

American Hungarian **Educator**

NEWSLETTER
of the
**American
Hungarian
Educators
Association**

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Please visit the AHEA Web page at: <http://ahea.net/> and send any suggestions you have to the Executive Director at eniko.basa@verizon.net or 4515 Willard Ave., Apt. 2210, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Conference

The Association met in Szeged between June 3 and 5 to discuss the theme: Bridges Between Hungarians — Magyar-Magyar Kapcsolatok. This was our third meeting in Hungary, following the decision to hold a meeting there every fifth year, and the first one outside of Budapest. The local organizers made us welcome and provided good support. There was also more local interest and publicity than in Budapest, which argues for having future meetings outside Budapest as well. The Dept. of Philosophy of the University of Szeged, the local Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Hungary and East Central Europe International Studies Center of the University were local institutional hosts. Local organizers were **Kissné Novák Éva, Erzsébet Barát and György Endre Szőnyi**.

We had very good participation from Hungarians—both academics from Hungary itself and from the neighboring countries. The large number of presentations necessitated starting the conference on Thursday afternoon, with an Art Exhibit and the Science Panel before the film which traditionally opens our conferences. Judith Király Bognár presented her creative use of Hungarian folklore patterns in modern art; the book exhibition also opened at this time.

The science papers ranged from a freewheeling talk on paprika by **Mario Fenyő** to research on a Hungarian-American study of childhood depression by **Enikő Kiss, Ágnes Vetró** and **Mária Kovács**. **Zoltán Szabó** spoke on the MOET's role in magnified surgery education in Hungary. Addressing the theme of the conference, **Kissné Éva Kovács** explored the relationship of language and ethnic identity in her presentation “Nyelvében él a Nemzet.”

Inkubátor, a documentary film by **Réka Pigniczky** explored the theme of ethnic awareness through the Hungarian Scouting movement. It resonated with Hungarian-Americans while providing others a glimpse into the a multiethnic awareness which does not conflict with maintenance loyalties. The lively discussion which followed was proof of the relevance of the topics explored.

On Friday **Miklós Kontra** of the University of Szeged, the Keynote speaker, sketched language maintenance concerns and the role of language as both an identifier and a distancer in ethnic relations. The talk was particularly relevant since Miklós had spent several years in the US teaching Hungarian. Literature and History kicked off the sessions on Saturday. In the former session, **Adriana**

Varga examined Dezső Koszolányi in the translations of Thomas Kabdebo and Peter Zollman, pointing out the difficulty of steering between a close or more literal translation and a freer, poetic one. This is an ever-present problem which each translator has to solve in terms of the purpose of the work. Her presentation was particularly useful in pointing out that small languages need to be taken seriously in translation studies. **Zsuzsa Varga** gave tribute to Margit Kafka as a forerunner of the modern woman (new woman) who was sure of her own identity at a time when women were expected to be identified in terms of their male relatives. Her setting Kafka in the milieu of the time as well as modern scholarship was particularly useful. **John Cox** brought a regional perspective to the discourse in his talk on Danilo Kis, a writer in the former Yugoslavia whose Hungarian background influenced both his creative and his critical writings. **Clara Orban** addressed recent Hungarian cinema as attempts to find a sense of self. She argued that in the 1930's the films were escapist comedies; after the war, comedy was relegated to the margins but post 1990 films seek to find the self and often deal with encounters with "the other." The second session on Literature was impacted by the flood which ravaged Hungary in May: **Erzsébet Molnár** was unable to deliver her paper on Samuel Brassai's linguistic work. **Ágnes Huszár Várdy** spoke on Hungarian American literature and **Judit Dombi** addressed the intriguing subject of scholarly writings which transcend languages and cultures.

The History panels presented a wide variety of papers. The first session reached back to the 19th century. **Arthur Bártfay** pointed out the impact of Lajos Kossuth in the United States while **Kenneth Nyírády** examined the Hungarian patriot's reception in Washington,

D.C. **Béla Bodó** and **Éva Mathey** addressed early 20th century problems: Horthy's paramilitary groups and expectations towards the United States in rectifying the Trianon diktates. Section two History featured attempts at alternative policies after World War II. **Pál Lillei** highlighted a positive initiative in US and British participation in the fabled (and still continuing) Summer School at the U. of Debrecen which teaches Hungarian language and culture to foreigners, primarily those from Anglophone countries; **Virág Rab** presented Kálmán Kánya's vision of post war Europe while **Robert Barta** focused on the role of Emery Reeves in forming public opinion. **Katalin Kádár Lynn** gave insight into Tibor Eckardt, the controversial representative of the Hungarian government in its efforts to extricate the country from German influence. Opposed to Hitler, Eckhardt sought to represent an increasingly embattled Hungary in the US. The Bethlen government supported him, but he failed to achieve his goal in the United States of representing an independent Hungary.

In the panel on Economic History **István Petrovics** talked about the medieval towns of Hungary as economic and cultural centers—something the tour to Temesvár following the conference helped to highlight as the region was explored in terms of its mediaeval roots and later developments. **Susan Glanz** gave an interesting account of the ways in which Imre Széchenyi sought to influence Hungarians to learn from American free enterprise in the 1880's. A particularly interesting talk was given by **Jeffrey Pennington** on the railroad options between the Alföld (Hungarian Lowlands) and the Carpathian region. The plans of the 1830's, were disregarded in 1920 when all logical rail lines were negated in favor of political considerations. While internal development

continued for a while, the 1830's plan of Széchenyi and the post 1848 Vienna rather than Budapest-centered system already delayed some development. The coup de grace, however, was given by Trianon, which destroyed the Debrecen-Körösmező line—as it did many other viable rail and road lines in the Carpathian basin. **Péter Strausz** examined Pál Teleki social reforms prior to World War I.

The panel on Jewish Cultural Studies featured three papers: **Julia Bock** on Hungarian Jewish doctors' contributions to medicine in the 20th century, **Alice Freifeld's** examination of Hungarian identify the 50's and 60's and a documentary film by **Gábor Kálmán** on the rediscovery of Jewish heritage in Hungary, often by Christian persons or organizations.

Two panels addressed questions of the Carpathian basin. **Erzsébet Barát** reported on a study dealing with autochthonous vs. migrant use of the Hungarian language, an issue in an area which sees many immigrants from Serbia and Romania where Hungarian is a minority language but individuals' relations to the language are mixed. **András Ludányi** summarized American (and to some extent Hungarian) perspectives on the situation of Hungarian minorities in the neighboring states. A practical demonstration of village development was given by Wayne Kraft with the village of Kalotaszentkirály as the example. **Philip Bognár** addressed the question of Hungarian autonomy in Romania (Transylvania is still about 20% ethnically Hungarian and Hungarian speaking). **Barnabas Rácz** examined public opinion in terms of voting patterns in the past twenty years.

The Education panel also addressed questions of multiple identities in a

fragmented world. **Györgyi Fábian** examined the controversial interim year for foreign language study in Hungary. **Szilvia Mentsik** gave two sides of the language law in Austria. While ostensibly liberal, it does not allow for instruction in minority languages nor does it support such instruction. In spite of nominal EU support, it is the Hungarian parents who make the school possible. **Zsuzsa Libor** explored the realities of non-Hungarians at Hungarian universities and their study of the language. Besides the obvious Erasmus students, sometimes even Hungarians prefer to take their courses in English, seeing this as a path to job opportunities. It was perceived that the English language courses would lead to more job opportunities, but this is not always the case, often due to lack of connections. **Marianne Nikolov** gave an overview and assessment of the one-year intensive language program at age 15, launched in Hungary in 2004/05.

[Hungarian] Americana was discussed in two sessions with papers addressing questions of American-Hungarian history and resources. **Tibor Glant** and **Balázs Venkovits** presented the views of Hungarian travels in 19th century America. **Csaba Lévy** and **Steven B. Várdy** addressed the issue from the American perspective: the former, the role of Ágoston Haraszty in the US; the latter the relations of Hungarian-Americans to the mother country. **Mónika Fodor** examined history in the formation of identity. **András Csillag** reported on the valuable resource for the study of Hungarian-Americans at the Somogyi Library, namely the Vasváry Collection, which houses not only the Rev. Vasváry's valuable collection and notes on many aspects of Hungarian-American life but also an ongoing collection of publications in the US by and about Hungarians. In conjunction with the conference, the

Library hosted an exhibition of items from the collections. **Szilárd Szentgyörgyi** spoke on a new co-operative initiative between Nazareth College in Rochester, NY and the University of Pannonia leading to a degree in American Studies. This is a model which might be replicated with benefits to both partners, since the courses in Hungary count towards credit at the home institution. **Peter Bergman** examined several American novels dealing with the so-called “Displaced Persons” after WWII. It is unfortunate that the speaker was unaware that, in general, DP did not refer to Jewish concentration camp survivors (though applied to them briefly in 1944-45), but to the refugees from Eastern Europe who flooded Germany and Austria and were accepted as immigrants to Australia and New Zealand, Latin America and later the US and Canada. This was the path for most post World War II immigrants to the countries of the new world.

Philip Bognár discussed Hungarian efforts at autonomy in Romania; **Irén Lám Hantz** presented the case of Torockó as a model for joining tourism with the protection of cultural heritage. Her innovative travel guide, Rocky Road, seeks to present the charms of this area through history, folklore and geography. **Beth Long** used state of the art genealogy software to connect families from the Bukovina to their Canadian cousins. The research has implications not only for genealogical research but also to answer questions on migration, ethnicity, assimilation, and similar puzzles. Another approach to the way in which scholarship can “reconstruct” the unity of the Hungarian ethnic group was via the Union Catalog of Károly Szász in his Old Hungarian Library as presented by **James Niessen**. **Nora Deák** and **Ilona Kovács** showed the way in which Fulbright support has made Hungarian archival resources available to the wider

research community by allowing for the dissemination of cataloging data of the collections of the Hungarian Heritage Center. **Lilla Szabó** ventured into the area of arts in pointing out the important contribution of József Domján and other graphic artists to American culture. He left Hungary in 1956 as a protest to the artistic restraints imposed by the regime.

Always an important component of the conference, sessions on Music and Dance were organized by **Judith Olson** whose paper demonstrated the way in which Hungarian-Americans connect to their past through folk music and dance. A demonstration and talk by **Katalin Juhász** of songs of Hungarian immigrants showed poignantly the role of folk traditions. **Katalin Kovalcsik** and **László Felföldi** gave “background” emphasis to these presentations by showing the way in which urban popular culture can influence village music and the role of dance as an expression of cultural awareness respectively. **Irén Kertész Wilkinson** focused on the role of dance in the creation of Roma identity and Zina Bozzay pointed out that variation and individuality are very much a part of folk traditions. **Julia Quick** and **Jonathan Cain** addressed Hungarian contributions to classical music.

Two special sessions on “Cultural Status of Hungarian Minorities in Neighboring Countries” allowed distinguished scholars from Hungary’s neighboring countries with large minorities to address current political and cultural issues. Organized by Katalin Vörös, who also ensured that the expenses of the participants were underwritten by generous donors in the San Francisco Bay area, the representatives spoke to packed rooms, attracting an audience from the city as well. Details, including abstracts and in some

cases the presentations themselves, are available on the home page: <http://ahea.net/conferences/2010/invited-papers> Speakers were: **Szilvia Szoták** (Burgenland); **Anna Kolláth** (Slovenia); **József Csörgits** (Croatia); **Ferenc Zsoldos** (Serbia); **Barna Bodó** (Romania); **György Dupka** (Ukraine); **Péter Huncik** (Slovakia).

As has become traditional, the conference was closed with a banquet. Dezső Csejtei of the U. of Szeged gave the address, "Encounter with the Other," appropriate to the cross-cultural theme of the conference.

A musical interlude sponsored by the American Hungarian Folklore Centrum gave participants chance to listen to lively Hungarian music and take a turn around the dance floor.

An excursion to Temesvár (now Timisoara, Romania) the next day led by urban historian István Petrovics capped the multi cultural theme. Stops in Nagyszentmiklós for Bartók memorabilia and at the church at Csanád, one of the first bishoprics in Hungary (unfortunately, nothing is left of the medieval church except the crypt where St. Gellért was supposedly buried), enhanced the tour of the Hunyadi castle, the city, and the church of Rev. Tókécs in the city itself.



Business Meeting June 5, 2010

At the business meeting of the American Hungarian Educators Association, the following decisions were taken:

- The dues were raised to \$25.00 for individuals, \$40.00 for couples and \$10.00 for students. The dues have been constant for many years; it was decided that the increase would give the Association more flexibility. The fiscal year of the Association is from January to December because we file our IRS forms according to this schedule. Thus the membership year is also the calendar year.

An earlier decision, that all who present papers or chair sessions at the conferences have to join the AHEA, was reconfirmed.

There will be a mechanism set up for members in Hungary and the neighboring countries to pay dues in Forints or Euros; information is available on the web site and see below.

- The Scholarship Fund continues to provide about \$1,000 annually to students in Transylvania. Beginning in 2010, it will be administered by the Romániai Magyar Pedagógusok Szövetsége (Hungarian Teachers Association of Romania). Our contribution will support the Kós Károly prize for those students who have gained distinction in Hungarian studies, and the Bolyai prize for students who achieved distinction in mathematics. These prizes are open to all Hungarian high school students in Transylvania and can be used toward their university education.*

- It was decided that communications will be sent out only in electronic format. Email will become the only form of communication and members are encouraged to check the home page for information as well. This Newsletter will be posted to the web and not sent out in printed format.

- In 2011 the Conference will be held in Cleveland, Ohio at John Carroll University. The call for papers and other information is available on the home page, with updates providing further details.

- Pictures of this year's conference in Szeged are available on the home page: <http://ahea.net/photo-album>, also media reviews at <http://ahea.net/conferences/2010/media-reviews>.

- The E-Journal of the AHEA is accepting submissions from members. This is a juried journal appearing annually. Papers presented at the conferences are invited, but they have to be submitted in a scholarly format to be considered. Details are available on the web page <http://ahea.net/e-journal> or via a link from the AHEA home page.

- Ken Nyírády reminded conferees that the [AAASS](#) holds its meetings in November and welcomes presentations on Hungarian and Eastern European topics.

Treasurer's report:

Checking Account

Beginning balance, January 1, 2009	\$1,695.82
Income	<u>+10,625.33</u>
Total	\$12,321.15
Expenses	<u>-10,478.03</u>
Ending balance December 31, 2009	\$ 1,843.12

Income:

Dues and conference payments	\$7545.00
Donations to the Conference	3080.00
Interest	<u>.33</u>
Total	\$10,625.33

Expenses/Debits:

Internet and web page	\$1345.26
Newsletter printing and postage	249.70
Conference	6,883.07
To Savings (Scholarship)	<u>2,000.00</u>
Total	\$10,478.03

We also have \$26,221.83 in a Money Market Account for the Scholarship Fund. Until CD rates rise, I think it best not to tie this fund up long-term with almost no interest. The Money market pays a little better and is flexible.

Enikő M. Basa,
Executive Director, Treasurer

* We were notified in October of the distribution of the \$1,000.00 in the Bolyai Prizes:

IX. grade: Sándor Kajántó, Áron Elméleti Líceum, Székelyudvarhely

X. grade: Zombor-Attila Komán Áprily Lajos Líceum, Brassó

XI. grade: László Bondici, Kölcsey Ferenc Nemzeti Kollégium, Szatmárnémeti

XII. grade: Balázs Sebestyén, Báthory István Elméleti Líceum, Székelyudvarhely

The awards were based on points accumulated over the year at various country-wide and Carpathian basin contests. A committee headed by Prof. András Szilágyi of the Babes-Bolyai University and composed of mathematics teachers Judith Szilágyi (Báthory Líceum), Hajnalka Csapó (Márton Áron Gimnázium, Csíkszereda), and Géza Dávid (Tamási Líceum). The prize was divided equally, each student receiving \$250.00. Next year individual competitions will be held, although again a committee of distinguished educators will evaluate the applications.



Educational Opportunities

Programs and Courses:

Institute of Hungarian Studies at Rutgers University: James P. (Jim) Niessen offers programs in Hungarian Studies to teachers of Hungarian, supports digital projects for library and archival materials, and discussions are in the works for cooperation with Fulbright scholars going to Hungary. Please consult the following web site for further information:

<http://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu>.

University of Pittsburgh Summer Language Institute offers intensive language programs. For information on upcoming programs contact Christine Metil, Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Pittsburgh, 1417 Cathedral of Learning, Pittsburgh, PA 15260; phone: 412 642 5906 or email: slavic@pitt.edu.

Magyar Nyelvi Szolgáltató Iroda (Hungarian Linguistic Service Office) seems to be a commercial service for language related problems and instruction. As part of the latter we are making their information available: Orsolya Tóth, toth.orsolya@e-nyelv.hu. Web: www.manyszi.hu.

Balassi Intézet: in addition to the news sent out to members, we want to call attention to an opportunity for persons 18 years or older, of Hungarian origin, who wish to study the language and history of their ancestors. Grants for all or part of the cost are available. See www.balassi-intezet.hu or erna.leichtman@bbi.hu. The Institute is has also issued a collection of teaching aids at the following address: eMagyarul and language dictionary: www.e-magyarul.hu.

Corvinus University of Budapest and University College, London: double degree in International Economy and Society. For more information: www.imess.eu.



Books, etc.

Unknown Places; poems by Péter Kántor, translated from the Hungarian by Michael Blumenthal. New York: Pleasure Boat Studio, 2010. (ISBN: 978-1-929355-64-8). Available from pleasureboatstudio.com. It is always good to see Hungarian poems in an enjoyable translation.

Széchenyi Kinga. *Megbélyegzettek – az 1951-es kitelepítések tragédiája*. Budapest: Kráter Könyvesház. (ISBN: 978-963-9735-56-9). 3500 Ft., 616 pages. Available from krater@krater.hu. Document collection about a period of history which has been mostly neglected, the internal exile of many Hungarian in the worst years of the Rákosi era.

Lambert-Gócs, Miles. *Tokaji Wine: Fame, Fate, Tradition*. \$27.95, hardcover, 269 pages, 3 maps (ISBN: 978-1-934259-49-8). It is available from major book stores and online. A four-part encyclopedic work offers a treasure-trove of information in easily digested, encyclopedic style A-Z entries.

“Föl, Föl Magyarok...” – A Dicsőséges Tavaszi Hadjárat is a film commemorating the 1848-1849 War of Independence through poems, music and authentically reconstructed scenes. 3000 Ft. www.bestofhungary.hu and info@bestofhungary.hu.

Károly Nagy and Peter Pastor ed. ***The Legacy of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, With Significant Documents***. New Brunswick, NJ: Magyar Öregdiák Szövetség – Bessenyei György Kör, 2010. (ISBN: 0-910539-07-3 and 9638711418). \$15.00, 104 pages. Order from P. O. Box 174, New Brunswick, NJ 08903 USA. 2nd ed. of the Association’s oral history book on the 1956 Hungarian Revolution’s legacy, supplemented with a collection of the Revolution’s most significant documents and photographs. The publication of these two books under one cover commemorates the 54th anniversary of the Revolution and the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Hungarian Alumni Association. The writers of the five oral history essays are members of the Association, and have participated in the Revolution: Andrew P. Fodor, János Horváth, Béla K. Király, Károly Nagy, László Papp.

PLEASE NOTE: You are invited to write a brief review of any of these works or of other works on aspects of Hungarian culture for **AHEA: An E-Journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association**. Check the website for details.



News

The Institute of Hungarian Studies at Rutgers University

James P. Niessen, interim director brings a interest and background in Hungarian studies and has exiting plans for the future even in this era of strained finances:

After more than two years’ research in Hungary and Romania, I completed my Ph.D. dissertation at Indiana University under the direction of Denis Sinor and György Ránki in 1989. Entitled *Battling Bishops: Religion and Politics in Transylvania on the Eve of the Ausgleich*, it is a study of clerical involvement in provincial politics during the period 1860-65 with an emphasis on the churches whose clergy enjoyed the greatest prerogatives in their communities, the Catholics of the Roman and Byzantine rites and the Orthodox.

I joined the Library Faculty at Rutgers in 2001 and received tenure in 2007. I am responsible in the Rutgers University Libraries for collection development in, and liaison with, four humanities programs: European history, German and Slavic languages, Medieval Studies, and Jewish Studies. The additional responsibility of administering the Institute hence complements my library work as well as my scholarly background.

The Institute of Hungarian Studies (IHS) falls under the administrative umbrella of the Office of International Programs (OIP) and its Dean, Professor Joanna Regulaska, in the School of Arts and Sciences or SAS. The SAS has more than 800 faculty, 40 academic departments, 50 interdisciplinary centers, and 40 study abroad programs.

The IHS is one of the smallest international programs in terms of budget and associated course offerings. Regrettably, Hungarian language courses are at present no longer being offered at Rutgers. In the face of mandatory budget cuts in the OIP during a tough budget year and very small enrollment in Hungarian classes, it proved impossible to justify the 50% Rutgers contribution to the instructor's salary even though the Hungarian government was providing the other half. But we still have a budget that can support guest lectures, workshops, or other initiatives.

Even more important, the IHS can benefit from the current strong support for international programs as reflected in the recent dramatic expansion of study abroad programs (Rutgers students can study in Hungary thru an affiliated program of the University of California) and faculty hires in selected fields. It is also a benefit for the IHS that Professor Regulska is a scholar of East Central Europe herself, in geography and women's studies, originally from Poland, and that one of the larger international programs, the Center for European Studies is directed by Professor Dan Kelemen, who happens to be a Hungarian though his field of specialization is elsewhere. Therefore I'm confident that the existence of the IHS is not threatened and that it has a strong interest in collaboration with Professors Regulska and Kelemen in regional projects. The best recent example of this was the exciting and well-attended fall symposium at Rutgers on the 20th anniversary of the events of 1989 in East Central Europe.

I stepped into this interim position at the beginning of the new year. There are three areas of immediate focus. We hope to organize a half-day workshop for teachers of Hungarian on the Rutgers campus that will be useful to these teachers and present opportunities for building networks for further collaboration. Within the Rutgers University Libraries, there is support for possible digital projects in Hungarian Studies that would facilitate open access to suitable and copyright-free resources thru the aforementioned RUcore, <http://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/>. Finally, we are in discussion with the Fulbright Commission about hosting a preparatory seminar for Fulbrighters going to Hungary. Our relationship with the Fulbright Commission in Hungary is solid, and we are looking forward to another teaching appointment at Rutgers for Professor Elemér Boreczky in Spring 2011.

James P. (Jim) Niessen, World History Librarian, Interim Director, Institute of Hungarian Studies
Rutgers University / Alexander Library / 169 College Ave. / New Brunswick, NJ 08901
tel.: 732-932-7129x136, fax: 732-932-1101, email: niessen@rci.rutgers.edu.

Common Sense Society is a group of students and young professionals who wish to promote the ideas of "responsible liberty, active civic engagement and constant intellectual development."
Contact information: www.CommonSenseBudapest.com.

University-Industry Collaboration in Hungary

A study released today describes university-industry relations in R&D and technology transfer in Hungary, a country typically omitted in studies of these current topics.

The study, "University-Industry Collaboration in Hungary: Cooperation Research Centers and Regional Knowledge Centers," is written by Dr. Peter Mogyorosi and Mr. Kálmán Bucsay, President and Director of Operations respectively of Laser Consultants, Ltd., perhaps the most successful technology transfer consulting firm in Central and Eastern Europe.

Because of its size and small industrial base, Hungary has relied upon subsidies from the Hungarian Government and the European Union to create and support its collaborations. The country has used these funds creatively.

Name: _____

Address: give preferred mailing address)

Business phone: _____ **Home phone:** _____

email: _____

Institutional affiliation: _____

Other address (optional) _____

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***Dues Schedule: Regular members: \$25.00 Couples/Joint members: \$40.00
Students/Retired: \$10.00***