

# THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

Founded 1783 Incorporated by Act of the General Assembly of Maryland, Chapter 100 Feb 3, 1818

## VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

APRIL 2014 ISSUE #91

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Shelley D. Arnold  
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Hon. Gerard W. Wittstadt

### **OFFICE MANAGER**

Bärbel Otto

\* = past president

### **ANNUAL MEETING 4-11**

The annual membership meeting is set for Friday, April 11. Come and bring with you as your guests all prospective members: your friends and family. The place: the dining room at Zion Church, City Hall Plaza. Time: doors open at 6:00. Free dinner served beginning at 6:30 pm. Meeting at 8 pm and is guaranteed to be over by 9 pm.

Please come to meet your fellow members of our Society. Hear the committee reports. President Tom Werner will report on the many activities of the past year and plans for the future.

Since we need to make sure there is enough food and drink for all, please call and leave a message on our answering service or send an email with the names of the persons in your group who will be attending. Phone number is 410-685-0450. The email: [germansociety@verizon.net](mailto:germansociety@verizon.net) Since we need to place an order with the caterer, please notify us by Wednesday, April 9. Talk to your "people" now and line them up. Students of all ages are especially welcome. We reach out to the young.

The food will feature a display of German meats, beer wine and soda. Since the event is on a Friday in Lent, we'll have tuna salad and egg salad for those who abstain from meat for religious reasons.

We count on our members to bring desserts. Homemade are especially welcome. If you can bring a dessert, let us know when you call or email your reservations.

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

This should be my last president's letter, since new officers will be elected at the April quarterly board of directors meeting. The past two years have gone by so quickly, but I have learned to respect what past presidents of the Society have accomplished and to appreciate the many contributions by other officers, directors and the general membership. Working with you has been sometimes challenging but overall rewarding, interesting and enlightening.

March 25 was the day we moved out of our ornate office. We just did beat the last (hopefully) snow of the season. Thanks go to the Wiesand family for making that location available when we had the need for a functioning office.

In addition to the many sources of information available to Maryland's German American community, please visit and "Like" the Facebook page GERMAN MARYLANDERS and MARYLAND GERMANS that are being administered by members of our Society.

I am very pleased that we are moving forward with the creation of a General Stricker Monument in this year of the star-Spangled Banner Bicentennial.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our Annual General Membership Meeting on April 11th and wish you all a warm and healthy spring time.

Thomas A. Werner, President

## KALENDER

April 11	Annual Meeting of Membership German Day 3-5 pm Friendship Garden, D.C.
April 25	Directors' meeting
June 22	Picnic at Kurtz's Beach
July 26-27	German Festival at Timonium
Oct. 4-5	Oktoberfest at Timonium
	Events to be announced
	October German Heritage month activities
	Ecumenical Service
	General de Kalb commemoration-Annapolis
	Dedication of General Stricker monument
	Bus trip to Heritage Museum in Washington, DC
	Visit to gravesite of Stricker, Westminster Cemetery
	Visit the German Society's website: <a href="http://www.germansociety-md.com">www.germansociety-md.com</a>

Articles from many past newsletters are posted on our website. Dr. Maureen Helinski maintains the site. "Pioneers in Service", the history of our Society, can be found on our website. For more local German-American events, check the web site of the Deutschamerikanischer Buergerverein von Maryland: [www.md-germans.org](http://www.md-germans.org)

You are invited to add articles about your German ancestors to the website conducted by our vice president and director, Shelley Arnold; [germanmarylanders.org](http://germanmarylanders.org)

Listen to German music and announcements of local German American activities on internet radio at [germanamericanradio.com](http://germanamericanradio.com). You are invited to visit and participate in the interactive website "Der Wecker", founded by our member, Walt Mathers. Google search these 3 words: German American Forum.

## ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

The Directors of the Society are elected by our members, which happens each year at our annual membership meeting. The nominating committee proposes a slate on which the members vote. Our bylaws require members who wish to nominate a director to notify the president 30 days in advance of the meeting, and although that time has come and gone, you may still request the nominating committee to place a name on the slate. If you wish to do so, send a letter to our P. O. Box addressed to Chairman, Nominating Committee, or email our office at [germansociety@verizon.net](mailto:germansociety@verizon.net) or phone 410-465-9450. The committee is not required to place the name in contention, but will give it consideration.

## OUR OFFICE CLOSES

Our Society has maintained an office at 15 W. Mount Vernon Place for nearly 20 years. As the years passed, the parking became increasingly difficult, making it virtually impossible to hold meetings in the evening at the site. The rental consumed 100% of our dues income, and our directors voted to close the office, It was a yeoman's task to pack all the records, furniture and artifacts to be put into storage. Our Society is cooperating with the Buergerverein, Club Fidelitas and the Baltimore Kickers club in a search for a location to serve as a German American cultural center with offices for the 4 organizations and a hall for meetings and social events. The Kickers club on Broadway has been sold, which makes the search more urgent. We may have a new office soon.

## INTERNET RADIO

Our executive committee studied the proposal to start an internet radio station, but after reviewing the pros and cons, the liabilities and man-hour requirements, decided to give moral support but not sponsor it. The station will become a free-standing organization with the same goals as our own Society: to promote the German American culture, heritage and German language. We will not exercise control over it, but because our mission is similar, will help when we can.

The station, [germanamericanradio.com](http://germanamericanradio.com), is up and running, 24/7. Lothar Boczek, the director of the former Edelweiss Hour, is an active programmer and announcer and will bring the Edelweiss Hour to the internet. Bob Mathers, a professional broadcaster of 36 years experience who was admitted last year into the Maryland Entertainment Hall of Fame, is the General Manager of the station. Tune in and listen to it for news of the German American community's activities and events. The target audience is the Middle Atlantic states, primarily Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, Washington, D.C. and southern Pennsylvania. You will probably recognize many of the voices on the station.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DUTCH!

Bruno (Dutch) Niemann turns 90 on April 16th. He took a fall near the Kickers clubhouse and broke a kneecap, had an operation, went into re-hab and still has many more weeks to mend. Dutch, who hasn't missed an annual membership meeting in many years, won't be with us on April 11. Get better so you can pitch horseshoes at our June picnic, Dutch!

## **STRICKER BUST AT FOUNDRY**

At its January meeting the Board of Directors approved the commission of creating a bust of John Stricker to the Schuler School, with Francesca Guerin as the artist. She has completed the bust of Stricker in clay and it is now at the foundry being cast in bronze. John Stricker was an incorporator of our Society and served for many years as a vice president. When we learned that there were monuments to the other leaders of the defense of Baltimore in the War of 1812 (Gen. Sam Smith and Major George Armistead) but none for the Hero of the Battle of North Point, our Society undertook to remedy that situation by commissioning a Stricker monument. Stricker's troops killed General Ross, the British commander in the Battle of North Point in Baltimore County.

We do not yet have a site for the monument nor a date for the dedication. Our first choice of a site is Federal Hill, where the Smith and Armistead monuments stand. However, our choice was rebuffed by a Federal Hill community association which appears to have some control over the Hill. Other potential sites are Patterson Park, the North Point State Park and the Battle Acre, both at the scene of the Battle of North Point. We hope these issues will be resolved in the immediate future.

The Stricker Monument will involve one of the largest expenditure of funds in the 231-year history of our Society.

## **GEN. JOHN STRICKER: SWISS**

Stricker, the "Hero of the Battle of North Point" was an incorporator and a vice president of our Society. We will honor him in the commemoration of the War of 1812, which effectively ended when Stricker's troops killed the British General Ross at North Point. Stricker's ancestry was not well known and for years we wondered about it. The question has been answered in an article by Dr. Nicholas Fessenden, soon to be published. Dr. Fessenden's research confirms that both of Stricker's grandparents were Swiss immigrants to Virginia, who later settled in Frederick, Maryland. Stricker fought as a junior officer under his father in the Revolutionary War, and rose to the rank of General of the Maryland Militia in the War of 1812. He signed the articles of incorporation of our Society in 1817. Our Society, founded in 1783, was previously an unincorporated association. In those days the German Society consisted of German-speaking persons, which included a large percentage of the

population of Switzerland. We are hoping that further research may discover which canton of Switzerland was home to the Stricker family. Dr. Fessenden's article will appear in The Report, the publication of The Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland, of which he is president.

## **THE ELEPHANT \* THE DONKEY:**

Ever wonder how the Democrats got their donkey and the Republicans their elephant? Wonder no more. They came from the pen of German American civil war era cartoonist Thomas Nast: another contribution to our American culture. A display of Nast's work, prepared by the German-American Heritage Museum in D.C., has been exhibited at Zion Church and is currently at the main Pratt Library.

## **OCTOBER: OUR HERITAGE MONTH**

It was not easy. Many people worked hard to get the legislature to pass the law declaring October to be German American Heritage Month in Maryland. Our own vice president, Shelley Arnold, spearheaded the efforts. The strongest legislative supporters of this law were Delegates Susan Aumann and Bill Frank and Senator Katherine Klausmeier. Our own Society was instrumental in the process: our officers and past presidents testified in Annapolis to support the bills. Our president Tom Werner put our own German Society in the forefront of the supporters.

Now that we have our month, what are we going to do with it? Nothing happens by itself. We need thinkers and doers. What are you willing to do? What are your ideas? Don't sit back and wait for the officers to think the thoughts and do the work.

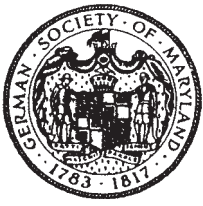
October will come and go with nothing to tell the world about our heritage unless YOU make it happen.

## **NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS**

Several of our long-time members have joined the ranks of our Lifetime Members :

George Shriver, VI and Chris Shriver  
Annemarie Picket  
Buck Lyon-Vaidon  
Edward and Shawn Dippel  
George Schrenker and Donna Whetzel

All have been members for at least 10 years. We are delighted that they made the decision to be members for life. The one-time dues are \$250. We are happy that they have made this lifetime commitment.



The German Society of Maryland  
P.O. Box 22585  
Baltimore, MD 21203-4585  
410-685-0450  
[www.germansociety-md.com](http://www.germansociety-md.com)

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Martha Daxer  
Gael R. Macnamara, PhD  
Gail S. Zik  
Chad Zik

*“The purpose of the German Society of Maryland is to preserve and promote the German heritage and traditions through educational, social and benevolent programs; and to develop the unity and continuity of the German American community in the State of Maryland.”*

## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse: (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_

“I hereby apply to be a member of the German Society of Maryland”

Annual dues \$25 Spouse may be included at no extra cost.

The German Society of Maryland  
P.O. Box 22585  
Baltimore, MD 21203-4585

Visit the German Society's website:  
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“Pioneers in Service”, the history of our Society, can now be found on our web site.

For more local German-American happenings, check the web site of the Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland: [www.md-germans.org](http://www.md-germans.org)

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