

Press release

Young musicians pleased about major donation from the Albert Berner Foundation

Cooperation between the Youth Music School and string and wind classes at the Künzelsau schools enables many children to learn to play an instrument

Künzelsau, January 18, 2019 – The Albert Berner Foundation is supporting young musicians in Künzelsau with a generous donation. To purchase new instruments for the wind and string classes, the non-profit organization, founded in 1995 on the occasion of the 60th birthday of its namesake, is making 25,000 euros available to the Friends Association of the Künzelsau Youth Music School. In addition, the foundation will assume the annual personnel costs for the project “Singing in School” (JEKISS) amounting to an additional 5,000 euros.

The Georg Wagner Elementary School and Ganerben High School have been collaborating very successfully with the Municipal Youth Music School in Künzelsau for quite some time now. As part of regular school lessons or as supplementary lessons, pupils from the fifth grade onwards have the opportunity to learn various wind and string instruments at both schools. The offer is becoming increasingly popular. Currently, more than 50 boys and girls take part in the music lessons.

“Through exposure to music, children develop a special social behavior which has a positive effect on all learning processes,” emphasizes Ursula Berner, Chairwoman of the Foundation Council of the Albert Berner Foundation, who officially handed over the symbolic donation

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check during a practice lesson at the Georg Wagner School. "The Municipal Youth Music School is an important base for our children in Künzelsau and the surrounding area. Even the youngest children are introduced to music by learning various instruments and singing. The cooperation between the Youth Music School and the string and wind classes of the Künzelsau schools is outstanding. The schools make their own financial contribution and the Youth Music School Friends Association can use our donation to acquire new instruments for the children and charge less for instrument rental fees."

With the help of the 25,000 euro donation from the Albert Berner Foundation, the Youth Music School Friends Association plans to acquire new wind and string instruments. By building up a sufficiently large inventory of trumpets, clarinets, flutes, violins and other instruments, rental fees can be significantly reduced in the future. This benefits parents by reducing the cost of instrument rentals from 15 to just four euros per month for members of the Friends Association (non-members pay eight euros).

"When it comes to children and young people learning to play a musical instrument, the outlay for an instrument is often the biggest hurdle for families," says Matthias Ankenbrand, Chairman of the Künzelsau Youth Music School Friends Association. "The lower the costs, the more boys and girls have the chance to take part in music lessons. We are very happy about the generous donation."

The Georg Wagner School will also be contributing 4,000 euros to purchase instruments. "The cooperation between the Georg Wagner School and the Youth Music School has grown over the years and is a

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real enrichment,” notes Florian Frank, Principal of the Georg Wagner School. “Mr. Koch, with Mr. Schellhaas and now Mr. Bender, have managed to build up a program that is now bearing fruit. Playing an instrument and singing are fundamental cultural tools. They open up new horizons for our boys and girls, and I am glad that we can offer our pupils this opportunity.”

Wind and string classes have been introduced at Ganerben High School, and here as well, 2,500 euros are being allocated by the school’s Friends Association for the purchase of instruments. “We are very happy about the cooperation with the Youth Music School and have enjoyed outstanding joint concerts. Even those children who only started learning an instrument this school year have had a hand in musically shaping our Christmas party. We would like to thank the Albert Berner Foundation for their generous financial and moral support.”

JEKISS Program

In addition to the 25,000 euros for the purchase of musical instruments for string and wind classes, the Albert Berner Foundation has also pledged to cover the necessary personnel costs amounting to 5,000 euros annually for the joint project “Singing in School”. The aim of JEKISS is to awaken the desire of elementary school pupils to sing by training their singing voices in a natural and cheerful way. “The JEKISS Program inspires me personally,” explains Ursula Berner. “Singing together without notes, singing by heart and learning to listen to one another (‘call and response method’): all these skills train

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social behavior in the group. Vocal technique, polyphony, rhythm and movement are all taught to kids in a playful way.” The musical education of young people is a matter close to the heart of this honorary citizen of Künzelsau. Accordingly, she and the Albert Berner Foundation have repeatedly supported young musicians in the past. In 2018, for example, Garneben High School received a donation of 5,000 euros for the repair and restoration of a concert grand piano.

“With this generous donation, we will be able to raise the students’ enthusiasm for singing and attract even more children to our wind and string classes,” says a pleased Jürgen Koch, Director of the Municipal Youth Music School. “Our cultural program in Künzelsau has become particularly attractive due to the support of the Albert Berner Foundation,” says Mayor Stefan Neumann. “Our honorary citizen Ursula Berner, herself an enthusiastic theatergoer, has long supported a theater partnership at the Georg Wagner School and our Children’s Cultural Program with foundation grants. That’s why we can offer incredibly low admission prices for the children’s plays. Our Youth Music School has already received several donations from the Albert Berner Foundation and, thanks to the new and very generous donation, has been able to purchase additional instruments which can be borrowed by the pupils. Berner and culture are interacting in a truly successful way in Künzelsau.”

Albert Berner Foundation

The non-profit Albert Berner Foundation was established in 1995 to mark the 60th birthday of its namesake, Albert Berner. The Albert

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Berner Foundation is dedicated to supporting children and adults in the social and cultural field, as well as in sports and education, mainly in the Hohenlohe region. Since its inception, the foundation has helped extensive lighthouse projects as well as smaller organizations to advance their goals. The Albert Berner Foundation pays particular attention to the long-term nature of the projects it supports, in addition to the regional factor. For many years, numerous organizations and projects have enjoyed the support of the Foundation. Internet: <http://www.albertbernerstiftung.de>