

Edit Vályi

MAGYARHÁZ paper – publishing about community life and community achievements

1. Best practice selection criteria

Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) and Environs Association consider it important, beyond operating the live community house, to preserve the existing values and make them accessible for everyone. Evidence for this includes a museum and point of pride as well as other efforts, e.g. creating a document portal out of the heritage of László Mécs and János Erdélyi in Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos), freely accessible for anyone online, or collecting the books related to the institution and concerning the region and making them accessible in the form of an e-book.

It was in this spirit that Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) and Environs Association set up the paper with the title MAGYARHÁZ (Hungarian House) in 2013.

2. Organization(s) / person(s) the best practice can be related to

The Hungarian Community House started its operation in Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos), the centre of Uzh region (Ung-vidék), in December 2003 as an institution performing local and regional community education tasks. By setting up the institution, locals' primary goal was to create a living centre for Hungarians in the region that could in fact become a house as well as a home for Hungarian culture in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék).

As the years have passed by, the set objective has been attained: the institution has become and continues to be an intellectual centre decisive for Hungarian cultural and community life in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék). The Hungarian Community House accommodates several civil organizations; by providing rooms and facilities it helps the administration of organizations and the operation of cultural groups – choirs, folk dance groups – with practice and performance opportunities.

Its activity is cultural transmission in the traditional sense. Its objectives comprise cultivating Hungarian traditions, organizing events reinforcing Hungarian self-identity, helping people living in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék) assume and fully experience their being Hungarian. In complying with this

objective, the Hungarian House has a booming cultural life and community education activities; Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) and Environs Association running the house participates in organizing and implementing numerous cultural and recreational events; by implementing commemorations of our national holidays, professional lectures, book panels, choir and student meetings, book presentations, film shows, art exhibitions, folk handicraft days, history, literature and poem recital competitions, book publications, conferences, courses, nursery and primary school enrolment programmes, as well as the traditional Mécs László and Erdélyi János Commemorative Days it nourishes Hungarian-language culture in the region.

In addition to what are listed above, the house also accommodates a library of almost 3000 volumes with the name Mécs László Library; the institution furthermore has a multifunction lecture and event room and runs a weaving workshop with 20 weaving stands, a 10-bed student hostel as well as a backyard marketplace for small-scale farm produce. Organically related to the institution, there is the Erdélyi János Memorial Museum refurbished in 2016 and commemorating renowned persons born in or related to Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) and the Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) Point of Pride, which is a room commemorating the 1956 revolution, established in 2017 and equipped with modern technology, primarily targeting young people.

3. Stakeholders and beneficiaries of the best practice

- Inhabitants, visitors, guests from our closer or wider neighbourhood, of various age groups
- Institutions and organizations wishing to disseminate information about their activities

4. Objectives and activities of the best practice

The fundamental mission of the MAGYARHÁZ paper is to disseminate information about values in Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) and surrounding villages. In its content it focuses on the Uzh region (Ung-vidék) and specifically and primarily on events related to the Hungarian Community House in Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) and in harmony with the spirit of the house.

MAGYARHÁZ paper aims to inform readers about events implemented in the region as well about the activities of (groups of) persons working for Hungarian people of the Uzh region (Ung-vidék). It is important that the groups active in Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) feel that their activities are followed, their efforts are appreciated. One way Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) and Environs Association and the Hungarian Community House are able to contribute to this is by reporting about them and disseminating information about their activities.

It is its contents that really make a paper viable. Since its establishment, MAGYARHÁZ has always attempted to meet the interest of Hungarians living in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék). It is much more than a newspaper set up by an organization for advertising itself to report only about the organization and target its workers. As regards its contents it focuses on culture and community life in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék), specifically and primarily on events, cultural groups and renowned personalities related to the Hungarian Community House. The issues published until now have all had a central guiding line or topic that the whole paper was arranged around: László Mécs Memorial Year, János Erdélyi Memorial Year, the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the town of Vel'lé Kapusany (Nagykapos), the 20th anniversary of the foundation of Erdélyi János Mixed Choir, Gulag Memorial Year, János Arany Memorial Year. For easier orientation in the paper, the named topics were presented in several columns. The main topics were usually featured within the framework of interviews, own experience accounts, delivered speeches, photo accounts, posters as well as news published in other media in the form of articles under the title "Written about us". In some issues, the proceedings of conferences organized in relation to the respective memorial years and competition entries were published, e.g. the winner entries to the essay writing competition launched within the framework of the Mécs Memorial Year as well as the proceedings of the Mécs conference were all published in MAGYARHÁZ.

In the past few years, the paper has published interviews with literary historian Ilona T. Erdélyi; publicist Csaba Skultéty; Péter Petrikán, mayor of the 800-year-old town Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos); Adrienn Kovács, at that time director of Erdélyi János Elementary School; Malvin Baloghné Domonkos, conductor of Erdélyi János Mixed Choir celebrating the 20th anniversary of its foundation and Andor Kovács, chairman of Bercsényi Miklós Member Organization of the Czekoslovak Hungarian Workers' Association (Csemadok) in Kapusianske Kl'acany (Kaposkelecsény).

The paper has reported on Hungarian national holidays: the revolution and war of independence of 1848/49, the Day of National Unity, the anniversary of King St. Stephen and the foundation of the Hungarian state, the commemorations held in honour of the Martyrs of Oradea and the revolution and war of independence of 1956, also publishing the speeches delivered at the commemorations.

Accounts have been published of the commemoration held on the occasion of the 230th anniversary of the birth of András Fáy in Secovce (Gálszecs), the hike to the High Tatras commemorating László Mécs, the visit of students from Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos) to Sándor Palace in Budapest, the implementation of the Day of Folk Handicraft and the Traditional Csemadok Day, the visits of people from the Uzh region (Ung-vidék) to the Sumleu Ciuc (Csíksomlyó) pilgrimage and to Transcarpathia and the commemoration in Svalová (Szolyva). Articles have been published furthermore, among others, on the inauguration of Erdélyi János Memorial Museum and the Transylvanian gate in Vel'ke Kapusany (Nagykapos), the honorary citizen title awarding ceremony, the weavers' club operating in the Hungarian Community House, the folk song, folk tale and poem recital competitions organized for elementary school children, the Sunday School programme launched for Hungarian children living in the peripheries, the theatre performance implemented in the region and those elsewhere visited by persons from the Uzh region (Ung-vidék), book presentations, choir meetings, the inauguration of the status of Sándor Petőfi and László Mécs as well as the memorial plaques of Géza Herczegh and János Erdélyi, the 1956 memorial room and the backyard marketplace established at the Hungarian Community House as well as projects implemented by the Association.

The paper has also reported that in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék) Hungarians get in touch with one another from the youngest age group already, in relation to which it has reported on the travelling cradle of the Uzh region (Ung-vidék), the Ringató (Rocking) programmes organized for babies and

their parents, the inauguration and gift giving programmes affecting nursery and primary school children as well as the visit of the Sátoraljaújhely secondary school camp to Slovakian Upper Hungary.

Newspaper columns have also commemorated the lives and death as well as the work of renowned persons related to the region and have thus bid farewell to Zsuzsanna Erdélyi, Hungarian folklorist and granddaughter of János Erdélyi, holder of the Kossuth award; Csaba Skultéty, Vel'ké Kapusany (Nagykapos)-born editor and publicist, godson of László Mécs and teacher and editor Béla Demjén, manager of the cultural heritage of the Uzh region (Ung-vidék).

Beyond what are listed above the paper MAGYARHÁZ has published the research findings and research material of research conducted at the institution in the past few years, as well as ethnographic or local historical publications that were issued in few copies only. They considered it important that the possible widest range of people should be familiar with the documents and the paper proved suitable means of information dissemination. Thus the stories Roma handicraft craftsmanship in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék) by Edit Czap, People from the Uzh region (Ung-vidék) on the gulag by Denisza Lakatos and Edit Vályi The history of the premontré abbey in Leles by Andrea Pankovics have been published in instalments.

5. Area(s) affected by the best practice

Paper publication

6. Territorial scope of the best practice

The periodical provides opportunity for everyone who, by expressing their opinions in writing, wish to contribute to improving the lives of Hungarians in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék). Thus the paper gives the chance to settlements, schools, cultural groups and communities to show off their values. Accordingly, the articles in the paper are written by several people who are not professional journalists. The writers of the articles are mainly staff members of the association, persons attending the events or members of the groups concerned who, by participating in this creation process, enhance their self esteem and become more loyal and emphatic to their own region/respective events.

7. The conditions (human, financial, technical) required for the best practice

Human: editor, writers of articles, pressman

Financial: pre-press and printing expenses

Technical: computer for writing articles; camera for photographic documentation

8. Results and short-, mid- and long-term impact of the best practice

The aim of the publishers of the paper was that people would have the feeling the paper was theirs. Hungarians in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék) can rightfully be proud of their achievements (the success of children and adult groups, visits by two Hungarian presidents to the region, numerous renowned personalities from the Uzh region (Ung-vidék)) and it is good for them to see these achievements clearly; besides they can give the paper to people living in other regions to show them that despite their problems and difficulties all these achievements have been successfully attained.

9. Sustainability of the best practice

Publishing a paper may have several pitfalls. The greatest difficulties are not only to make the contents interesting or the look attractive but also to make the paper sustainable, find the coverage for publication and comply with regulations.

From the beginnings, the publication costs of MAGYARHÁZ have been covered from Hungarian and Slovakian grants and subsidies. Its publication has been funded, among others, by Bethlen Gábor Fund Management Zrt., the National Cultural Fund, Rákóczi Association as well as the Government Office of Slovakia. Thanks to the support the paper is totally free; it is a periodical that is not available in trade. It is published four times a year in 1000 copies, which are available at the Hungarian Community House in Vel'ke Kapusany (Nagykapos). The periodical is registered in compliance with regulations, it has an identification number according to the rules on newspaper publication currently in force in Slovakia and, meeting the relevant obligations, the association regularly sends legal deposit copies of the paper to the Slovakian National Library in Martin (Túrócszentmárton), the University Library in Bratislava (Pozsony), Gorazd Zvonický Zemplín Library in the district seat of Michalovce (Nagyimihály) and the Ministry of

Culture of the Slovak Republic. Beyond these, further copies are sent to the organizations subsidising the paper.

In addition to the printed paper, all issues of MAGYARHÁZ published so far are available online on the homepage of the Hungarian Community House of Vel'ke Kapusany (Nagykapos) www.nvt-magyarhaz.eu and thus the contents of the paper are accessible also for those who live a long way from the Uzh region (Ung-vidék) and have no access to paper-based copies.

10. Adaptability of the best practice

To put it in a trendy way, MAGYARHÁZ is easy to use as a cultural PR tool of the Uzh region (Ung-vidék), i.e. as a tool that familiarizes the audience, i.e. a wider range of the Hungarian population, with the values found in the region. The association publishing the paper regularly sends copies to primary and secondary schools in the neighbourhood, to local authorities, disseminates copies at major events and donates the paper as a present to other settlements, to Hungary, Transylvania, Subcarpathia and Voivodina, whereby the activities of Hungarians in the Uzh region (Ung-vidék) can be followed all over the Carpathian Basin.