

Our 2010 Honoree Alfred A. Zeller



In recognition of his unique ability to give joy to others by sharing his magnificent gift for playing the accordion and in appreciation of all his efforts on behalf of German-American organizations in Maryland, the German Society of Maryland selected Alfred A. Zeller to be honored at the 2010 Awards Banquet.

Alfred was born on May 21, 1924, in Stuttgart, Germany. He grew up in a German village where everyone was poor. TV hadn't been invented and radios were expensive so the people entertained each other. Alfred learned to play the accordion from his uncles and other relatives. It's a hobby that he has pursued enthusiastically whenever he has been able to do so.

In 1951 Alfred met, courted and married an American girl named Marlene. She was the daughter of his mother's childhood girlfriend. After he had received his visa, he emigrated from Germany to the United States to be with his bride. Soon after he arrived here, he decided to play soccer and keep up the soccer skills he had learned as a boy. He joined a professional team, the Baltimore Rockets. During the half time of an exhibition game against the Swiss National Team, a group of Baltimore Kickers approached him and asked him to join their team. Alfred finished the season with the Rockets. However, he joined the Baltimore Kickers in 1955. Alfred became a champion soccer player with the Kickers. He was inaugurated into the Maryland Major Soccer Players Hall of Fame. He is an Honorary Life Member of the Kickers and served as president of the club.



When the Kickers needed to raise funds, Alfred started a band to help with the fundraising efforts. This band became known as "The Happy Wanderers" and it performed at many events in Maryland. The band was also invited to play at events outside Maryland and the group made several recordings.

Although "The Happy Wanderers" went their separate ways in 1980, Alfred has continued to entertain with his accordion at many different events sponsored by a wide variety of organizations. He still entertains the members of the Edelweiss Club as well as other patrons of the Eichenkranz Restaurant in Highlandtown with his two-hour long accordion playing every other week. He is widely respected and appreciated as a very talented and generous member of the Greater Baltimore German American community.



The German Society of Maryland is pleased to honor Alfred Zeller with our 2010 Distinguished Service Award.

