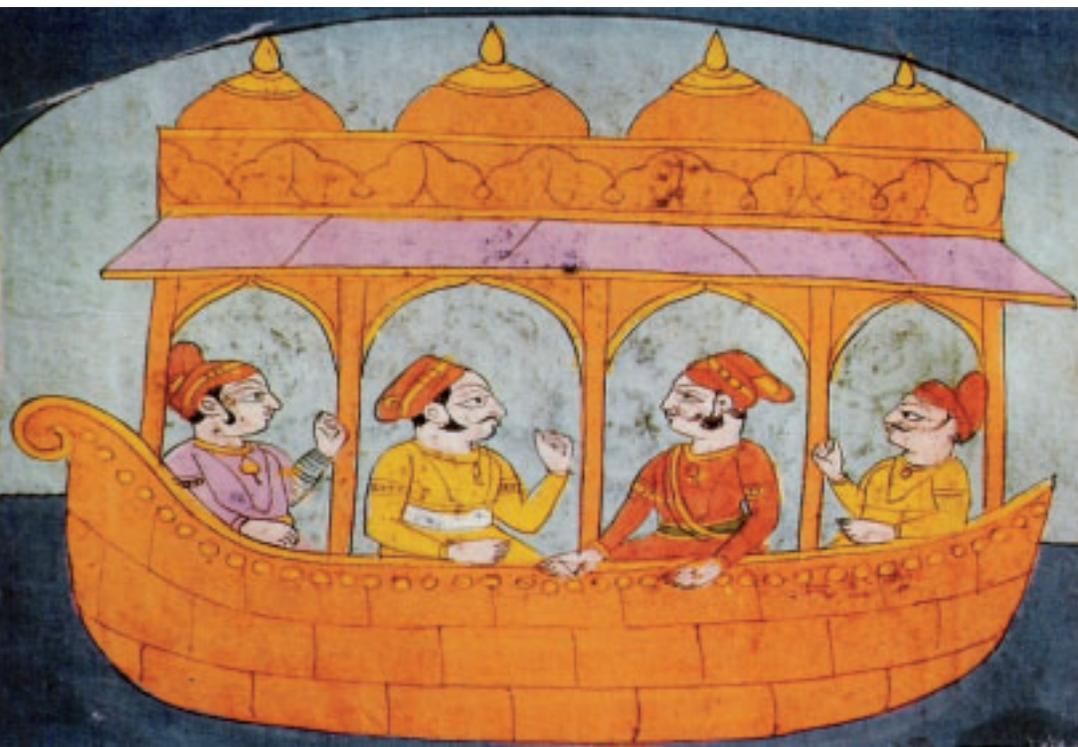


# alumni

## DEUTSCHES KREBSFORSCHUNGSZENTRUM



*In one boat: Scientists from India and Germany will meet at the DKFZ in July 2007 in order to promote collaboration in cancer research.*

*Dear DKFZ Alumni,*

At the beginning of this year we extend our best wishes for 2007 to all of you! In addition to the General Alumni Meeting described in our previous Newsletter, there were many other outstanding events at the DKFZ and Heidelberg University in 2006, some of which are highlighted on the following pages: the centenary of the Czerny Clinic, the "First German Institute for Cancer Research", which is about to top its longstanding reputation in radiation oncology by the implementation of ion beam therapy; the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Meyenburg Foundation for Cancer Research at the DKFZ; and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the nationwide telephone service KID (Krebs-informationsdienst) for cancer patients.

Focal points of this Newsletter are contributions by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the DKFZ, Dr. Peter Lange, and the longstanding but outgoing Chairman of the external Scientific Committee of this institution, Professor Ralf Pettersson, on the policy of the supervising body, the input of scientific advice in the decisions of the Board, and the scientific development of the DKFZ during the past two decades. In this context, we also introduce the new Chairman of the Scientific Committee, Professor Carl Henrik-Heldin.

A most promising international biomedical PhD program was started in the DKFZ in 2001 in order to attract the best students from all over the world. The first experiences with this program, which is described by the responsible coordinator, are very encouraging. The catchment

area for students has been expanded by this initiative, and the number of guest scientists working at the DKFZ at one point in time has surmounted 200. It is evident that under these conditions the activities of the Alumni Association have become more important than ever. Several of these activities are briefly described in this Newsletter. Since local politics may have a strong impact on the life of our guests and on the situation of the DKFZ as a whole, we have also included an article on the recent change of the Lord Mayor of Heidelberg from Beate Weber to Dr. Eckart Würzner.

Last but not least I would like to repeat my request for formal applications of those former co-workers of the DKFZ from Germany and abroad who are not yet inscribed members of the Alumni Association (see [www.dkfz.de/alumni](http://www.dkfz.de/alumni) for further information). In addition, all present co-workers and friends of the DKFZ who intend to support the aims of our Association are welcome as members. On behalf of the Board of Alumni DKFZ I once again would like to express my gratitude for a large number of generous voluntary donations which we received during the past year.

I sincerely hope you will appreciate the information provided in this Newsletter, and send you our best wishes for your personal welfare from Heidelberg,

*Peter Lange*

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# czerny clinic

## 100 Years of Radiation Oncology in Heidelberg

by Stephanie E. Combs and Jürgen Debus

Vinzenz Czerny was one of the first physicians who recognized the interdisciplinary character of oncology. He was also the first to acknowledge that treatment results obtained by surgery can be significantly improved by chemotherapy and radiotherapy. It was he who realized for the first time that surgery alone does not provide the required outcome; as a modern oncologist in this era he played a leading role when he implemented radiation, not only for diagnostic procedures, but also for radiotherapy of cancer patients.

disciplinary tradition of Czerny is still the foundation of the modern Department of Radiation Oncology. Over 3500 patients per year are treated by 37 physicians in ambulatory settings or within the three wards staffed by specially trained personnel for the treatment of cancer patients. The department is equipped with six linear accelerators, one tomotherapy machine and one accelerator for intraoperative radiation localized at the Department of Surgery. Additionally, the whole spectrum of brachytherapy is offered.

*The Department of Radiation Oncology at the University Hospital of Heidelberg was founded one century ago by Vinzenz Czerny, a pioneer in modern interdisciplinary oncology.*

*On September 25, 2006, a ceremonial act dedicated to the historical past of the clinic as well as the present status and visions for the future of the Czerny Clinic, was held in the Alte Aula of the University of Heidelberg. Exactly 100 years ago, on September 25, 1906, the key for the newly built "Samariterhaus" was handed over to Vinzenz Czerny by the Grand Duke of Baden in this historical place. In the same year Vinzenz Czerny organized the first international cancer conference in Heidelberg.*



Samariterhaus

Vinzenz Czerny was born on November 19, 1842. After medical school he completed his residency in surgery, during which he was strongly supported by the famous surgeon, Theodore Billroth. After scientific work in Vienna and Freiburg he became the chairman of the Department of Surgery at the University Hospital of Heidelberg. During the whole time of his research he put a lot of effort on finding a suitable model to combine patient treatment with clinical research as well as preclinical evaluation. His vision was realized in the "First German Institute for Cancer Research", founded in 1906.



Vinzenz Czerny

During the past 100 years the Czerny Clinic was transformed into one of the most modern departments of radiation oncology worldwide. In 1988, the department moved from the historical building to the new medical campus, and is now localized in the "Kopflinik"; yet, it is still known by the name of Vinzenz Czerny. The inter-

The essential cooperation between clinical activities and preclinical research is represented by a number of internationally renowned projects. The scientific cooperation with the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) as well as the lately founded comprehensive cancer center (National Center for Tumor Diseases Heidelberg, NCT) represent the direct continuation of the idea of Vinzenz Czerny.

The first and worldwide unique center for proton and carbon ion radiotherapy, the "Heidelberger Ionenstrahl Therapiezentrum" (HIT) is currently under construction at the Department of Radiation Oncology, which will start patient treatment in 2007. This facility will combine preclinical and clinical research with the possibility to treat 1000 patients per year. Therefore, this center can be considered the "Samariterhaus of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" following the footsteps of the great pioneer in oncology.

# innovation

## Proton and Carbon Ions Against Cancer

by Stephanie E. Combs and Jürgen Debus

*Treatment facilities for proton and carbon ion radiotherapy provide unique opportunities for a large number of patients. Charged particles offer distinct physical and biological properties that enable the application of high local doses while sparing normal surrounding healthy tissue. Moreover, the increased biological effects of carbon ions as opposed to protons and photons, have been shown to improve treatment results for certain tumor entities.*

The results obtained within the cooperation of the Department of Radiation Oncology and GSI in Darmstadt, as well as the clinical results of carbon ion radiotherapy obtained in Japan were the basis for the new facility for carbon ion and proton radiotherapy which is currently under construction at the Department of Radiation Oncology in Heidelberg. The Heidelberger Ionenstrahl Therapiezentrum (HIT) is going to be a worldwide unique center offering particle therapy for 1000 patients per year.

has to be conducted to offer safe beam application. Clinical treatment at the HIT will start at the end of 2007, offering proton and carbon ion treatment for a large group of patients. Clinical studies will be conducted for a number of tumor entities, such as prostate cancer, lung and liver tumors as well as brain tumors, to evaluate the effect of particle treatment and to show potential advantage over conventional photon radiotherapy.



*Architecture for the future: the "Heidelberger Ionenstrahl Therapiezentrum"*

Since 1997, carbon ion radiotherapy has been performed by the Department of Radiation Oncology of the University Hospital Heidelberg in cooperation with the Gesellschaft für Schwerionenforschung (GSI) in Darmstadt, Germany. Additionally, the Department of Medical Physics at the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) plays a crucial role in the ion therapy project. During the last decade over 300 patients have been treated with carbon ion radiotherapy, mainly for chordomas and chondrosarcomas of the skull base as well as adenoid cystic carcinomas. Clinical studies have proven the superiority of carbon ions as compared to modern photon treatment for these tumor entities. At present, a clinical study for locally advanced prostate cancer is offered as a combined photon-carbon ion treatment.

In all three treatment rooms patient positioning robots as well as imaging robots will be installed. Additionally, one room is included for quality assurance.

The intensity controlled raster scanning technique will be used for dose application as established for the patient treatments at GSI. With this technique, essentially two features are used for beam application: The depth of the dose application can be modulated, and additionally, the beam can be directed by magnets. Therefore, the defined treatment volume can be irradiated precisely, slice by slice.

At present, the building has been completed and part of the staff has moved into their offices. Until patient treatment can start, quality assurance as well as commissioning of the facility



*Jürgen Debus was Head of the Clinical Cooperation Unit Radiation Therapy at DKFZ from 1997 till 2003. In 2001 he became Chairman of the Scientific Council of the DKFZ. In 2003 he was appointed Professor of the Medical Faculty at Heidelberg University and became Director of the Department of Radiation Oncology at the University Hospital of Heidelberg.*

# board of trustees

## Supervisor of DKFZ's Research Policy by Peter Lange

*The Board of Trustees supervises the research policy and all financial and administrative matters of the Foundation. The Board, which as a rule convenes two times a year, consists of 18 members, six representatives of the Federal Government and the State of Baden-Württemberg, the Rector Magnificus and the Dean of the Medical Faculty of the University of Heidelberg, seven internationally renowned external scientists, and three internal scientists from the DKFZ. Dr. Peter Lange, Ministerialdirektor at the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, is Chairman of the Board.*

The past 20 years of DKFZ can only be described as a success-story. The scientific quality of the DKFZ is outstanding. Also internationally DKFZ is highly respected as reaffirmed in detail on the following pages by the Chairman of the Scientific Committee, Professor Pettersson.

The Board of Trustees is the decisive body to guide DKFZ to continue its successful way in the future. It directs DKFZ in research policy issues as well as in financial and administrative matters. The Management Board of the DKFZ reports to the Board of Trustees, which approves the research programmes, the foundation or dissolution of divisions as well as the start and termination of research projects. The Board appoints the heads of divisions and the coordinators of research programs, and interacts with the University of Heidelberg in the appointment of professors at the DKFZ. Most important legal transactions and agreements with other undertakings and institutions also have to reach approval by the Board of Trustees. The aim of all of these activities is to ensure a positive development of research at DKFZ.

Basic research is the core of the research activities of DKFZ since its foundation. More recently, emphasis has been put on translational research, i. e. the rapid transfer of innovative findings into the clinics to the patient, as well as on the economical use of the research results. It is not the policy of the Board of Trustees to replace basic research by other research areas but to add activities which make DKFZ more powerful in the international context, particularly in Europe.

The Board of Trustees plays an important role in the implementation and the acceleration of new ideas and concepts of the DKFZ to enable it to start new challenges and to elaborate fundamental issues of cancer research. This should be done in combination with other research bodies and institutes to generate interactions, to acquire more know-how and also to concentrate on translational research for the benefit of the patient. The Board of Trustees shall also ensure that the results of research at the DKFZ reach the public as quick as possible, and that they are used commercially, e. g. in the development of new drugs.

### Fruitful support by science experts

The seven external scientific members of the Board of Trustees and four additional external scientists constitute the Scientific Committee of the DKFZ. This important body prepares the decisions for the Board of Trustees in all scientific matters. It thereby is ensured that scientific expertise is taken under consideration in all decisions of the Board of Trustees. This has not always been the case. Only in 1983 the Board of Trustees decided that the influence of the scientists should be strengthened. An appropriate balance between administrative and scientific aspects in the Board of Trustees has been achieved by the incorporation of a considerable number of external scientists into the Board of Trustees, who represent seven of the 18 distinguished members. No other grouping is that numerous inside the Board of Trustees of DKFZ.

This was an important and well-founded step. Since then nobody ever questioned this change in the statutes. Being the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees I experienced the co-operation with the Scientific Committee to be extremely fruitful for the benefit of the DKFZ.

The Board of Trustees always profited from the high ranking expertise, which gives a very important input from the scientific point of view. The Scientific Committee also brings new scientific issues to the Board of Trustees. The recommendations of the Scientific Committee are of highest value for the

decision making process of the Board of Trustees. In the discussions and deliberations inside the Board of Trustees it always was sensible and wise that the scientific ideas were not only presented by the Chair of the Scientific Committee but by various members from the Scientific Committee. Thereby a broad range of scientific expertise was introduced into the Board of Trustees.

The decision of 1983 created a sagacious and successful model. In the past 23 years it showed to be well approved. Especially in comparison to other centers of the Helmholtz Association (HGF) I regard it as indispensable to have an important and big influence of the scientists on the discussion in the Board of Trustees to ensure that the scientific ideas are carefully taken under consideration.

### Program Oriented Funding

The introduction of the system of the Program Oriented Funding (POF) by my ministry had no direct influence on the structure and the functioning of the discussions inside of the Board of Trustees in DKFZ as well as in the other Helmholtz Centers. Aside from the fact that the POF outlines certain aims to reach it should give guidance for future development. These guardrails allow for sufficient scope and possibilities of development for the individual research institution and inside its decisive bodies like the Board of Trustees.

The POF supports the development of transparency of research inside of the institution vis-à-vis the public. The thematic orientation of each Helmholtz institution has become clear. It makes visible the high level of quality of the individual research and helps to identify research of a sub-critical level which does not fit exactly the research of the whole institution. The POF showed possibilities of cooperation and synergies between the various HGF Centers and forced the individual institution towards a thematic concentration. The latter observations did not play an important role for DKFZ and its Board of Trustees as it always focused on cancer research.

# interview

## Sustained Scientific Progress Upwards

*Professor Pettersson, as a member and chairman of the Scientific Committee you have been in close connection with the DKFZ for many years. How do you rate the scientific development during this period?*

From my point of view there has been a sustained progress upwards in these seven years. Both scientists managing the DKFZ during this period, namely Harald zur Hausen and Otmar Wiestler, have continuously developed the international control system. The different research programs are reviewed every five years by top scientists from all over the world, particularly from the United States and Europe. At the end of 2005 the program on Cell and Tumour Biology was reviewed, and recently there was the evaluation of the program on Tumor Immunology.

These reviews put the researchers under considerable pressure provoking that they sit down and reconsider what they have done in the past, are doing at present, and will tackle in the future. This is a very positive effect, and I am convinced that this measure will further increase the quality of science at DKFZ.

*How attractive is the DKFZ for top scientists at the international level?*

The attractiveness has constantly grown through the years. Recently, I met an old friend of mine, Kai Simons, who has been working at the EMBL for 25 years. And he was really impressed by the development of DKFZ. He told me that he was rather negative about DKFZ in the old days, but he admitted that since then it had changed a lot.

I am convinced that the ongoing recruitment of young people in a very competitive way is an excellent procedure which has also encouraged people from abroad, especially returning Germans, to come to this place. This is a very good trend. The new working conditions for junior groups might not be in line with the usual habits in Germany or other European countries; they rather resemble the American tenure track system. But I regard this as highly positive because it stimulates young people to really do their best.

*Do the considerations of the Scientific Committee have an impact on those decisions made by the Board of Trustees that are relevant for research in the DKFZ?*

I have been in the Committee for seven years now, but I have to admit that I cannot really judge to which extent we have influenced the policy of the Board of Trustees and contributed to the progress of DKFZ research. This might be due to the fact that there haven't been severe problems. I think the main purpose of sending scientists to the Board of Trustees is to balance between researchers on one hand and administrative members on the other.



*How does the external Scientific Committee interact with internal scientific institutions of the DKFZ, particularly the Chairman and Scientific Member of the Management Board and the Scientific Council?*

Harald zur Hausen, who introduced the effective external evaluation procedures, had his own way of dealing with the Scientific Committee. His perfect preparation and presentation of intended decisions provided only a small window of opportunities to interfere for the Scientific Committee, except the organisation of the external evaluations. There were, however, short presentations of selected scientific topics in each session of the

Board of Trustees permitting an instructive insight into specific projects. When Otmar Wiestler took over the position as a chairman of the Management Board he immediately started the habit to see me in Stockholm once a year to discuss various scientific topics. He brought a pile of information materials through which we went systematically during our meetings. Now the future development of DKFZ research is up to Otmar Wiestler. As many of the older scientists will retire in the next few years, he has put a strong emphasis on recruiting young scientists. When it comes to the internal Scientific Council, I have to give a straight answer:

We had no questions from, and no direct interaction and discussions with this internal body until recently. It was only in the summer session 2006 that the chairman of the Scientific Council, Wolfhard Semmler, took part in our meeting for the first time. As he stepped down and Christof Niehrs became the new chairman of the council, I sincerely hope that this positive contact will be continued.

*How does the Scientific Committee communicate with the various internal scientific divisions of the DKFZ?*

Well, there is the 5-years-reviewing process that gives you the opportunity to get more insight into DKFZ research. I

myself took part several times – but this depends on what topic you are an expert in. The Scientific Committee meets twice a year. There were some doubts whether it makes sense to come together so often. From my point of view this is absolutely necessary, otherwise you cannot really get an appropriate overview on DKFZ research. Thus, it is very important for the members to attend both Committee meetings.

In order to improve our interaction with the Scientific Divisions, we have recently established more comprehensive discussions with members of specific research programs together with the Scientific Committee the day before the sessions of the Board of Trustees. By this procedure the members of the Committee get an introduction into the various research programs, making it much easier and more efficient to learn about the ongoing activities. Moreover, our ability to actively take part in the external reviewing process has been considerably strengthened. Thus, the Committee has come much closer to science in the DKFZ.

*During the past few years important changes in research policy and funding have been made in the DKFZ, e. g. the introduction of the “Program Oriented Funding” and the establishment of a number of “Junior Research Groups” that are independent of the Divisions. How will these changes influence the future of research in the DKFZ?*

The program oriented funding focuses things in a very particular way, e. g. the reduction of the number of research programs to six topics – with the additional program Translational Oncology. I have been following this development with interest, and I am very optimistic about its consequences in the future. Initially, the new emphasis on translational research resulted in severe concerns about the funding of basic research. Especially those scientists who were working in that field were really upset. This controversial issue was settled by allowing 20 percent of the DKFZ budget to be spent on basic research in order to explore new areas, and address new questions. This agreement has

been accepted quite well in the meantime. As I have mentioned previously, I feel confident that the establishment of many junior research groups is a very promising approach to further improve the scientific standing of the DKFZ. When you look into the research topics covered by most of the recruited young people you will recognize that they are mainly devoted to basic research. This also shows Otmar Wiestler’s intention to stimulate this field of research. I strongly support this view since there is no doubt that the solution of basic problems will remain the driving force of cancer research.

*With the foundation of the NCT and the emphasis now placed on translational cancer research by Professor Wiestler, new horizons have been opened. How can an optimal interaction and balance between basic and translational research be achieved?*

It is a big challenge. Translational research is a problem all around the world, including the United States. The gap between basic and clinical research is still a really tough thing. Basic research goes down to all kinds of complicated areas like drosophila and yeast genetics which have little to do with clinical aspects. It is

evident that the NCT is a model, not only for Germany but also for all other European countries. Comprehensive cancer centers are not very common in Europe as a whole. At the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm we are just trying to set up something similar. Therefore, we are very interested in the German experiences. I am very much looking forward to the further development of the NCT as a place where panels of experts will take care of the patients, where specific cases will be recorded and discussed, and from which the patients will be directed to the appropriate hospitals depending on the type of tumor from which they suffer. Some time ago serious concerns about the establishment of an institution like the NCT were expressed by several directors of the traditional University Hospitals as everyone wanted to remain king in his own realm. But now the NCT is on a very good way.

*Do you see major deficiencies in the structure and research programs of the DKFZ?*

At first glance I can’t really see a big gap in the program of the DKFZ. All plans and research projects which I have noted are excellent. For example there is the idea to strengthen the co-operation with the ZMBH (Center for Molecular

### Professor Ralf F. Pettersson

Until recently Professor Ralf F. Pettersson was Branch Director of the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research (LICR) and is now Adjunct Professor of Molecular Biology at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. Born in Finland, the medical doctor focused his scientific activities mainly on basic molecular virology, i. e. the structure, replication and maturation of enveloped RNA viruses. In the field of molecular cell biology he investigated mechanisms of intracellular protein transport and compartmentalization of membrane proteins.

Ralf Pettersson is involved in boards and committees of many acad-

emies and research institutions like the American Society for Cell Biology and takes part in several international reviewing processes, for example the evaluation of the Spanish National Cancer Institute (CNIO) in Madrid. He was a long-standing member of the renowned Nobel Price Committee for Medicine, from 1998 to 2000 he was the chairman of the committee. From 1993 until 1996 Pettersson was president of the Virology Division of the International Union of Microbiological Societies. In 1999 Pettersson became a member of the Scientific Committee of the German Cancer Research Center, which he chaired from 2002 till 2006.

Biology of Heidelberg University), which seems very promising. The European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) and the DKFZ have also become much closer in the past few years, and this has been promoted by attracting Iain Mattaj, General Director of EMBL, as a new member of the Scientific Committee recently. There is one area of cancer research, however, in which I see some deficiencies, not only in the DKFZ but all over the world: prevention. There is an urgent need to intensify and further develop all possible approaches to prevent cancer as this is the silver bullet to conquer this dreadful disease.



***How do you envision the future development of cancer research in general, and in the DKFZ in particular?***

Molecular biology and cell biology will remain the basis of cancer research in the years to come. With the ongoing sequencing and cloning of the genome, and new tools in proteomics and metabolics, the information has dramatically increased. The ever increasing complexity has forced people of different areas to collaborate more closely. It appears to be particularly important for young people to focus not only on their own research, but to connect their activities with those of other groups. However, in spite of the enormous expansion of our knowledge in almost all areas of basic research, the most challenging question is still: what are the consequences for the treatment of cancer patients? In many types of

cancer very old styles of treatment predominate, and it is, unfortunately, rare that novel drugs reach the market. To give a few examples of particularly promising areas for the improvements of cancer therapy in the future, I would like to mention the further development and introduction into clinical trials of antibodies inhibiting receptors at the cell surface, or growth factors outside the cell, as well as inhibitors of tyrosin kinases inside the cell, and approaches to overcome the mechanisms of drug resistance. Yet, these measures are very tricky and complicated as they interfere with essential biological processes, and it will take some time to see whether serious adverse side

effects can be avoided. Another problem with new cancer treatments is that the development of drugs takes such a long time – up to ten to twenty years – until they are approved by the administration. This is why pharmaceutical companies really hesitate to invest in such projects. Therefore, we need a high level of institutional research at universities and places like DKFZ. In cancer prevention, vaccination against oncogenic viruses, such as the hepatitis B virus and human papilloma viruses, which have also been very successfully studied in this center, are excellent examples for a foreseeable progress. In any case, basic research will play an important role in maintaining a high quality standard. The DKFZ is well organized to take part in this development.

*Interview by Peter Bannasch and  
Dagmar Anders*



**New Chairman of the Scientific Committee**

Since 1986 Carl Henrik Heldin has been Branch Director of the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research in Uppsala, Sweden. In 1992 he became Professor in Molecular Cell Biology at Uppsala University. He was born in 1952, and obtained a PhD degree in Medical and Physiological Chemistry in 1980 at Uppsala University, where he continued to work until 1985 using a position sponsored by the Swedish Cancer Society. His research interest is related to mechanisms of signal transduction by growth regulatory factors, as well as their normal function and role in disease. Carl Henrik Heldin is a member of the European Molecular Biology Organization, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and Academia Europea. He serves or has served on the Scientific Advisory Boards for several companies and academic institutions, including the German Cancer Research Center (member of the Scientific Committee since 2002 and its chairman since September 2006), the Max Planck Institute for Biochemistry, Martinsried, the European Institute for Oncology, Milan, and the European Molecular Biology Laboratory. Heldin is currently member of the Board of the European Research Council and the Swedish Research Council. He has received several scientific awards, including Prix Antoine Lacassagne (1989), K. Fernströms Large medical Prize (1993), the Meyenburg Award (1999) and the Pezcoller-American Association for Cancer Research Award (2002).

# meetings

## EACR in Budapest: Alumni meet Hungarian Oncologists

During EACR 2006 which took place in July in Budapest, the Alumni Association invited several Hungarian oncologists who had previous connections with DKFZ to a meeting with Alumni and current DKFZ scientists as well as some special guests, including two past Presidents of EACR, Professors Edith Olah, Budapest, and Hans Grunicke, Innsbruck. Additionally Dr. Enrico Michich from Buffalo joined the meeting, and also Pauline Saunders, Nottingham, who had just handed over the outstanding position she had taken for decades at the EACR Secretariat, to the new Executive Director, Robert Kenney.

The present status and the perspectives of research at the DKFZ were highlighted by the Chairman and Scientific Member of the DKFZ Management Board, Professor Otmar Wiestler. In addition, the history, goal, and organization of Alumni DKFZ were presented by the Chairman of the Association, Professor Peter Bannasch, who is also a former President of the EACR. All guests were invited to join the Alumni Association. After the "formal" part of the meeting, during a small reception, the German

and Hungarian scientists reminisced on "old times" and discussed new possibilities for further connections.

As a result of the meeting several new "friends" joined the Association, among others Professor Zsuzsa Schaff and Professor Anna Tompa, both from the Semmelweis University in Budapest. Zsuzsa Schaff is the Chairperson of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Department of Pathology and former President of the Hungarian Society of Oncologists. She and her co-workers still have close contacts with researchers in Heidelberg, both at DKFZ and the University.

Professor Anna Tompa, Chairperson of the Institute of Public Health, spent several months repeatedly in the DKFZ in the Toxicology Department with Professors Dietrich Schmähl and Beatrix Pool-Zobel, and has on-going connections with the research workers in the field. Both of them hope that in the future younger Hungarian colleagues will join the Alumni Association to further strengthen the traditionally good relationship between German and Hungarian scientists.

Zsuzsa Schaff

## Reception at AACR in L. A.

During the forthcoming Centennial Meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) in Los Angeles, California, attending Alumni and current Scientists of the DKFZ are cordially invited to a reception, taking place on Monday, April 16, between 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm. The Chairman and Scientific Member of the DKFZ Management Board, Professor Otmar D. Wiestler,



will give an overview on the present research programs of the DKFZ at this occasion. The Chairman of the Board of Alumni DKFZ, Professor Peter Bannasch, will review the present state of the Association.

If you want to take part in this reception, please, inform the Alumni Secretariat by e-mail (e.mang@dkfz.de). Participation is free of registration fee.

## Indo-German Collaboration in Oncology

A workshop on the perspectives of Indo-German collaboration in oncology will take place from **July 12 to 14, 2007**, in the communication center of the DKFZ in Heidelberg. Two main topics have been selected for presentations and discussions by representatives from both sides: *Tumor Biology* and *Cancer Therapy*. The



following subtopics have been proposed: *tumor stem cells, mechanisms of tumorigenesis and metastasis, epidemiology of cancer, pathogenesis and prevention*

*of cervical cancer, prevention and tumor therapy, and radiotherapy.*

The detailed program will be communicated as soon as it has been completed.

Although the mutual exchange of ideas and scientific expertise between Indian and German cancer researchers has a long tradition, there appears to be a great potential for improvement in efficient collaboration. In order to give **DKFZ-Alumni** from India who are not members of the official delegation a particular chance for participation in the workshop, the DKFZ provides a limited number of **travel grants** of 750,00 Euro each for the presentation of posters during the

workshop, which will be selected by the Organizing Committee. The **deadline** for the **submission of poster abstracts** is **June 11, 2007** (by e-mail to p.bannasch@dkfz.de and e.mang@dkfz.de)

In addition to the official delegations from India and Germany all interested scientists from Germany and from abroad are cordially invited to participate in this promising workshop which should especially stimulate Indo-German collaboration in oncology. Participation is free of registration fee.



# local events

## Cordial Welcome Meeting

“I will bring Christmas cookies”, a guest scientist from Lebanon suggested, “I may provide some wine”, another researcher proposed. This dialogue was part of a discussion during the welcome meeting of new guest scientists of the DKFZ. The participants were quite eager to make up their minds on the forthcoming reception in December 2006.

This most recent welcome meeting already took place in November 16, 2006 in the Communication Center of DKFZ where nearly 20 new guest scientists came together. Professor Gerhard van Kaick, coordinator of social activities for guest scientists and foreign co-workers, cordially welcomed them on this occasion. Together with Professor Peter Bannasch, Elfriede Mang and Heike Langlotz, he did his best to make the foreigners feel at home in Heidelberg. Each guest scientist introduced himself to his colleagues, reported about his scientific background, his present work and how he selected the DKFZ as host institution. Many different countries were represented, for example the USA, China, Lebanon, India, Hungary, and Switzerland. Among the guest scientists were radiologists as well as toxicologists and biologists.

The tradition of welcome meetings started in November 2005. Since then these meetings have taken place about three times a year. It is a great opportunity to discuss current problems of guest scientists like language difficulties, finding a flat in Heidelberg and making acquaintances with colleagues from one's own country. Usually each results in a satisfying solution.

*Elfriede Mang*



*Baroque music for German flute and piano performed by the double-gifted scientists Annette Kopp-Schneider and Peter Schmidlin framed the Reception of current guest scientists in December 2006.*

## Stimulating Alumni Evening

On the occasion of the second assembly of the Heidelberg Alumni Club on October 26, 2006, about 30 colleagues met in a nice room at the REGA- hotel, in a familiar and friendly atmosphere. The participants were current and retired scientists from the DKFZ as well as former co-workers who are now working in hospitals, industrial companies, or other scientific institutions. Some had come from other cities, such as Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Mannheim or Mainz, to attend the presentation by Professor Christof von Kalle, who is Director of the National Center of Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg and Head of the DKFZ-Division of Translational Oncology.

He described in detail the approach of translational cancer research: Modern oncological clinical studies require an exact clinical planning, a clear statistical concept, and the approval of both the

ethic committee and the regulatory authorities as well as a clinical trial coordination. The legal prerequisites to perform clinical studies have gained high complexity, and, as a result, studies are almost impossible to perform without expert advice. Based on his great experience, particularly in international trials, von Kalle gave a convincing insight on how oncological research has changed during the last two decades.

At the end of his presentation, and after dinner, there was a lively and interesting discussion. The questions of some colleagues, when the next evening would take place, were encouraging enough to carry on.

*Gerhard van Kaick*

# phd program

## Worldwide Search for the Best by Thomas Efferth

*The German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) offers a biomedical PhD Program for exceptional graduate students from all around the world. It provides splendid interdisciplinary training and research opportunities in basic, translational and clinical cancer research. Most PhD students at the DKFZ graduate in Biology, Physics, Computer Science, Pharmacy, or Chemistry.*

nomics, cancer risk factors and prevention, tumor immunology, innovative cancer diagnostics and therapy, infection and cancer, and translational oncology. A broad spectrum of laboratories at DKFZ is incorporated into the design of our innovative doctorate program. This facilitates graduate students to learn cutting edge science and to interact with internationally leading

### Thesis supervision

The typical duration of a PhD thesis at the DKFZ is three years. All doctorate students are supported by a Thesis Advisory Committee. This committee has an active role in mentoring and supervising the students to promote a high level of achievements. It consists of the group leader and two other scientists.



*"By now, more than 100 PhD students from all over the World selected in the course of this program have conducted their thesis at the DKFZ" says Thomas Efferth, supervisor of the PhD Program (first row, very left).*

The aims of the program comprise the promotion of scientific excellence of students and a broad education in the entire field of basic, translational and clinical cancer research. This also includes the development of interdisciplinary skills. Moreover, the program intends to communicate to students, how different research fields influence one another. Both the development of a sense of responsibility and an awareness of ethical issues in order to communicate to science and society are essential features of the doctorate program as well.

DKFZ maintains seven major fields of research, e. g. cell biology and tumor biology, structural and functional ge-

scientists. In addition, every student in our PhD Program will acquire basic knowledge about major aspects of cancer research.

### Course Work

The curriculum of the PhD Program assumes an innovative format, which combines doctoral research with a research-oriented teaching program. It is our major goal to train self-reliant students to assimilate the knowledge required for a career in cancer research. Throughout their thesis, students attend lectures, method courses on scientific subjects, communication skills and language courses, poster presentations, journal clubs, group meetings, institute seminars and conventions. The participation is acknowledged by a credit point system. The successful candidates are certified after completion of the doctorate thesis.

Doctorate students write progress reports after the first and second years, which are discussed with the committee. Students with a need for further support receive additional tutoring.

### Selection of candidates

The elaborated selection procedure aims to identify exceptional students with a deep commitment to their graduate education. A pre-selection committee evaluates applicants according to their submitted application documents. Short-listed candidates are invited to Heidelberg to present their projects from Master or Diploma thesis research. A selection committee explores the candidates' abilities and motivation in face-to-face interviews. Currently, 36 fellowships are granted each year. Application deadlines are in January, June, and September. Detailed information and application documents are available on our website ([www.dkfz.de/phd/](http://www.dkfz.de/phd/)).

# 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary

## Two Decades for the Informed Cancer Patient

by Hans-Joachim Gebest

*The Cancer Information Service (KID) at the German Cancer Research Center was founded in 1986 by Hilke Stamatiadis-Smidt and Almuth Sellschopp. Hilke Stamatiadis headed KID for many years. After her retirement Dr. Hans-Joachim Gebest took over this position in 2004. Now, after two decades, it's high time to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this trustworthy source of information on cancer and successful development throughout the past years.*

After all the years the aims of KID are still the same, that is talking to worried cancer patients, family members and friends as well as gathering data and providing information on cancer related subjects. KID has also effectively taken on a guiding role, based on more than 3000 addresses in its database, on where to find relevant contacts for individual questions regarding cancer. This service is being provided nationwide to all citizens. It is funded by the German Ministry of Health and additional financial contributions from the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg.

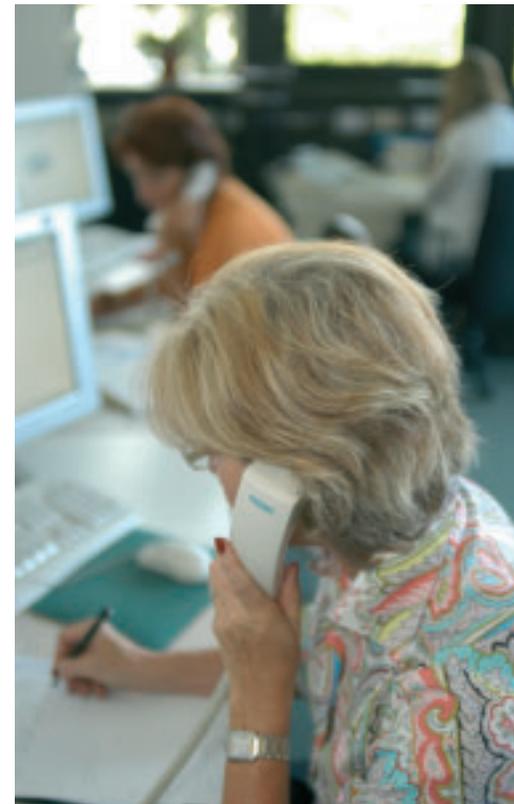
However, since its foundation several fundamental factors have changed dramatically. First of all, the amount of knowledge about cancer, diagnosis and treatment has increased rapidly and continues to grow. The second crucial change concerns the attitude of patients, who nowadays want to share the decision making process regarding their cancer with doctors. And finally, abundant information about cancer is available for everybody who has access to the internet. This raises the question whether a telephone service like KID is still needed today. The clear answer is YES. Cancer in general is a very complex issue and needs comprehensible explanations. People are overwhelmed by the diagnosis, some are also deeply depressed. It also takes time for them to get information about cancer and to understand their diseases. On the other hand, patients are faced with a variety of confusing information not knowing which piece of information can be trusted in. They need to gather reliable knowledge in order to discuss treatment options and other illness related issues with their doctors.

### Open Access to highly reliable information

Integrated into the German Cancer Research Center, KID is a trustworthy source of information on cancer. High quality standards have been applied to ensure best practice in the communication of complex topics. The information given on the phone is done by specifically trained physicians according to the best scientific evidence found in the constantly updated KID database. This is a challenging and exciting task for the whole staff and its fulfilment requires continued medical education and training. To meet contemporary trends in technology KID also has been offering an e-mail service since 2003. On its website [www.krebsinformation.de](http://www.krebsinformation.de), KID is providing detailed and comprehensible information about cancer as well. The internet service does not act as a substitute for the telephone information. Instead, it is intended to enable users to ask the right question to their doctors or other experts.

### Tailor-made answers to individual questions

More than 24,000 inquiries have been answered in 2006; almost 6,000 of which in the form of e-mails. Seventy percent of KID callers are seeking information tailored to their own specific case. Good subject knowledge is by far the most important quality expected from KID by 83 percent of users, according to a survey conducted in 2005. Over the years KID has been offering additional modules for special topics like breast cancer, fatigue and cancer pain. Due to varying funding, these services have been provided via different telephone numbers. People were sometimes surprised about that. On October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006 KID has launched one single number to reach all services. Since trustworthy information on cancer must not depend on the financial status, it was our goal to introduce a toll free number. After dialling 0 800 420 30 40 one can select the wanted service by a touch tone menu. KID has also extended its availability and is open now from 8 am to 8 pm daily.



One for all:  
0 800 - 420 30 40

Although KID primarily is a service for the public, more and more practitioners are using the service in order to ensure the right treatment options for their patients. We are therefore truly convinced of the need for a cancer information service for physicians.

# people

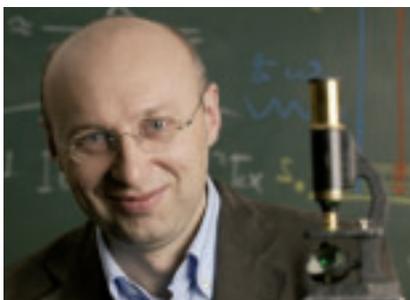
## Awards & Appointments

**Dr. Marc-André Weber**, Division of Radiology, was awarded the 1st prize of the DEGUM Wissenschaftspreis 2006 endowed with 2,000 Euros. The Deut-



sche Gesellschaft für Ultraschall in der Medizin (DEGUM) acknowledged the excellent achievements on "Pathologic Skeletal Muscle Perfusion in Patients with Myositis: Detection with Quantitative Contrast-enhanced US – Initial Results". The results have been published in the journal of "Radiology" in February 2006.

**Prof. Stefan Hell**, Head of the Research Group High Resolution Optical Microscopy at the DKFZ and Director of the Max-Planck-Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, Göttingen, received the Deut-



scher Zukunftspreis 2006 worth 250,000 Euro. The Prize conferred by the Federal President Horst Köhler acknowledges the development of an improved light microscope that bridges the gap between light and electron microscopy in some areas.

In October **Norma Howells** took over the position as Head of the Animal Care Facility. During her former job at Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe the Englishwoman who holds a broad experience in animal husbandry and laboratory management had been responsible for the implementation of highest standards in animal hygiene and husbandry in line with statutory provisions.

**Dr. Gisela Werle-Schneider**, Division of Toxicology and Cancer Risk Factors, and co-authors were honoured for the best article of the year published in the



"International Journal of Toxicology". The award of 1,000 US-Dollar acknowledges the publication of results on "Gene expression profiles in rat liver slices exposed to hepatocarcinogenic enzyme inducers, peroxisome proliferators, and 17alpha-ethinyloestradiol", which have been released in the September/October issue 2006, Volume 25.

**Prof. Jean Rommelaere**, Head of the Division of Tumor Virology, was honoured with the "Officier dans l'ordre national du Mérite". The French Republic ac-



knowledged his efforts in strengthening the European idea and his merits in intensifying the French-German co-operation in science.

**Prof. Rudolf Kaaks** was appointed Head of the Division of Clinical Epidemiology recently renamed as "Cancer Epidemiology". In his new position at DKFZ the Dutchman will participate in the DKFZ part of the European Prospective Investigation into Nutrition and Cancer (EPIC) as well as other epidemiological issues in order to identify cancer risk factors either inherited or of environmental cause.

**Dr. Michael Boutros**, Head of the Boveri-Junior Group Signaling and Functional Genomics, received the Johann-Georg-Zimmermann-research Award of 10,000



Euros. Boutros investigates signal cascades which control the development of the embryo. Failures of these signaling pathways contribute to cancerogenesis in adults. Additionally, the 36 year old researcher belongs to the twelve winners of the GO-Bio-Competition of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Boutros wants to re-examine results achieved with animal models by using human cell cultures. Furthermore, libraries of cell ingredients will be checked for new therapeutic components.

**Prof. Harald zur Hausen**, former Chairman of the DKFZ Management Board, was honoured with the Johann-Georg-Zimmermann Medal endowed with 5,000 Euros for his outstanding contributions in cancer treatment and his achievements in tumor virology.

**Dr. Julia Rautenstrauch**, Head of the Public Relations Department from 2003 till the end of 2006, took over the position of the Chief Executive Officer at MedKongress GmbH in Stuttgart on January 1st, 2007. We highly appreciate her sustained support in editing this Alumni Newsletter in the past few years.

# 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary

## A Science Foundation for the DKFZ

*What if scientific research were without generous sponsors? For 30 years science at the DKFZ has been supported by the Wilhelm and Maria Meyenburg foundation. The returns of the foundation provide the grants for the internationally announced Meyenburg Award which acknowledges outstanding achievements in cancer research. Moreover, the foundation supports research projects, hosts a lecture series with renowned scientists from the field of cancer research and operates a guest house for foreign investigators.*

In 1975 the foundation was established. Originally, it was Wilhelm Meyenburg's idea to set up a foundation. However, these plans were only realized years after his death. Maria Meyenburg put down the establishment of a foundation in her last will. The intention was to provide financial support in favour of cancer research. Dr. Marion Meyenburg, who has been chairing the Board of the Meyenburg Foundation since it was established, has been strongly committed to the intention of her parents throughout her officiate. In all administrative matters her activities have been supported by the Managing Director of the Foundation, Dr. Wolfgang Henkel, over the past 27 years.

During the early years of the foundation it provided grants for research activities, including temporary personnel, equipment for research projects and scientific conferences. The late Professor Klaus Munk was Deputy Chairman of the Foundation's Management Board and thereby scientific advisor right from the beginning (at present Professor Christof von Kalle holds this position). It was Munk who raised another issue: The implementation of the Meyenburg Award. Since 1981 the prize – presently endowed with 40,000 Euros – has been awarded annually to scientists for outstanding contributions in cancer research. The first award was dedicated to a scientist of DKFZ: Professor Werner Franke, an expert on intermediate filaments and cellular junctions. This cell biologist developed methods for the elucidation of the cellular origin of tumors, which are now commonly applied in diagnostic

*Andrew Fire*



*Dr. Marion Meyenburg and Dr. Wolfgang Henkel expressed their congratulations to 2005's prize winner Prof. Thomas Tuschl (on the right).*

and experimental pathology. In addition, the knowledgeable scientific advice of Werner Franke had a strong impact on the selection of many further laureates of the Meyenburg Foundation.

Retrospectively, with a list of laureates sounding like the Who's Who of tumor biology, it becomes clear that the foundation always had a keen sense for excellent minds. The most recent prize was dedicated to Professor Elizabeth Blackburn, University of California. She was given the award for the identification of telomerase, an enzyme that adds new DNA pieces to the ends of the chromosome after cell division and thereby counteracts the aging process of the cell.

Her predecessor in 2002 was last year's winner of the Nobel Prize in Medicine, Professor Andrew Fire, Stanford University, California. He shares his research subject with Professor Thomas Tuschl, Rockefeller University in New York, who received the Meyenburg Award in 2005. Both focus on short RNA pieces, so called siRNA, which interfere with mRNA and thereby silence the respective genes. Meanwhile siRNA belongs to the most important tools in biomedical research.



Professor David P. Lane, University of Dundee, and Professor Carl Henrik Heldin are two more examples of internationally renowned scientists honoured with the Meyenburg Award. Lane was awarded in 1995 for his outstanding contributions to the identification and functional characterization of tumor suppressor gene p53. The product of this gene plays an important role as "guard of the genome" as it stops the cell proliferation or even induces apoptosis in case of severe damages. Heldin (see also page 7) contributed to the understanding of the mechanism of cellular signal transduction by growth factors in health and disease.

In 1993 the foundation decided to face another challenge with respect to the international character of science: the acquisition of a guest house for scientists and students. To further expand the exchange with people from other countries is another aim of the foundation. Therefore, internationally renowned scientists are invited to give Meyenburg Lectures at the DKFZ to present latest news about their research. This lecture series, which has been organized jointly with the International Journal of Cancer for many years, has gained a high reputation and regularly attracts a large audience.

The DKFZ has every reason to appreciate the achievements of the Meyenburg Foundation in furthering cancer research, and to congratulate the Foundation on its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

*Dagmar Anders*

# excursion

## High Tech in a Baroque City *by Elfriede Mang*

*The City of Rastatt located in an area where Alsace, Rheinland-Pfalz and Baden-Württemberg meet offers diverse cultural attractions and a magical countryside. With its many buildings remaining from the Baroque period on one hand and vibrant modern businesses like the car manufacturer DaimlerChrysler on the other it is definitely worth a visit. Many guest scientists of DKFZ therefore didn't want to miss the chance to get to know this place.*

was silver, other popular colours were black and red. Not only the male guest scientists could not get enough of all those cars, especially in the exhibition hall were many snapshots were taken. Most participants of the Alumni excursion were eager to be on a photo in front of a luxurious Mercedes car. After the guided tour through the plant we enjoyed our lunch in the restaurant of DaimlerChrysler.

portunity to admire all the flowers and trees in the broadest sunshine.

The castle experienced several historical highlights, one of them was the Peace of Rastatt in 1714. The treaty which concluded the Spanish heritage war was made between the "Deutsches Reich", under governance of Prince Eugene, and France. These facts and many stories about former habits as well as anecdotes



*Fascination of disembodied modern technology: the DaimlerChrysler Production Halls*

June 29, 2006 promised to become a hot and sunny day when nearly 40 guest scientists entered the bus to Rastatt, situated in Baden between the rivers Rhine and Murg, at the foot of the Black Forest.

Our first destinations were the Daimler-Chrysler Production Halls. The plant was established in 1992 and stretches on an area of 147 hectare. About 6,500 employees help to produce A-class and B-class automobiles. In December 2006, 1.5 million A-class cars had been sold since its production start in 1997. We were astonished about the high number of employees as we saw so many robots constructing the cars. The nearly disembodied production hall was fascinating and frightening at the same time. We felt like in a science fiction movie. The main colour of the recent production

In the afternoon we moved to the baroque building of Rastatt Palace, finished in 1705. Margrave Ludwig Wilhelm from Baden (named Turk Louis due to his victory over the Turks) had a residence put up as replica to the example palace of Versailles. Also the Gardens were created after the French model. We had an op-

were told by a guide dressed in a baroque costume. This day of many impressions was concluded by a drink or an ice cream in the nicely situated Pagoda café not far away from the castle. On our way back by bus we had time enough to discuss what we had experienced due to a traffic jam on the highway.

*Brightest sunshine invited the group of guest scientists to enjoy the baroque Palace of Rastatt and its marvellous Gardens.*



# local politics

## A Lord Mayor for the City along the River *by Dagmar Anders*

*It was after eight years that on October 22, 2006, nearly 98,000 citizens of Heidelberg were asked to go to the polls for a new Lord Mayor. Beate Weber who was in duty at that post for 16 years was the first woman in the state of Baden-Württemberg to be elected Lord Mayor. Now the 62-year old former teacher and member of the European parliament refused to run for office again.*

The voter participation on the election day of October 22, only reached 46.1 percent – nearly 12 percent less than eight years before. Germany's long lasting trend of decreasing voter participation obviously wouldn't come to a halt before Heidelberg.

Nine candidates were nominated for the position of the mayor. As expected, none of them reached the necessary absolute majority of more than 50 percent of the legal votes. Nevertheless, this election procedure gave a distinct hint at the favourite candidates. Dr. Eckart Würzner who was supported by a broad bourgeois alliance of the Christ Democrats, the liberal party, the civil coalition "Die Heidelberger" and the Association of Free Voters clearly headed the poll with 47.4 percent, while his competitor Prof. Caja Thimm from the Green Party achieved a 33.6 percent vote. After all, the votes for Jürgen Dieter (Social Democrats) amounted to 12.8 percent, Dr. Arnulf Weiler-Lorentz ("Bunte Linke") received 3.7 percent of the votes, while the other five candidates stayed below 1 percent each. Thus it was obvious that another election had to be conducted where a simple majority would be sufficient.

The second election on November 12, turned out to be a duel between the 45-year old Würzner and the 48-year old communications researcher Thimm; the other three candidates were actually far from winning the election. The 53.9 percent vote for Dr. Würzner clearly exceeded the results of Dr. Thimm who reached 45.1 percent. Thus Würzner became the seventh Lord Mayor of the city of Heidelberg since World War II. The 45-year old politician who studied geography lives in Heidelberg's district Ziegelhausen, he is married and father of four children.

### After the election

Since 2001 Würzner has been deputy mayor of the department for environment and energy of the city of Heidelberg. On December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006, he assumed the office from Beate Weber.

Würzner's manifesto focused on sustainable environmental protection, on the invigoration of Heidelberg as a site of

station and the Ernst-Walz bridge which might have caused many commuters trying to get to the Neuenheimer Feld or the other way round to lose their temper.

Meanwhile both plans have been dismissed so that "City along the river" is en vogue again. Thus, the needle eye of traffic close to the Ernst-Walz bridge will be kept existing. But you don't really want to imagine the traffic jam at this



*Congratulations to Heidelberg's new Lord Mayor, Dr. Eckart Würzner (and his wife), from Beate Weber (left), his predecessor and an old hand in local politics.*

innovative science and research as well as on strengthening of economy.

But the center piece of his future policy will be the project "City along the river" which includes the construction of a tunnel of two kilometres along the edge of the river Neckar extending from the Wattergate up to the Theodor-Heuss bridge. The project is part of Würzner's vision of a city with a huge shopping center in Bergheim's former clinical buildings and a well equipped townhall that meets the standards for international congresses. The costs for the tunnel according to Würzner's plans will amount to 80 million Euros. This development was already under consideration some years ago, but it was abandoned when the plans for the construction of the so called "Burelli" tunnel from the main station close to the Ernst-Walz bridge and the 5<sup>th</sup> crossing of the river Neckar arose. Both projects were intended to relieve the totally tangled traffic situation between the main

bottle-neck as soon as the tunnel along the edge of the river will be under construction. Everyone who lives between the district of Kirchheim and the quarter around the main station is already sorely afflicted: A chaotic management of construction measures for the trolley provoked a lot of resentment among the citizens throughout the past two years. Finally, the tram is on its way from Kirchheim to Bismarck Square; yet, the Neuenheimer Feld is still connected to Heidelberg's southwest by bus lines.

Plans to build a roadway for the tram right through the middle of the biomedical campus raise new questions and debates – especially at DKFZ. Facing the possibility of a rattling tram with its electromagnetic field there are severe concerns about the safety of the highly sophisticated equipment for radio diagnostics and therapy.



## Conquerer by beauty: the “Palatinate Versailles”

On October 12, we made a pleasant trip to Schwetzingen, a beautiful town famous for its castle and the magnificent gardens. In the eighteenth century this place served as a summer residence for the palatinate electors Karl Philipp and Carl Theodor.

Although this visit was already more than two months ago, I can easily remember the beauty of that place. Bathing in the warmth of sunshine under the sapphire blue sky, walking in a grand palace garden which is wonderfully designed, surrounded by colorful flowers and graceful statues, all these seemed to have brought us back to the golden age of this castle which was built from 1698. One can easily imagine that it attracted the palatinate electors’ families to spend their whole summer here every year. And it is not hard to understand why the palace garden has the charm to make many couples to have their wedding ceremonies here. Beside the marvelous appearance of the castle our attention was attracted by the interesting stories and occurrences of former times. A

tourist guide introduced us to the life of the people, their everyday duties, their hobbies and customs. One of the most famous visitors of Schwetzingen castle was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The Austrian composer repeatedly came to this beautiful place which he regarded as “a paradise for musicians”. Nowadays the summer residence with its rococo theatre from 1752 is still the place for music events and concerts, above all the famous Schwetzingen Music Festival and the Mozart Festival.

The many impressions during our trip were like small mosaic pieces which added up to a complete picture of the palace and gardens. The notion that the castle conquers people by its beauty and in return surprises everyone by people’s love for it, made it even more charming. It was indeed an excellent journey and worth of being recommended to any friends. I am honored to be asked to write this small article to memorize this and express our thanks to the Alumni Association for organizing this event.

*Qin Yin*

### Imprint

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- p. 7: private (on the right)
- p. 9: Gerhard van Kaick
- p. 10/11: Yan de Andres
- p. 12: private, except middle row, below: Yan de Andres
- p. 13: Yan de Andres
- p. 14: DaimlerChrysler AG (left), Gerhard van Kaick
- p. 15: City of Heidelberg
- p. 16: Qin Yin

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