



# Off We Go!



December 2005  
Volume 1 Issue 1

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## Welcome Aboard!

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On behalf of the TEXAS YOUTH ORCHESTRA, Music Celebrations International, and your Directors, Deb Perkins and Desiree Overree, we extend a great big Texas welcome to all of you that have decided to journey with us on this incredible adventure of a lifetime!

We are so excited that all of you have decided to spend your summer rehearsing and preparing for this inspiring trip. You will begin to appreciate other cultures, savor European cuisine, become a better musician, and perhaps make a few new friends along the way. We encourage you to call or write us should you have any questions about the trip. Billing questions should be directed to Carol Navarro at MCI 800-395-2036 or write Carol Navarro at [carol@musiccelebrations.com](mailto:carol@musiccelebrations.com).

*Currently, we have 38 travelers registered; two more and everyone's price will go down \$79; seven more and everyone's price will go down \$165. Invite your string friends or teachers.*

Speaking of money~~ Students- start saving for your spending money on the trip. Instead of having a latte, pocket that money for souvenirs.

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**"The World is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page."**

*Saint Augustine*

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## Passport Information

If you haven't yet obtained your US passport, now is a great time to take care of this small task. You must have a current passport (valid through August 2006) in order to travel with us. For first-timers, you must apply in person. If you are renewing, check out the following link for specific information. You can even renew by the mail these days!

[http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/renew/renew\\_833.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/renew/renew_833.html)



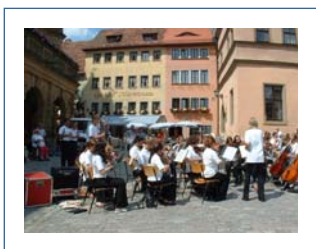
Dez conducting Texas Voyagers  
(Seefeld, Austria) Summer '04

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**“Certainly, travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living.”**

*Miriam Beard*

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Deb conducting Texas Voyagers  
(Rothenburg, Germany) Summer '04

## Research Time!

So you're trying to round up the school year by not thinking about where you'll actually be next summer. RIGHT! How can you NOT be excited that in about seven months you will be in Italy, awed by the size of the incredible Colosseum, awestruck by the Vatican artifacts, and sampling real pizza...and that's just Rome!

Well, whether it's your first time visiting Europe, or your 21<sup>st</sup> time, it's time to start some research about the major cities that we will be visiting. Here are a few ideas to get you started along your way:

1. Guidebooks published by Fodor's, National Geographic, contain amazing details about each of the cities and countries that we will be visiting. From population, temperature, and specific monuments and cathedrals, these guidebooks are a great wealth of information. Check them out from your local library and if you want, purchase a copy for yourself!
2. Being the techies that we are, we always say, "Stay connected!" Websites such as <http://www.lonelyplanet.com>, <http://italian.about.com/od/cinema/tp/filmsaboutitaly.htm>, <http://www.initaly.com/regions/tuscany/florence.htm>, <http://www.aboutaustria.org/> and <http://www.travelnotes.org/Europe/austria.htm>
3. Start preparing yourself by studying up on German and Italian. Although you will get basic language lessons at Home Camp in Dallas, they are no substitute for a bit of independent study. Practice saying, "When do we eat?" in both languages! You really can't go wrong! Ask your high school language teachers for a bit of help.
4. Your local movie store has a great selection of movies that feature Italy and Austria. Some suggestions for Italy: "Under the Tuscan Sun" (2003 - PG13), "Roman Holiday" (1955) and the "Lizzie McGuire Movie," "Much Ado About Nothing" (1986 - PG13), "Tea With Mussolini" (1999 - PG). For Austria, check out "Amadeus" (1984 - PG) and the all-time favorite, "The Sound of Music" (1965)."

**Attention TYO Student Travelers,  
Please make sure we have all your information. Please reply to Ms. O or Dr. P with your instrument, age, school and grade level. Be on the watch for a TYO 'meet and greet' event during the spring of 2006.**

## Christmas Traditions Around the World

### ITALY

Christmas is a very religious time in Italy. A manger scene (*presipio*) is set up in each home. During the Christmas season the street, shops, and homes are decorated. Everywhere there is much singing and music.

The twenty-four hours before Christmas, people fast (do not eat). This is followed by Christmas Eve dinner called a *Cennone*. This feast includes fish (no meat), pasta, vegetables, fresh fruits and special sweets and cakes.

Special prayers and church services called "novena" last for nine days prior to Christmas. Mass is celebrated on Christmas morning. In certain parts of Italy the children hang their stockings near the head of the bed. *La Befana* is supposed to visit each child and leave sweetmeats or coal in the stocking (depending whether the child has been good or bad.)

The **Epiphany** (Feast of the Three Kings), on January 6th, is the last day of Christmas celebrations.

### AUSTRIA

The **feast of St Nicholas** (December 6) marks the beginning of Christmas. Legends tell that the saint accompanied, by the devil, asks children for a list of their good and bad deeds. Good children are rewarded with toys, candy, and nuts by *Heiliger Nikolaus* or St. Nicholas.

During this time, traditional carols are played by brass instruments, and carol singers, carrying blazing torches and a manger from house to house, gather on the church steps.

In Austria, baked carp is served for the traditional Christmas dinner. Gifts that are placed under the tree are opened after dinner on Christmas Eve. Austrians believe that the Christ Child brings presents and the Christmas tree for the children. The children wait until they hear a bell tinkling. Then they enter a special room where the Christmas tree is waiting all decorated with candles, ornaments and candies. The whole family sings Christmas carols and wishes each other:

**FROLICHE WEIHNACHTEN!  
FROHE WEIHNACHTEN!**



### The Legend of La Befana

A woman was busily sweeping her house when the Three Wise Men came to her door. They said they were seeking the new King who was born in Bethlehem. They asked her to show them the way, but she replied that she was much too busy. Later, she felt sorry that she had not helped the Wise Men, so she set out after them. She searched and searched, but she never found them. Because La Befana felt so bad, she continues to travel throughout the country at Christmas time, searching for the Christ Child.

Legend state that she is dressed in a long black coat with a black scarf tied around her head. She brings gifts to each child on January 6th, which is the Epiphany (feast of the Wise Men), sliding down the chimney and filling the stockings of the good children with gifts, but leaving a lump of coal for the bad children.

## Thinking ahead about packing and Instrument Rental

As you know, you will be responsible for toting all of your luggage while on the trip. We encourage all participants, players and non-players alike to pack intelligently. A more detailed article guiding you with what to pack will be included in the next issue. For violinists and violists, your instrument is one of your carry-ons. All students will be toting their instruments.

If you are a cellist or bassist, you will want to pay careful attention to the following information. Cellists are welcome to bring their own instrument in a hard-shell case (wheels are recommended); however, some students have asked for specific information regarding renting an instrument for the duration of the tour. Please be advised that renting an instrument is much more expensive overseas than in the US.

Rental prices for celli are \$220 for the duration of this trip; bass rental is \$400. Please note that the rental fees do not include bows. (You will need to pack your own in a separate hard-shell case.)

Bassists also have the option to play on electric crossover basses that have been generously offered by Zeta Music Corporations.

If cellists are afraid of bringing their own instruments on the trip, then consider renting a quality instrument from a local agency such as Brook Mays, Lisle Violin Shop, Dallas Strings, Frisco Strings or Williamson's. They offer a variety of levels of instruments, in addition to hard-shell cases. Additionally, instrument insurance is usually included in the rental price.

Til next time~~ Arrivederci or Auf Wiedersehen

### ITALY



### AUSTRIA

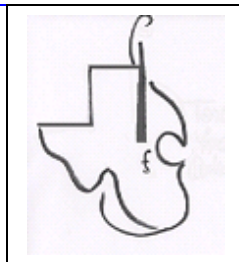


Questions about the Trip?

TEXAS YOUTH ORCHESTRA

Deb Perkins: 972.839.8879

Dez Overree: 713.294.9315



Questions about Billing?

Music Celebrations International

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