSP

Ms. Huangci chose two formidable pieces, which she executed beautifully. First, she played a very musical yet subtly nuanced version of the Ferruccio Busoni arrangement of Johann Sebastian Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565. Ed Cohen's engineering and use of the Ontario web-based production software for music broadcasting, Stage Ten, worked quite well. Although there was a bit of extra reverberation in the very beginning, it was quickly resolved and the sound quality of the recital was superb. (My partner felt there could have been a truer reflection of dynamics, but after hearing what horrid sounds are produced via Zoom, I think Ed deserves a commendation for the quality of the production.)

Ms. Huangci followed the Bach/Busoni piece

with an arrangement by Franz Liszt of the Beethoven Pastoral Symphony No. 6 in F major, Opus 68 – an incredible tour de force. She managed to produce oboe solos in her right hand and made thunderstorms growl with her left hand. It is so impressive to witness how much she has grown as an artist since I first heard her play at the German Society.

And there were several virtual concerts by a duo who were not playing directly under the auspices of the German Society, but who are the heart and soul of the Wister Series – Nancy Bean and Lloyd Smith. They presented six weekly concerts from their home starting on March 30, getting quite respectable sound quality by broadcasting through their smart phone. Their warm and cheerfully presented programs created a friendly salon reminiscent of the 19th century.



Nancy Bean and Lloyd Smith's virtual performance

The selections ran the gamut of violin/viola and cello duets to an amusingly inventive piece for four hands and one cello by Lloyd Smith in which Nancy played second fiddle (or bow) over Lloyd's shoulder. They also played traditional duos, including classical period duets by Carl Stamitz. They presented several modern pieces, including Allen Krantz's new arrangement of his variations based on a Scottish folk song and a world premiere of Martin Heyworth's *Danza per viola da braccio*. They played some virtuoso repertoire, including a Paganini *Centoni di sonata No. 4* and the Handel-Halverson *Passacaglia* for violin and cello.

Added to these fun virtual concerts was the pleasure of a virtual *Konversationsabend* coordinated by Helga Halbfass whose theme was *The healing power of music*. Participants brought in a wide variety of the music they turn to when they need a lift, which included home-made and professional recordings of everything from Renaissance dances to Elvis Presley. How wonderful that even a pandemic and confinement cannot prevent the GSP from presenting inspiring musical events.

- Margaret Darby

Save the Date: 256th Stiftungsfest Saturday, November 7, 2020

The 256th Stiftungsfest has been cancelled due to the ongoing global pandemic. We appreciate your understanding and apologize for any inconvenience.

2020/2021 Scholarships

For the past decade, I have had the privilege of attending the AATG Annual Award Ceremony at the Cannstatter Volksfest Verein on behalf of the German Society's Scholarship Committee. Before that time, the AATG held its *Preisverleihung*, as it is called, on the premises of the German Society, but when the attendance grew, it could no longer be held at our facility – for lack of appropriate parking space.

This annual event usually takes place in mid-April, but – due to the current coronavirus restrictions – it had to be cancelled. The deliberations of our Scholarship Committee, and its interviewing process with high school graduates and college students learning German in the greater Philadelphia area, also had to be modified this year, since a face-to-face meeting with the applicants was not possible.

After weighing the pros and cons of using Zoom technology for that purpose, our committee members agreed to confer via teleconference, and scrutinized each candidate's application by looking at his or her transcript, the covering letters of recommendation from their respective teachers, and finally the essay which had to be written in German.

The first part of our process was to eliminate those candidates whom we felt should not be interviewed and thus would not receive any scholarship support from us. This cut the number of students for consideration almost in half. Then it was our task to select the top three candidates, one of whom would receive the

prestigious George Beichl award, which had been funded by the Women's Auxiliary for many years.

With the dissolution of this highly supportive and long-time affiliated organization of ours in 2019, the German Society took on several of its well es-

tablished activities, including the *Christkindlmarkt*. Last December, the income generated from that event covered the funding for the George Beichl award.

Furthermore, thanks to the generous bequest in the late 1990s by J. Conrad Linke, a long-time German Society member, our Scholarship Fund had been established by his direction, from which we were able to draw \$12,000 this year. In addition, a recently established Leon H. Volgenau Scholarship Fund yielded \$4,000, and another \$2,000 was distributed from the Elsa Schweikert Scholarship Fund.

It is gratifying to note that two of the top three award recipients this year are high school graduates: Julia Oborna from the Immanuel German School of Philadelphia, who received the George Beichl Award, and Nina Zhang of the Wissahickon High School in Ambler, PA. Both were the recipients of numerous awards during their high school years, including trips to Germany. In fact, Julia was awarded a full scholarship to participate in the US Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange program.

The other scholarship recipients are: Pascal Aubert (University of Pennsylvania), Alison Geiger (Franklin & Marshall College), Clarice Helfand (University of Pennsylvania), Anna Maria Iaramboikov (Radnor High School), Rory Jester (Millersville University), Nicholas Speranza and Annabel Zhao (both Radnor High School). A total of \$22,000 will be dispensed to these nine students this year.

Congratulations to each and everyone! And many thanks to my colleagues of the Scholarship Committee: Angel Bacher, Thomas Buckley, Jean Godsall-Myers, Bill Heintzelman, Carol Olenschlager, Karin Volkwein and, last but not least, our indefatigable Chairman Donald Rainey, for their diligent work. You are indeed a great team to work with.

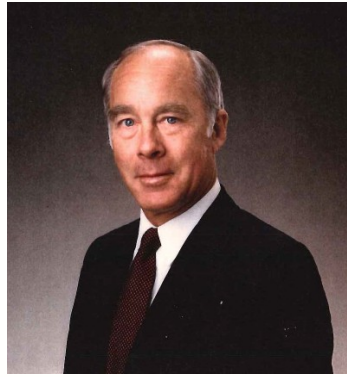
- Hardy von Auenmueller



Dr. George Beichl

In Memoriam

Karl H. Spaeth



On April 11, 2020, Karl H. Spaeth passed away peacefully at the age of ninety-one. His family told us that he died the way he had lived – elegantly and with grace. Karl went for a walk on the

grounds of Cathedral Village, on the outskirts of Philadelphia where he lived, sat on a bench to rest, looked at the setting sun, and fell asleep. It was the night before Easter Sunday.

The German Society was very much a part of his life. He was a member of our Board of Directors for many years, served as Corporate Secretary at a critical time, when our organization was restructured, and was Co-Chair of our Music Committee for more than a decade. Karl had also taken German lessons in our language school for many years, and, having been an excellent student, had become quite proficient. He loved to practice his language skills when the occasion afforded him to do so.

Last year, at the celebration of his 90th birthday on the premises of the Philadelphia Cricket Club, we were able to bestow upon him the Honorary Lifetime Membership of the German Society, and presented a framed certificate to him – in recognition of his many years of service.

Karl had been educated at Germantown Friends School, Haverford College, Oxford University, and Harvard Law School. He also studied music at the Plymouth Music School, and the Salzburg Mozarteum. At one time, he confided to me that his love for music had tempted him to pursue a musical career, but he quickly realized it would be hard to make a living and raise a family as a musician.

And so – while his love for music never ended – he started his professional career as a lawyer

with a Philadelphia law firm. After a few years, he moved into the corporate world, serving as Counsel for Foreign Operations at Scott Paper Company, followed by nearly 30 years as Vice President, Corporate Secretary, and Chief Legal Officer of Quaker Chemical Corporation.

Professionally, he also served for many years as Chairman of the Section on International and Comparative Law of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, and was involved with the management of several other civic organizations at the Board level, including the Settlement School of Music, where “our” Claire Huangci had received her early training as a pianist. He was also the Founding Chairman of what is now the Bach Festival of Philadelphia, which was started in 1976, at a time when our nation celebrated its bicentennial.

As a true renaissance man, Karl was not only intellectually accomplished, but a very gifted athlete as well. In his younger years, he was a state champion fencer, an accomplished figure skater, and an All American soccer player, a sport he continued until he was 50. As a member of the Philadelphia Cricket Club he also enjoyed playing tennis – well into his 80s. He loved skiing, sailing, and took up rowing later in life with his wife, Ann, as a member of the University Barge Club.

He is survived by his three sons Karl Henry, Edmund Alexander, Christopher Philip and his brother George Link Spaeth, who recently became a member of our Society. Karl’s family graciously suggested that – in lieu of flowers – donations be made in his memory to our Endowment Fund at the Philadelphia Foundation, for which we now have established a combined Karl H. and Ann Spaeth Memorial Fund. All who loved and respected him are encouraged to make a contribution.

Thank you...and Adieu, Karl! Rest in Peace!

- Hardy von Auenmueller

Robert M. and Pauline W. Koerner



In December of 2019, the Koerner Family informed us of the passing of Robert M. Koerner and his wife Pauline W. Koerner. Bob was a professor of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering at Drexel University for over forty years. Together with Paula, Bob founded the Geosynthetics Institute (GSI) as a research organization with international outreach programs for the design of geosynthetic materials in construction. Geosynthetics are polymers used for solving many Civil Engineering challenges. Bob and Paula’s philanthropic ideals of inspiring future generations of Engineers can be witnessed through their support of the Koerner Family Foundation and the Geosynthetic Institute.

Bob was born to German and Austrian parents in Philadelphia and obtained his Ph.D. from Duke University. Paula came to the U.S.A. in 1957 and called the Tegernsee in Bavaria her home. In fact, the picture shown was taken in their garden with a mural of the Tegernsee in the background. Bob and Paula typically participated in our annual Stiftungsfest celebrations and at last year’s event, it was a family affair for them with six Koerners attending. They were early donors to the General Endowment and are members of the Linden Society.

Our sympathy goes out to the entire Koerner family.

- E. D. Weiler

Edwin T. Winter



Edwin “Ed” Thomas Winter, age 84, passed away peacefully on March 7, 2020 surrounded by his family. Ed is survived by his beloved wife of 61 years Christa Winter, whom he met while stationed with the US Air Force in Germany.

Ed and Christa participated in many German Society events and are members of the Linden Society, which was established to recognize donations of \$1,000 or more to any of our endowments. Ed and Christa instilled an appreciation of German heritage in their children.

Ed Sr. was a graduate of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He was employed at Aldan Rubber Industries for almost 30 years, first as controller and later CEO and co-owner.

Our sympathy goes out to Christa and the entire Winter family.

- E. D. Weiler

Annual Meeting Postponed

As we have been carefully monitoring the current public health situation, we have made the determination that for the health and safety of our members we will not be able to host our Annual Members Meeting on June 7th as originally planned. The meeting will be postponed to **Sunday, September 13, 2020 at 3:00 PM.**

Members must be in good standing to be eligible to vote, i.e. current on dues no later than close of business on **Friday, September 11, 2020.** Please be reminded that Associate level members do not have the right to vote, but you can upgrade your membership before the meeting should you wish to partake.

Bei PhillyKinder wird Digital das Neue Normal

Ja, auf einmal ist alles digital! Eine Woche war noch Kaffeeklatsch mit leckerem Apfelkuchen und Sahne mit Maria Sturm in Overbrook, die Woche drauf wird abgesagt... und dann? Seit März 2020 ist auch PhillyKinder aufgrund COVID 19 auf den digitalen Unterricht umgestiegen. 3 PhillyKinder Familien teilen ihre Erfahrungen.

Familie Rösch berichtet: „Für unsere Kinder war das erstmal keine große Umstellung. Wir kommunizierten mit der Familie in Deutschland viel mit Facetime/Whatsapp-Video/Skype oder Hangout. Zoom war schnell erlernt und funktionierte gut. PhillyKinder hatte eine schnellere Lernkurve als einige Lehrer von LMSD; es ging los und es funktionierte; eine Mail, ein Link, klappt...Da wir zwei Kinder bei PhillyKinder haben, die aber zu unterschiedlichen Zeiten ihr Meeting hatten, war es mit den Geräten eine Herausforderung. Auch die Stunde Einkaufszeit oder Quatschen am Donnerstagnachmittag hat irgendwie gefehlt.

Die Kinder haben dieses Schuljahr alle ihre „Einsterns Schwester“-Hefte gemacht. Es beschäftigt sie, dass sie jetzt wegen Covid19 evtl. keine Belohnung bekommen (War da nicht Gummibärchen für jedes Heft?). Routinen haben uns viel geholfen. Donnerstag ist PhillyKinder-Tag; daran ändert auch Corona nichts. Daher VIELEN DANK an das coole Team der Lehrerinnen und die Organisatoren. Ihr habt das super gemacht.

Es ist noch unklar, was die Kinder aus der Online-Zeit bei PhillyKinder mitnehmen, aber die Hilfe ist ganz sicher wichtig. Wir sprechen zu Hause nur Deutsch, bzw. versuchen es sehr. Wir Eltern sind beide Muttersprachler. Die Kinder waren zwei und vier als wir 2015 hier ankamen. Und dennoch: Beide Kinder sind voll „ver-englischt.“ Sie denken, träumen und unterhalten sich in Englisch. Untereinander sprechen sie und streiten (manchmal) nur Englisch. Durch PhillyKinder und unsere häufigen *Video-Calls* mit der Heimat bekommen sie mit, dass es sehr viele Menschen gibt, die Deutsch sprechen und mit Deutschland zu tun haben. Sie

erleben das Deutsch-Sein, das finden wir wichtig.

Auch die Nutzung der Anton-App war hilfreich. Unsere Kinder präferieren bildliche Medien (was auch schnell zum Nachteil werden kann). Die tägliche Zeit am iPad motiviert sogar zum Aufräumen. Lieber arbeiten die Kids am iPad als in ihren Büchern oder gar ihrem Journal. Manchmal ist „Ich mache Deutsch“ auch eher die coolen Spiele der AntonApp. Auf der anderen Seite zeigte sich, dass noch eine weitere Stunde *Screentime* und AntonApp echt viel Zeit vor dem iPad sind.

Anfangs wollten die Kids auch noch virtuelle *Play Dates* mit ihren Freunden haben. Das wurde aber immer weniger. Ab Woche drei wollten es die Kinder kaum noch, kaum Nachfragen, die Eltern wollten es mehr als die Kids. Reden mit den Nachbarskindern (mit 6 Fuß Abstand über den Zaun) war hoch im Kurs, *Online-Play Date* (egal ob mit Oma, Opa oder Freunden) war es nicht. Das ist so bis heute in Woche 8.

Danke an das PhillyKinder-Team, dass Ihr weitergemacht habt.“

Uli Boeckheler berichtet hingegen: „Als Vater dreier PhillyKinder möchte ich mich zuallererst bei dem wunderbaren PK Team bedanken, in so kurzer Zeit die Umstellung des Unterrichts auf das digitale Zoom Medium geschafft zu haben. Es war für Eltern und Lehrer technisch eine große Herausforderung! Klar gab es anfangs einige Probleme mit den *devices*, *links* und *Passwörtern*, wie überall, aber insgesamt bewerte ich die Umstellung als erfolgreich gelaufen. Besonders will ich die unglaubliche Arbeit der Gruppenlehrer würdigen, aus dem Dschungel von Online Lernangeboten die passenden Dinge auszusuchen und vorzubereiten. Es ist bei allen drei Gruppen meiner Kinder ein wirklich abwechslungsreiches Menü geworden: Vom Singen, Rätselraten, Klatschspielen, Bewegungs- und Wortspielen, Bilder (Aus)malen bis zum Witze erzählen war alles dabei. Wenn ich sehe, wie sich meine drei, Martin, Miriam und Eva, auf die PK Zoom Meetings freuen, kann ich nur sagen: die Mühe hat sich ge-

lohnt! Vor allem die AntonApp ist in unserer Familie sofort begeistert angenommen worden. Ob deutsche Grammatik, Natur- oder Sachkunde, Verkehrsunterricht oder Mathematik, es ist für jede Altersstufe etwas dabei. Wer sammelt die meisten Goldmünzen? Meine Kinder haben jeweils schon über 80! Jeder will den anderen übertrumpfen, da findet das Lernen ganz von selbst statt.

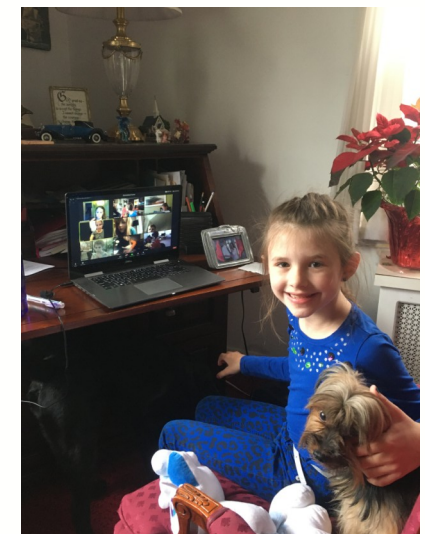
Das Wertvollste an den Meetings ist aus meiner Sicht jedoch einfach, dass die Gruppen auf diese Weise miteinander in Kontakt bleiben. Gerade auch den Sommer über, wo so viele andere Ferienpläne abgesagt werden müssen! Ich hoffe, dass weiterhin Zoom Meetings stattfinden werden, wo unsere Kinder und Eltern sich auf Deutsch austauschen können. Es ist eine schöne Gemeinschaft, die auch geographische Grenzen überwindet.“



Und Jessica Friis sagt, „COVID 19 hat auch den Unterricht bei den PhillyKindern stark beeinflusst. Anstatt 1,5 Stunden zusammen in Overbrook, mussten wir auf 40 Zoom Minuten umstellen. Ich war erleichtert, dass der wöchentliche Unterricht weiterging; da Deutsch meine Zweitsprache ist, fühle ich mich unsicher meinen Kindern eine Sprache beizubringen, die ich nicht völlig beherrsche. Obwohl ich mit ihnen (Alter 4 und 8) von Geburt an ausschließlich Deutsch rede, haben sie die Sprache erst angefangen zu benutzen, als sie an dem PhillyKinder Unterricht teilnahmen. Die beiden achten und bewundern ihre Lehrerinnen und das Deutsch sprechen macht ihnen Spaß. Sie haben sich immer sehr auf ihre Zooms gefreut. Nachdem sie jeden Coronatag

meist in Schlafanzügen verbracht hatten, haben sie sich für PhillyKinder schöngemacht. Meine 8-Jährige hat ihr Lieblingskleid angezogen und sich geschminkt, und mein 4-Jähriger hat sich Fledermausflügel angezogen, um sie seiner Klasse zu zeigen.

Jede Woche war ich beeindruckt, wie interessant die Lehrerinnen den Unterricht gestaltet haben. In der Klasse meiner 8-Jährigen Tochter hat Cindy u.a. die Kinder durch Experimente, Henkerspiele und Schnitzeljagd geführt, während die 4-Jährigen mit Kathlyn Bewegungslieder gesungen, Handpuppen benutzt und Geschichten vorgelesen hat. Dazu gab es wöchentliche Hausaufgaben, z.B. Videos, E-Bücher, Lieder. Die Große liebte ihre Aufgaben in der AntonApp. Für jede Altersstufe gibt es dort Grammatik- und Wortschatzübungen, sowie kleine Tests. Das Beste daran ist, für richtige Antworten verdient man Münzen, die dann wiederum für Spiele genutzt werden können. Eine gute Motivation! Mir fiel auf, dass sie schwierige Aufgaben freiwillig wiederholten, um mehr Münzen zu verdienen. Obwohl wir den persönlichen Unterricht sehr vermissen, war unser Erlebnis mit den virtuellen Phillykindern sehr positiv. Ich bin dankbar, dass das PhillyKinder Team so einfallsreich und fleißig gearbeitet hat, um den Unterricht trotz Corona Virus weiterzumachen!“



*This article is an example of the activities of a German Society affiliate. PhillyKinder is a separate PA 501(c)(3) corporation and not a component of the German Society of Pennsylvania.

Notes from the Konversationsabend: all events starting with KA, and the victory progress of ZOOM

In November, the world was still in order. I had planned a very nice Spring program. In February we would start with **an evening of anecdotes**. The "world's ten best waltzes" from YouTube were to provide the background music. A nonstop Power Point procession of Venetian masks would deliver a carnivalesque touch, buffet and gluhwein would get the conversation going. And so it happened.

But already in late December and more so in January, strange news reached us from the province of Wuhan, China. Large numbers of people fell ill from an unknown virus. Images of China building temporary mass hospitals on parking lots emerged on our TV screens. The first warnings from health experts were heard: this was a new virus, highly contagious, everyone could succumb to it, there would be a pandemic, millions of cases, hundreds of thousands dead.

The virus soon had a name, Sars-CoV-2. Its bizarre appearance gave it the nickname coronavirus, the illness it caused was called Covid-19 because it first occurred in 2019. At the end of February, the illness was wreaking havoc in Italy, spread out over Europe, and had reached the United States. It was undeniably a pandemic. It would be over soon, wouldn't it? But what about the Spanish Flu a hundred years earlier? Had there not been three waves?

We still had a wonderful **KA Extra** event in March with **Martin Kaiser** from the Gustav Stresemann Institute in Germany. My own presentation on the hundredth anniversary of the famous **Bauhaus School of Architecture and Design** on March 11 went over well, but rumors were growing. And on March 12, Gov. Wolf dropped the gavel: **Lockdown!** Imagine - a Konversationsabend in April, and no one to talk to.

This is where **ZOOM** came to the rescue. The "triumph of the virtual world", already on a global tangent, forced us all into subjection:

like it or not, the world learned to use ZOOM. Germans quickly added an ending and had their latest Anglo-Saxon inspired neologism: zoomen. ("Ich hab' heut' morgen gezoomt.")

We had the first **KA on ZOOM** in April. Our friends appeared ghostlike on gallery view, pale or obscure (the lighting!), names attached to tiny pictures, voices loud and clear. So we talked - about the perfidies and fickleness of technology first, then about our topic: **Covid-19 and how it affected us**, and how we were all in this together. The May theme "**The healing power of music**" seemed now even more relevant than in November.

People presented samples of the kinds of music they would listen to in their darker hours. What a diversity of choices! However - when it comes to transmitting music, ZOOM cannot quite compete with other technologies used by professionals. And alas, ZOOM does not come with a buffet, nor with a Wandertag in June. It's just a bit too virtual to be real...

On the other hand, we opened a new weekly program on ZOOM, meeting every Tuesday at 8:00 PM. We called it **KA Contact** to provide an informal platform for our members to voice (in English) their concerns, emotions and hopes, along with their ideas about what social and political changes might grow out of the corona crisis, a crisis that so painfully laid open the fault lines threatening the American way of life, and the life of the planet as well.

- Helga Halbfass



Phone: 215-627-2332
Email: info@germansociety.org
www.germansociety.org

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