

UPF Austria: Austrian and German Hikers Trace Former Border as Peace Road

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Schwarzenberg, Austria – The annual Peace Road event at the Austria-Germany-Czech Republic tri-border area took place on August 8, 2026, beginning with a typical Bavarian “Weißwurst” breakfast at the mountain guesthouse, Berggasthaus Dreisessel, in Neureichenau. **Ms. Maria Pammer**, secretary general of UPF-Upper Austria, welcomed the guests from Austria and Germany. **Mr. Michael Leitner**, mayor of Schwarzenberg, recounted his own experience of the time when the Iron Curtain still ran along the Peace Road route.

Mr. Peter Deininger, president of Youth and Students for Peace (YSP) Austria, then introduced the participants to the Peace Designer project. He and his wife Polina, along with **Mr. Peter Wurzer** and his wife Hanna, had prepared cards featuring thoughts on peace from various prominent figures. Each participant selected a card with a quote that particularly resonated with them.



Participants then proceeded to hike the 3-kilometer, well-marked Peace Road that runs directly along the border between Germany and the Czech Republic to the tri-border area, where Austria, Germany and the Czech Republic meet. Along the way, participants enjoyed the beautiful natural surroundings, greeted many fellow hikers, and picked blueberries, while also engaging in lively discussions about their thoughts and hopes for peace.



Upon arriving at the tri-state border, everyone arranged the cards back-to-back, like a puzzle, to form the Peace Road banner, as a symbol that each individual can contribute a piece toward peace.



This Peace Road initiative began in 2021 at the tri-border area with a march from three directions. Participants set out from Austria, Germany and the Czech Republic, and over 100 walkers gathered for a peace celebration at the tri-border area. One of the underlying ideas was that people living along the 38th

parallel in Korea would one day be able to meet just as amicably as we have here in Europe since the fall of the Iron Curtain.



In the years that followed, the UPF chapter in each country took the lead in promoting this activity. With the help of the mayor of Schwarzenberg, who supported the initiative from the very beginning, an officially marked Peace Road was established in 2024 with the approval of the Bavarian State Forestry Department.



The initiators of this project were pleased to see the commitment of the young members of YSP Austria to carry on this tradition, as an inter-generational activity that brings people together in the name of peace, allowing them to experience God’s beautiful nature and, in a family-like atmosphere, enjoy hiking together and sharing with one another.

