

## AUSTRIA GERMANY SLOVAKIA HUNGARY by Jan Ferrell

Now, how's that for a trip? This January that is exactly what SCSC members enjoyed. **Leslie and Andy Cashio, Ann Rogers, Olga Adair and Frank Adams** found Berlin fascinating on the pre-trip. The Berlin Wall is something to see. The murals are breathtaking and poignant. Some German beer must have been sampled. They joined our core trip in Munich on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Our group included **Cheryl Spear** from Brownsville, **Frank Adams** from Beaumont as well as **Angela Zumwalt** from Gonzales. At the Munich airport as we were waiting for our bags, Cheryl Spear was asked over the intercom to check with the KLM desk only to find that her luggage never made it out of Amsterdam. Assured it would be transferred the next day—all sounded good. **Fred Zahnow**, Angela Zumwalt and I discovered our luggage had not made it either. What to do but to get on the bus and hope our bags would arrive along with Cheryl's. A lovely bus trip through the Austrian countryside brought us to Hotel Elisabethpark right in the middle of town center Bad Gastein. A great hotel but a little tricky to navigate since they recently added a new wing. Ask anyone staying in the new wing about the elevators. And the area with dead birds mounted on the wall. Avid skiers **Bob Gottlieb** and his son David, **Chris Albright, David George, Chris Urbanczyk** and **Ross Baker** hit the slopes the next day and the next day and—well, you get the picture. A great breakfast greeted us each morning and après ski in the lounge each evening.

Several of our travelers opted for the side trips to Salzburg (going by train was the way to go), the Salt Mines—David George is the one to ask about that, the Castles and Abbeys of south Austria and Trieste, Italy were just some of the offerings. Remember the missing bags? They did not show up until the 25<sup>th</sup> after spending time in Amsterdam and Munich. Shopping trips on KLM's dime was called for. Darn. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, I was attacked by a large amplifier that launched itself from a wall and broke my foot. So much for skiing—more time for shopping. Darn. On the 29<sup>th</sup>, most of our group went home to Houston. Leslie and Andy, Olga, Frank, Cheryl, Ross and I went on the post-trip to Bratislava, Slovakia and Budapest, Hungary. Terrific guides in both cities especially Budapest. Some of our travelers went to the ballet in Budapest. Located right on the Danube river, it is a lovely city but so-o-o cold that time of year. Having been to Bad Gastein 25 years ago, it was very special for me to see it again. It was special for all of us to create memories in wonderful Austria.

