

JUNE 2011

  
American Women's Club  
of the Taunus e.V.  
Serving the Frankfurt Area  
International Community

VOLUME 17 | NUMBER 5

# ZUSAMMEN

NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUB OF THE TAUNUS  
[www.awctausus.org](http://www.awctausus.org)

Hessentag comes to  
Oberursel 10-19 June  
See pages 8 & 15



Charity Nominations  
due in August -- see  
page 4

Join the Fall Market  
Committee -- see  
page 11

Special,  
In This Issue:

# Relocation

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The American Women's Club of the Taunus e.V. was founded in February 1971. The club is a non-political, non-denominational organization, which promotes the public good (especially education and training through the support of schools, higher educational institutions and projects as well as the giving of scholarships to persons in addition to supporting social, cultural and medical institutions and projects) nationally and internationally. In addition to this objective, the AWCT intends to advance international understanding, advance cultural exchanges among Americans and other nationalities, assist in achieving a better understanding of Germany and inform members about issues of interest to Americans. If you would like to join the AWCT, call the office (06171-580835) and/or check out the website at: [www.awctaunus.org](http://www.awctaunus.org).



## **CHANGE OF VENUE FOR THE JUNE ALL-CLUB COFFEE**

Since the AWCT Office is closed from 8-17 June, the All-Club Coffee scheduled for **Thursday, 16 June, from 10am to noon**, will not be held at the Clubhouse, but at the:

### **Historisches Hauptwache Cafe**

**An der Hauptwache 15**

**60313 Frankfurt**

069-21998627

*(directly above Hauptwache U-Bahn station)*

**RSVP** to Stella at the office **by 7 June:**

06171-580835 or [awcctaunus@hotmail.com](mailto:awcctaunus@hotmail.com)

***Cover photo by Alexandra Struck***

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# GETTING IN TOUCH WITH GERMANY: *EIN SPAZIERGANG* by Dr. Ingeborg Cleve

So, there you are, all set up: the movers did their job; the relocating agency eased your way to housing, schooling and clubbing; you have been briefed on how to do business in Germany and learned some elementary phrases in German. You are well prepared to get along for the next few years to come, as long as you stay within the social limits of the easy-going transnational community of the Rhine-Main area. But you may want to leave these limits to touch base where you are: a peculiar area with a foreign language in the center of Europe.

Be aware: what happens beyond will challenge your conceptual framework. Ensuing irritations have resulted in shelves full of books on 'how to survive in Germany'. Laughing away uneasiness certainly helps to confirm established concepts of awareness and intercultural training while musing about 'those strange German ways'. I want to encourage you to accept the conceptual rifts you may encounter in your daily life. Let them come to mind instead of laughing them away, for instance when trying to understand the proper use (which really is not clear at all) of *Sie* and *Du*, names and titles; or when wondering about the almost seamless overall design of the city and landscape that is inviting exploration, in which carefully restored ancient buildings, some of them very old indeed, play such a prominent role far exceeding their potential use as sight-seeing landmarks and in which the wilderness has been reduced to an absolute minimum. You may also observe the way people tend to the public sphere by fitting this design and its historical frame to their own use.

I propose that you try out the German habit of *Spaziergehen* which may be defined as 'a walk with no particular purpose except to distract'. With occasional exceptions, it is safe even after sunset. Why this is so, is also a part of German history, as is the history of *Spaziergehen* itself, which started in Germany around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. A *Spaziergang* in a city, town or the equally well-designed and accessible countryside will show that Germany as a country is made up

of so many different towns, regions and historical monuments, with a peculiar spatial order and a timeline resulting from a confluence of histories and sometimes conflicting collective memories; not just one linear development. People here are, to a degree, not only defined by their jobs and interests, but also by the family histories attached to them. The proper use of *Sie* and *Du* may refer to those histories: an absorbing status game which becomes difficult to play if one is moving away from one's proper place. Germans like to travel, but in general do not move much from one region to another.

This said, a conflict with the conceptual framework of your own family's history may result: why, then, did such a substantial number of German sedentaries migrate to the United States in the course of the past couple of centuries? If your family memory or family name indicate a German background, this may be a strong enough motivation to try not only to identify some common grounds with one or several of these particular spaces and their histories and memories, but also to find the reasons why your predecessors walked away. The emergence of the seamless design of space and the monumentalization of ancient buildings may have, in the past, instigated social forces of exclusion and repulsion. How to define the beginnings of recent times when such open sites, especially those in the Rhine-Main region, have become beautiful and enjoyable?

Nowadays, *Willkommen in Hessen, Deutschland* is an open invitation to walk around. Besides the great cities of Frankfurt, Wiesbaden, and Mainz and a host of smaller towns, I recommend the *Garten RheinMain* website which presents an abundance of public gardens in the Rhine-Main area, see [krfrm.de/c/grm/](http://krfrm.de/c/grm/). Any one of the parks and gardens listed there may be a good starting point for a *Spaziergang* into the many facets of German identity.

*Ingeborg earned her PhD in history and culture at the Eberhard-Karls-Universität in Tübingen.*

***If you have just moved here, it won't be long before you get the urge to go out and discover. A Spaziergang can give you a deeper understanding of the history and culture of the region in which you are living.***



## Need to move? Let's get the job done!

We can assist you in every step of your move locally, nationwide, across Europe or overseas. Need storage? We have our own warehouse. Need a painting job or house-cleaning? We offer lifestyle service. Call us for moving advice and a free survey at your residence **plus** some extra ideas for enjoying the Frankfurt RheinMain region.

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