

AYA AUSTRIA ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

BGSU COLLEGE OF ARTS & Sciences
BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC YEAR ABROAD



Students experience Krampus-encounters.

Greetings from Salzburg!

from Fall 2013 Director Christina Guenther

“Die Krampusse sind los!” You may remember that at this time in Salzburg—the first week of December—the Krampusse are haunting—actually terrorizing—downtown Salzburg. Our students in this year’s AYA Salzburg have been pretty cool about their first Krampus-encounters, though. See photo at left!

Mengdi and Sara from Sara’s Facebook entry (permission to include granted): “I got to experience my first Krampuslauf today! I ended up getting whipped, and also a few of the Krampus’s rubbed my head/face. Not sure why. It was insane, I loved it!!”

This is just one of the many (and occasionally weird) intercultural encounters that our students have had in Salzburg this semester. I am very pleased to announce a new opportunity for intercultural exchange in Salzburg this year. With the help of our Geography-Team—Professors Fritz Baier and Ute Januschka—the new Patenfamilienprogramm, a friendship family program in Salzburg, has gotten off to a good start. Through this pilot program a few of our students have already been able to experience Austrian family life more directly. Several local families associated with area high schools responded to our friendship program invitation and hosted one or more of our students this fall. We hope that this program will serve as a fun and rewarding complement to the academic component of our program.

The semester got off to a fast start once again. October was full of excursions and special events, including a geographer’s tour of Salzburg, a visit to the open-air museum in Großgmain, a

(partial) hike up the Gaisberg, and a weekend trip to Vienna via the Westbahn. This year, the tour of Großgmain’s open-air museum in early October took place in the snow while we had splendid sunny weather for our walking tour around Vienna at the end of the month, on the Austrian National Holiday no less. Here is a picture of the group looking intently at the Austrian parliament building, the Nationalrat. On page 2, a more relaxed group photo in front of the palace at Schönbrunn!

Vienna was as beautiful as ever in the autumn sunshine, and we all vowed to return very soon.



I should say that the group this year has proved to have quite a bit of staying power. The students have been unwavering in their interest in the Austrian theater scene; in two months, we managed to see Brecht’s *Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe* at the Salzburger Schauspielhaus, Ödön von Horvath’s *Geschichten aus dem Wiener Wald* at the Akademietheater in Vienna and a modern production of both *Faust I* and *Faust II*

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at the Salzburger Landestheater and Felsenreitschule respectively. Talk about amassing a lot of cultural capital quickly!

For a change of pace over the Thanksgiving holiday, the students showed off their culinary talents by cooking up a storm in the kitchens of Haus Merian, Institut St. Sebastian and Haus Humboldt! Three turkeys, a ham, green bean casserole, a special Chinese curried chicken and lots of variations on the stuffing theme as well as at least six pies were only some of the dishes that we were able to offer in thanks to our new community of friends here in Salzburg. What a fantastic meal with very few leftovers, sadly enough! Below is a picture of some very happy people at our Thanksgiving fest, which we hosted at Haus Humboldt again this year.

Now we are looking forward to many visits to the Salzburger Christkindlmarkt—after we wrap up pre-holiday assignments during the next several weeks.

We wish all of you a very happy holiday season wherever you are and we promise to raise a mug of Glühwein to those of you who are spending the holiday season back in the USA.

Herzliche Grüße aus Salzburg!

Christina Guenther and the AYA Austria Group 2013



From Spring 2014 Director

Geoffrey Howes

Dear Alumni and Friends of the Academic Year Abroad in Austria,

It has been over ten years since the last of my four previous stints as director of the program ended in 2003—although I have been back to Salzburg with the summer program, the spring “breakaway,” and privately—and I am looking forward to spending the first six months of 2014 in the place where my family and I made so many memories in the eighties, nineties, and oughts.

How much Europe and Austria have changed since we came to Salzburg in August of 1989! The Berlin Wall fell (1989), Germany reunited (1990), Austria joined the European Union (1995), the passport and customs control at the German and Italian borders were eliminated when Austria joined the Schengen agreement (1997), the euro was introduced (2002), and the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Slovenia joined Schengen as well (2007). Geopolitics have moved Austria from the edge of Western Europe to the center of a new Europe that is still struggling for its identity. Each year, BGSU students have had the opportunity to be in Europe to witness these momentous transitions.

Much has changed in Salzburg itself since 2003 as well: the familiar buildings in the Akademiestrasse have been demolished, replaced by the new Unipark Nonntal, and the director’s apartment has moved back to Nonntal from Schallmoos. There is a new modern art museum up on the Mönchsberg (2004), the Salzburg Museum (formerly Carolino Augusteum) moved into the Neue Residenz (2004), and the Haus der Natur expanded into the space on the Franz-Josef-Kai vacated by the Salzburg Museum.

This year, the AYA Austria celebrated 45 years of its mission of giving BGSU students unforgettable international experiences. I have been fortunate to participate in twenty-five of those years, watching as our students return to the USA with new sophistication and self-awareness. The generosity of our alumni helps to assure that these opportunities continue.

June 2013 Alumni Gathering in Salzburg
45 Years Program Celebration – June 16-20, 2013

Alumni and friends met to celebrate the program’s forty-fifth anniversary. Highlights were our unplanned (because the Almbachklamm was closed) trip to the Königssee and our city walk with BGSU President Mary Ellen Mazey.

The reception at the old university library “Aula” was a wonderful and emotional event where the presenters (including current and past students, Margy Gerber, Gene Aufderhaar, and Stefen Fritsch) made a powerful case about the impact a program like ours has had and continues to have on the lives of our students, its alumni, and all those involved both in Austria and the States. We were reminded once again of the long history of our program, but also of the dedication and idealism of the directors, students, and alumni that has kept us and our program going. — Edgar Landgraf



Feeling royal on the Königssee



View from Nonnberg Abbey



BGSU President Mary Ellen Mazey meeting BGSU students at the new Unipark Nonntal building, University of Salzburg

Alumni News Send us your updates at austria.bgsu.edu

Tim Cable (2008–2009) has taken a position as program associate at the ACLU of Ohio in Cleveland. He was formerly a part-time lecturer in German at Case Western Reserve and John Carroll University, and also youth-services associate at Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

Bradford Goodwin (2004–2005) and his wife Margarethe Karl-Goodwin—they met at BGSU—is in Berlin learning how to code websites and is freelancing as a copywriter

thanks in part to generous financial support from his former employer (Swarovski, whose internal magazine, 1895, he co-edited for a few years). The market for multilingual voice artists is thriving, and Brad helps make ends meet by doing voice work in German and English. Brad is “thrilled to be living in this very vibrant city and intends to stick around a while.”

Antonia Davis (2011–12) has submitted a Fulbright research application for a project entitled “The

National and Cultural Identity of Turkish-German Return Migrants.” She plans to be associated with the European Institute at Istanbul Bilgi University. Antonia lived in Turkey for four years earlier in her life, and has further improved her Turkish language skills in preparation for the project.

Elisabeth Nims (2004–2005) is working at a hedge fund in Boston called Three Bays Capital LP doing investor relations. She moved from NYC to Boston in July with her

fiance. “I’m not really using my language skills on a daily basis, but I’m still certain that my experience in Austria and at BGSU was worth it!” writes Elisabeth.

April Reiter (2009–10) moved back to the U.S. this last summer after two years as a teaching assistant in Austria. She is the program coordinator for the American Association of Teachers of German in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. In early September, April married George Hemphill. They met while in the

Snowshoeing in Salzburg

During my year in Salzburg (2012–13), I had some incredible experiences, but one in particular sticks out in my memory: snowshoeing in the Alps.

It was a sunny, windy, bitterly cold day in January when our group embarked upon a trek into the great, white unknown. Geography instructor Fritz Baier gave us all an introduction to the natural features and wildlife of the area, mentioned that there had recently been a couple of deadly Austrian avalanches (although we would be quite safe where we were going), and pointed out to a few of us that our footwear was glaringly inadequate for what we were about to do.

I'm not quite sure why, but before we started out, I thought we would be walking horizontally in our snowshoes. Not so. After piling out of the bus, which had been conveniently parked in front of a sign reading, "Warning: Avalanche Danger," we were issued our snowshoes and set off on a hike up the side of a mountain, at an angle of what felt like approximately straight up.

After several minutes of huffing and puffing, we stopped in our tracks. A loud, deep rumbling sound filled the air. I turned, and instantly saw the source of the noise. At eye-level to where we were standing, an enormous cloud of snow thundered down the side of the neighboring mountain. We all paused for a moment to thank any and all deities that came to mind for not



putting us on the mountain directly opposite us, and continued our hike.

As we waddled single-file after Herr Baier like a flock of semi-frozen ducklings, it became clear that the depth of snow was highly unpredictable. In most places, the white fluff was at about knee-level, but one false step, and the person in front of you disappeared entirely.

Efforts to dig each other out often resulted in more people falling into the hole, and we quickly abandoned all hope of having a warm, dry ride back to Salzburg.

Just as we began to seriously ponder the

concept of, "What goes up, must come down", Herr Baier strode out to the edge of a small cliff and jumped off, sticking a perfect-10 gymnastics landing at the bottom. Then he waved, apparently expecting the rest of us to follow suit.

I watched as the first brave souls took the leap, each of them landing in a less than graceful butt-plant at the bottom, then warily inched my way to the edge. Twelve feet below, the others were moving on without me. My choices were: jump off small cliff or await uncertain helicopter rescue. Needless to say, I jumped.

If you can imagine flying through the air and landing on the softest pillow in the world with piles of snow shooting up the back of your shirt, you know exactly how I felt. It was exhilarating.

We all slipped, jumped, rolled, tripped, and belly-flopped our way down to the bus, then sat in wet pants, talked, laughed, and gazed out at gorgeous scenery for the two-hour ride back to Unipark.

If you ask me, that's what the year in Salzburg is all about: a leap into the unknown, an unexpected and exhilarating landing far outside your comfort zone, and a built-in family of students and faculty to help you safely navigate your way through the ups and downs, every step of the way.

Laura Hoesman
Graduate student, 2012–14



Thanks to Alumni

...who have generously given to the Dzidra Shllaku Scholarship Fund. Former students of Professor Dzidra Shllaku started the fund in 1998 to help BGSU undergraduates in any major take part in the AYA Austria program. Their donations and the many contributions of other program alumni have increased the fund. It was endowed in 2003. Current donations are increasing the endowed fund. Donors may wish to designate their gifts as “spendable”—in other words, available for spring 2014 awards.

Members of the Department of German, Russian & EAL contribute to the Shllaku fund. Like alumni, they realize challenges to affording study abroad, one of the most transformative educational experiences.

Dzidra Shllaku Fund contributors:

Eugene L. Aufderhaar
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You may contribute to the fund on the BGSU website at givetobgsu.com

Thanks to Friends

...who have generously supported the Foell International Travel Award (for the AYA Austria program) Fund in Memory of Margaret Kaesmann Foell. The travel award is for students from any university and is based on academic merit.

2013–14 Scholarship Awards

Foell International Travel awards ranging from \$750 to \$1,000 were received by

Andrew Francis (Fall 2013)
 Eric Liddy (AY 2013–14)
 Paul Rowinsky (AY 2013–14)
 Emily Skorupski (Spring 2014)

Dzidra Shllaku Scholarship awards in the amount of \$1,000 were received by

Patrick Allen (AY 2013–14)
 Sara Othersen (AY 2013–14)
 Noel Welch (AY 2013–14)

Austria Programs Alumni Board Members

Board members continued to provide valuable advice to faculty program directors. Sincere thanks from students and faculty members to:

Eugene Aufderhaar (Salzburg 1981–82, 1984–85)
 Anna (Wein) Bradley (Salzburg 1998–99, 2001–02)
 Margy Gerber, professor emerita
 Steve Harris (Salzburg 1970)
 Galen Koepke (Salzburg 1971–72)
 Judi Lindsley Nath (Salzburg 1987–88)
 Brian Pavlac (Salzburg 1976–77, 1978–79)
 Vickie Teats Sherwood (Salzburg 1974)
 Larry Snavley (Salzburg 1967)