**September 2021 Newsletter - HK Seattle**

Dear Friends of Austria!

 Fall is here! The days are getting shorter and temperatures cooler, but we are rewarded by the beautiful colors Mother Nature is displaying for us, especially stunning while on a “Herbstwanderung” (hike in autumn). What’s about a hike in the Alps, up to an original Almhütte? E.g. the Almhütte im Dorfertal near the Grossglockner? And then being rewarded there with a refreshing drink  and hardy food  ?  Maybe we can join an “Almabtrieb”, where the cows make their descent from the higher elevations when the temperatures drop. This very old tradition is celebrated with music and dance, the new wine (Heuriger) and delicious food!

 **TRAVEL TO/FROM Austria:**

**Travel to Austria:**

**Effective with September 15**: the United States got removed from Austria’s list of countries with low epidemiological risk. **FULLY VACCINATED persons** and persons who recently recovered from COVID-19 **arriving from the U.S. will continue to be allowed to enter Austria without being subject to mandatory quarantine**regardless of their travel purpose. Proof of vaccination/recovery must be presented upon entry. No pre-travel-registration is necessary.

**UNVACCINATED persons** arriving from the U.S. will continue to be allowed to enter Austria but **MUST** [pre-register](https://entry.ptc.gv.at/en.html), present a **negative COVID-19 test**upon arrival and subsequently **observe 10 days of mandatory quarantine**. As the restrictions change frequently, please check the latest updates for traveling to and from Austria at the website of the Austrian Consulate General in Los Angeles:<https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/austrian-consulate-general-los-angeles/travels-to-austria/coronavirus-covid-19-and-travel-information/>

For the Covid related situation within Austria: <https://www.austria.info/en/service-and-facts/coronavirus-information>

In Vienna: Test validity got reduced to 24h (antigen) or 48h (PCR Test). Plenty of test options are available throughout the city and country.

**Travel to USA**:

**NEW!!!!!:** Starting with **November, the travel ban for travelers coming from Europe will get lifted**. The exact date is not announced yet. Then fully vaccinated travelers can travel to the USA, providing in addition to the proof of vaccination a negative Covid test within 3 days before coming to the USA. US Citizens can always return to the USA, but any foreign nationals (including green card holders) must show proof of vaccination in order to fly into the US. US citizens must also provide negative test taken within one day of their return flight to the US and then test again after they land.

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**NEWS FROM AND ABOUT AUSTRIA**

** September 3:** Two Austrian Universities have been placed in the Top 200 of The Times Higher Education ranking for the first time! The University of Vienna and the Medical University of Graz. <https://science.apa.at/power-search/11639213993058651018>

** September 15:** Because of an alarming increase of Covid cases and hospitalisations, Vienna is now again enhancing tougher Corona restrictions: masks requirement in all public spaces, shops and indoor spaces for over 25 people. Continuation of required proof of vaccination or negative test (not older than 48h) for any kind of indoor gatherings (e.g restaurant, hair salon). Multiple testing per week required for all students and educational staff. At start of school 3 weeks of intensive testing of all students and teachers/staff (3x/week) were performed. If a child tests positiv, all children who were in a radius of 2m have to go into quarantaine at home and can return to school earliest after 5 days (after negative test).

 **September 21:** **Austria’s Minister for Sustainability and Environment (Umwelt),** **Leonore Gwessler**, met with her American colleague **Secretary of Energy Granholm** in Vienna. They discussed the big tasks, which come with the changing climate and the energy system of the future. Both confirmed the good and close cooperation between our two countries.

** September 21**: UN **International Day of Peace**: around the world this day is honored with setting aside time to reflect in silence on a global vision of peace. In past years the International Peace Run Team organized a global Peace Run on a multi country scale, where teams in Austria as well here in Seattle participated. The Organizers of the Colors of Peace in Seattle are hoping to resume the event in person next year. <https://www.peacerun.org/us/>

 **September 23:** **Austria’s President Alexander Van der Bellen** attended the 76th UN General Assembly along with Chancellor Kurz and Foreign Minister Schallenberg. President VanderBellen stressed the importance of a common fight against climate change, “as our planet is in a state of emergency. We need to live up to our responsibilities. Every nation has to do its share. There is no more time to lose.” https://twitter.com/i/status/1441160449282613252

** September 26: Austrian-American Day:** every year on this day we celebrate the strong relationship between Austria and the United States of America. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1838. On September 26, 1945, a conference of political representatives of all Austrian federal provinces took place in Vienna. This paved the way for the Austrian Federal Government, which was formed at the end of World War II, and up until then, only recognized by the Soviet Union, to be also recognized by the United States and the other Western Allies. On September 26, 1997, former President Clinton officially proclaimed the “Austrian-American Day” and both Houses of Congress passed respective Resolutions. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/proclamation-7027-austrian-american-day-1997> . The Austrian-American Day has been celebrated ever since. This day, which underlines the intense links and great bonds of friendship between the United States and Austria, should continue to be remembered and also be celebrated by future generations.

 The famous **Vienna Boys’ Choir** must cancel again all overseas events for the 2021/2022 season because of the increasing corona incidence and the lack of vaccinations for children under 12 years old. An increased number of events within Austria, other innovative venues, and federal financial assistance should help to sustain this traditional institution for another year of limited possibilities.

 New Image Video about Vienna: The "**Vienna – A luxurious journey**" provides a special insight into the city’s opulent soul and reveals some of the most luxurious sides to the capital. Straight from the Freudian playbook, the video draws on a dreamlike interplay of elegance, materiality and sensuality to encourage people to visit Vienna. <https://b2b.wien.info/en/press-media-services/pressservice/new-image-video-vienna-a-luxurious-journey--410356>

 According to new data on foreign direct investments (FDI) in the United States recently released by the U.S. Department of Commerce, **Austria takes second place** in the ranking of countries with the **fastest-growing FDI in the U.S. Between 2015 and 2020**, direct investments from Austria increased by 40.1%. The total FDI from Austria in the U.S. is estimated at USD 17.184 billion in 2020. FDI from Austria is currently sustaining 33,500 jobs in the United States.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

 **Call from FEMA**: **Be READY - Be PREPARED – Stay INFORMED**: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), and/or download the FEMA app on your smartphone.

Disaster preparedness starts today! WA, AK, OR, ID belong to FEMA Region 10, MT: FEMA Region 8. Region 10 FEMA HQ is located in Bothell, WA. The main disaster risks stem from the 2 major fault lines: Cascadia Subduction Zone and Alaska-Aleutian Megathrust. Our region is subject to earthquakes, wildfires, tsunamis, severe storms, floods, and landslides. There were about 250 Disaster declaration in Region 10 since 2000. For questions, please contact Region 10 relations specialist Brett Holt: Brett.Holt@fema.dhs.gov

 **ABC German School in Bellevue**: offers afterschool German Classes for school age children and adults: Mo – Th; German classes for adults, Level 1 and Level 3 in the evening, online. For more information: contact Principal Nadja Helmer-Penry; nadja@abcgermanschool.com

 Check out the regular **online film and music events** organized by the **Austrian Cultural Forum**: <https://acfdc.org/?mc_cid=487b48d54a&mc_eid=1321923619>

 Regular events are offered by the **Goethe Pop Up Seattle**, ranging from book club, Summer camps, movies, and literature presentations: <https://www.goethe.de/ins/us/en/sta/gps.html>

** Saturday, 11am – 3pm; Sept. 25 or Oct 2, 2021:** Covid-19 **Virtual Youth Summit** to Build a healthy tomorrow: Minecraft against COVID: One block at a time. For ages 12-19 years. For more information:

<https://www.ichs.com/news/youth-summit-2021?utm_source=Members&utm_campaign=429acedf38-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_07_29_03_49_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_7c526f90cf-429acedf38-105972009>

**October 14, 2021**: 2-4pm (UTC+2) **stayINFORMEDonline**

Virtual Kick-off event of the international alumni network of TU Graz. For more information: see attached flyer and international@alumni.tugraz.at

 **ICH BIN EXPAT Virtual Conference Nov. 3-6, 2021**: Moving to and Living in the US for the German Speaking community: <https://www.ichbinexpat.com/>

**Monthly Stammtisch – 1st Thursday of the month: Mark your calendar!!**

 Virtual **STAMMTISCH: October 7, 2021; 7pm**: Join the casual get-together with Friends of Austria, even when only via zoom. There is so much to talk and chat about! Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5845087371> . Questions: please contact Elana Sabajon: youcan@askelana.com or Jürgen Schatzer: [juergen.schatzer@gmail.com](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CEva%5CAppData%5CRoaming%5CMicrosoft%5CWord%5Cjuergen.schatzer%40gmail.com)

Please mark your calendar for the next upcoming Austria event: a **joint celebration of the Austrian – American Day/ Austrian National Holiday** on **Sunday, October 24, 2021, from 4-6pm**. It is our great honor that our new **Consul General, Dr. Michael Postl**, will be able to join in from Los Angeles and can so be introduced to the Austrian community here in the Pacific Northwest.

As part of the program, we will go on a virtual tour to the **9 State Capitals of Austria**. **Are you interested in presenting one of them**? The floor is yours!!! This would be wonderful! Only 5 min/city and we can provide photos and text if wanted. Please let me know!

This event will be held virtually via zoom. We hope that many of you can join in from wherever you are, enjoy the program and get to chat with other guests! Please see **attached invitation** for more information.

Here is the zoom link:<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87137814981?pwd=aGZrNHEwSVVyUjF5MnhOUzcycjZRdz09>

 With best wishes for a healthy and enjoyable fall

Mit herzlichen Grüβen

Eva Kammel

Honorary Consul of Austria in Seattle

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PS: attached: Invitation National Holiday event; flyer TU Graz alumni