

## **Music and Merriment**

### **An Evening with Steve Eulberg**

The JFK Verein presented the instrumentalist and singer-songwriter Steve Eulberg to a full house in the Paulus-Kirche Gemeindehaus on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. Eulberg gave a phenomenal performance of finger dexterity playing folk tunes on his Appalachian lap dulcimer as well as his larger hammer or ‘hackbrett’ dulcimer. Most of his songs were self-composed, ranging from a true-life experience of seeing an “Elk in the Meadow” to the biologically correct “I Am a Pond” on being a balanced ecosystem.

In addition to local Zehlendorfers enjoying a top-class ‘Sweetsong’ concert in their neighborhood, there were of course many teachers and parents from JFKS there, a couple of alumni and actually a couple of younger students as well. They also enjoyed singing along to Eulberg’s “I Fly Away” bluegrass tune.

According to Principal Frau Lennert, Eulberg has a surprising connection to JFKS that wasn’t known when he was first asked to perform here. The connection was initially made by alumni Susanne Goldschmidt-Ahlgrimm (left after 10<sup>th</sup> grade ca. 1970). Eulberg hails from Fort Collins, CO where Susanne’s daughter studies. When Eulberg told his acquaintances there of his tour plans he was told that he should greet our school from the many teachers who has taught at our school at some time. Plus Fort Collins was also a city for student exchange programs.

Eulberg is Germany with a group from Fort Collins on a study tour tracing the path of Martin Luther. The only earnings he made this evening were from the sale of CDs under his own label. His “Said Nothing” ballad was based on Niemöller’s poem “Sag Nichts” on Nazi persecution.

In addition to his renditions of Celtic, Bluegrass, blues, folk, and gospel music he gave informative talks on the tradition of the instruments he played and even built himself. The lap dulcimer – also called a hog fiddle – looked like a flattened, elongated mandolin. He played the hackbrett dulcimer with two sets of hammers at incredible speeds. We learned These instruments came to the U.S. by way of the Wolga-Deutsche and not, as may be presumed by some of the tunes, via the Scotch-Irish. There were quite a few students up on the stage after the concert to get a hands-on presentation of these instruments. Would a dulcimer or two perhaps make it into the music department’s instrument collection?

In closing Steve told the kids he had entertained with his music to “let that in your soul come soaring out.” A Kennedy-school “Ich bin ein Berliner” base cap was presented him.

This was one in a series of “Zehlendorfer Kammermusiken” that the Verein and Ms Karin Hunter produce throughout the year; a quarter of the proceeds goes to help the music department. The next concert, which sounds interesting, is called “Moz-artig?” and will be presented on Sunday April 30<sup>th</sup>. We shall see Leopold and Wolfgang Mozart in father and son roles as well as teacher and student.

Alan Benson  
(class of ’77)

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