

# LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

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***January 2021***

Dear Franconians,

May I wish you all the very best in what will undoubtedly be a difficult New Year. As far as Corvid19 goes, we have good reason to be optimistic. I have already heard of the first society members being vaccinated and would like to hear from you, if you belong to that number. If you were happy with your experience, then maybe you would like to write a short email encouraging others to do likewise, or perhaps you could offer tips as to how to be registered. On the other hand, you might be one of those who would rather wait on the vaccination or forego it altogether. I'm sure your standpoint would help others trying to decide what to do.

This Letter from the President, owing to the absence of many of our usual activities at the festive season, is going to be a rather short affair. There was one highlight, however, namely the huge success of our Handicrafts Group in selling its traditional and novel Christmas items via our website. The group is very small in number, but they are extremely dedicated in their wish to raise funds for our charity activities. Orders came in from a range of people, certainly not all of them society members, some even from far away, all made possible through our website. One dear member, now resident in Malta, was able to order customized items that our handicrafts team promptly produced and posted off to various addresses in other parts of Europe. Ladies, you deserve great admiration.

Of course, mentioning our website leads me to some very sad news. Shortly before Christmas, in late November, we lost the good services of David Griffiths, the man who gave us our internet presence in its current, professional figuration and who continued to administer it to the very end despite his severe illness. One of his last acts was in fact to set up the platform for the on-line sale referred to above. At his wife's suggestion, the board decided to donate to the local ambulance service that helped him with all his hospital visits in the last few years. Perhaps you are wondering who could take over this task, and to that I can only say that I have talked with several people and believe I have found a worthy replacement, a member with the necessary skills and experience. I am talking about Dr. Berger-Graef, a mathematician employed until his retirement at the FAU, and, together with his wife Karin, a relatively new member of our society.

Another item of distressing news also reached me just before Christmas. Sieghard, our very competent and well-liked treasurer, suffered a serious injury following a fall at home and is now being treated in a Bayreuth hospital by specialists in spinal injuries. Valerie has told me that his path to recovery will not be easy, but he remains cheerful and often mentions the Society and hopes all is well. I can assure him that we will try our best, but that we also miss his good-hearted, optimistic, and kind personality. If you would like to send him your wishes, please do so. I'm sure he would be delighted to hear from you. Valerie will, of course, ensure that he gets your messages.

You are all aware of the current "lock-down" situation in Germany. How can you not be? And are aware that it will continue for a good long time. Just a few weeks ago we published the Christmas Special Edition, which I hope was well received. We are now considering issuing a late February Special Edition, perhaps with a Fasching theme, and would like to include your input, if possible. The editorial team remains the same, so you know how to reach us with your contributions.

Yes, this was indeed a short President's Letter, and not all of it pleasant reading. But do not despair. Remain strong and vigilant. Better days are in the offing.

Frank