
AHEA Newsletter: June-July 2026

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June-July 2026 Newsletter

President's Corner

Dear Friends

As the academic year is winding down, we are all getting ready for a well-deserved summer holiday. I would like to thank everyone for their commitment and dedication to AHEA, and the support we enjoy from our members.

We are looking forward to our next annual conference at Indiana University, Bloomington, the stronghold of Hungarian studies in the United States. The conference will take place on April 22-24, 2026. Please follow our website for the conference theme and the call for papers before early September.

I wish you all a wonderful break and a happy, sunny summer.

With the best wishes
Zsuzsa

Report on the 2026 Annual Conference

By Nóra Deák

Hungarian Academy of Sciences and AHEA Secretary



Group picture of the conference participants in the main hall of Mather Mansion, Cleveland State University.

Photo credit: Zsolt Molnár / Bocskai Rádió

This year's AHEA conference was in many aspects a special one. We celebrated another round anniversary, as this was our 50th conference, returning to our founding location, Cleveland, OH. It was at the 1974 Hungarian Congress, organized by the Magyar Társaság, that the idea for AHEA was conceived. The second special occasion was that we could once again thank our two founding members: Enikő Basa Molnár, who, together with her husband, Péter Basa, was the Association's mastermind and a participant in every conference since then; as well as Márta Pereszlényi-Pinter, who (according to her) only missed last year's conference in Pécs. This year's Péter Basa Award, established in 2009, awarded every two years by the AHEA Board of Directors, was presented to Katalin Kádár-Lynn in recognition of her decades of committed service in support of the organization's mission.

This year's theme was "250 Years of Hungarian Contributions to the United States of America," in honor of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, essentially the USA's birthday. Almost a hundred people registered for the event in advance and onsite. During the breaks and in between sessions, we were able to meet and chat with representatives of the local Hungarian community, including such personalities as Elizabeth Papp-Taylor, president of the [Cleveland Hungarian Development Panel](#), János Nádas and Gabriella Nádas, whom everyone knows as Kuni, representing the [Magyar Társaság](#), and János Szigeti, director of the [Cleveland Hungarian Museum](#). The Program Committee received 56 abstracts, including two book presentations, one roundtable discussion, and four workshops. Thirty-one presenters came from the USA and 25 from Europe. Exactly while the conference was set to take place, the Lufthansa airline staff went on strike for several days, which raised considerable alarm. A few participants could arrive only at the last minute, and four speakers were unable to come at all, owing to travel disruptions. In two cases—close exceptions, given the extraordinary circumstances—we successfully played pre-recorded video presentations, although the speakers were not able to take any questions.

In accordance with tradition, this year's program began with a film screening on Thursday evening: the audience viewed *Hogyan tudnék élni nélküled?*, the 2024 Hungarian musical romantic comedy, and after the movie there was an informal conversation about how the film depicted the 1990s, about family relationships, and about the acting.

On Friday morning, Gabriella Paár-Jákli, Associate Professor of Political Science at Cleveland State University, delivered the keynote address. After providing a theoretical background of science diplomacy, she presented on contribution of Hungarian-born scientists, artists, and athletes to the cultural and intellectual life of the United States.

This year's program was also quite substantial: the 56 presentations took place in two parallel sessions and in varying formats. Beyond the customary 20-minute lectures, there were panel discussions, practical workshops, and book presentations. The most anticipated session of the conference was Friday afternoon's set of three presentations on the work of the 2025 Laureate of the Nobel Prize in Literature, László Krasznahorkai, which did not disappoint. During another session, the panel chair remarked that it was the first time she had taken part in a conference where the audience sang a canon by Haydn in solmization. (Hungarians will know the work as *Erdő mélyén, esti csendben.*)

Another traditional element of the conference was the annual general meeting on Saturday morning, to which every member was invited. The Board officers gave their reports on the past year's work and on AHEA's financial condition. [*Editor's note: it is very sound!*] As in the past, we gave remembrance to those members who had passed away since the previous year's meeting: István Kun-Szabó, who had attended several AHEA conferences and Péter Hargitai, who was a regular conference presenter and who had even prepared a lecture on Krasznahorkai for this year. Details on the AHEA capital campaign were made known, and the location of next year's conference was unveiled: in April 2027, Indiana University in Bloomington, IN. Representing the [Department of Central Eurasian Studies \(CEUS\)](#), the future organizer and host, were Öner Özçelik, department chair, and Valéria Varga, Senior Lecturer of Hungarian language.

The professional programs, the network-building conversations during the coffee and lunch breaks, the book exhibition, and the USA250 traveling roll-up display were complemented by cultural programs showing off the iconic scenes of the Cleveland Hungarian community. On Friday evening, the Cleveland Hungarian Museum held a reception supported by the [Fulbright Hungary Committee](#), which screened an 11-minute video, "[50 Fulbrighters, 250 Years](#)," in which fifty Hungarian and American Fulbright Fellows recited the abridged text of the Declaration of Independence in honor of America's birthday. Present at the reception were former Fellows—ten Hungarians and eight Americans—and they, along with the Fulbright Hungary Committee, posed for an impressive group photo in the museum's exhibition hall.

Returning to the Hungarian connections, at Saturday evening's closing banquet, the musicians of the local [Harmonia](#) ensemble performed live music and dance numbers. On Sunday, expert and local patriot Endre Szentkirályi led a voluntary excursion for those interested in the monuments of Hungarian Cleveland.

Stops on the sightseeing tour included: the bust of Cardinal József Mindszenty and the 56er memorial on Mindszenty Plaza; the statues and inscriptions of the [Hungarian Cultural Garden](#); the ironwork Szekély Gate made in the workshop of Hungarian-born Martin Rose; the statue of Kossuth, dedicated in 1902; the Saint Elizabeth sanctuary (formerly the Árpád-házi Saint Elizabeth Church); as well as a concluding stop at Saint Emeric Church and Scout House. Thanks to the excellent local guidance, the participants, packed into an American school bus, were enriched by much interesting and exciting knowledge.

Thanks are owed to the local organizing committee—Klára Papp (committee chair), Krisztina Fehér, Katalin Vörös, Endre Szentkirályi, Emily S. Rauschert must by all means be mentioned by name—and the volunteers for their superb organization, the creative use of locations and parking, and the good atmosphere.

Continuing a tradition begun in 2024, the conference attendees gathered for a group photo. This time, the number of participants was so large that not everyone could fit in the frame.

See you in Bloomington in 2027!



**Fulbright Hungary representatives pose with Fellows past and present at the
Cleveland Hungarian Museum**

Photo credit: Zsolt Molnár / Bocskai Rádió



At the Statue of Lajos Kossuth

Photo credit: Klára Papp and Anna Fenyvesi

The Newsletter is Going on Summer Break!

Our newsletter will be taking a summer pause in July and August. We'll resume in September with new Spotlights, conference info, President's Corners, and other exciting updates. Until then, *jó nyaralást!*



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