

THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

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VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

JANUARY 2014 ISSUE #90

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* = past president

THE SCHULER FAMILY LEGACY was honored at the Annual Awards Banquet of our Society held on Nov. 2 in the Adlersaal of Zion Church of the City Baltimore. Hans Schuler was a legendary sculptor whose works achieved an international reputation. He came to America as a child when his parents emigrated from Alsace Lorraine, then under German sovereignty, attended the Scheib School at Zion Church and graduated from the Maryland Institute in the first class of the new Rinehart School of Sculpture in 1898. He then studied sculpture in Paris and returned to the Maryland Institute as a teacher in 1906. In 1925 he became its

director and remained as such until his death in 1951. His son, Hans Karl Schuler and his wife, artist Ann Didusch established the Schuler School of Fine Arts in 1959, an entity carried on by their family. Francesca Schuler Guerin, their daughter, is now the director of the school. Frederic Schuler "Fritz" Briggs, son of Charlotte Schuler Briggs and grandson of Hans Karl Schuler studied under his grandfather. Francesca's sons Andrew Schuler Guerin and Hans Paul Guerin also serve on the school's faculty, along with their uncle. The Schuler School of Fine Arts, is known internationally as one of the world's finest atelier schools for oil painting, watercolors, drawing and sculpture. The German Society honors this tradition.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, the year 2013 came to a close and we are now looking ahead to a busy and fruitful New Year for our Society. Happy New Year to you all. At the end of the year our Director Gerhard Meinzer contributed an additional \$2,000 to the Gerhard Meinzer Scholarship Fund. His total contributions in 2013 were \$4,000 and there is now \$6,510 left in the fund for future awards. Thank you Gerhard. This award is available again in 2014. Please see our website www.germansociety-md.com for information and application forms.

Also see the article on page 2 regarding the Robert F. Awalt Memorial Fund. Thank you too, Mrs. Awalt.

As we were going to press it was brought to my attention that our Director Dr. Mohamed Esa was recently installed as the National President of the American Association of Teachers of German. Many of our directors and members are members of AATG.

"The Purpose of the German Society of Maryland is to develop the unity and continuity of the German-American community in the State of Maryland." In this edited version of our stated purpose I am emphasizing the unity element of the purpose because I fear that we in our Society sometimes lose track of that part of our purpose. I have seen

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KALENDER

- January 25 "Dueling Pens" Special Exhibit
- March 1 Buergerverein Fasching (Adlersaal)
- April 11 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
- April 24 Directors: election of officers
- May 18 Student Awards Presentation

Visit the German Society's website:
www.germansociety-md.com

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 web site. For more local German-American events, check the web site of the Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland: www.md-germans.org

You are invited to add articles about your German ancestors to the website conducted by our director, Shelley Arnold; (germanmarylanders.org) and to register to visit and participate in the website "Der Wecker", founded by our member, Walt Mathers.

TRY THIS ELECTRONICALLY

We would like to be able to send our newsletter to all our members via email. It would save us money and get it to you lightening fast.

Some of our directors who have tried it say they prefer the electronic version. They can forward all or parts of it to their friends and relatives. They find it is a good way to recruit new members. We will continue the print version of the newsletter, but by sending the electronic version at the same time it goes to the printer, our members can receive it almost a week earlier.

Try it. You may like it.

Send an e-mail to our office manager at germansociety@verizon.net saying "Send me the newsletter via email". Each electronic delivery of the newsletter will save the Society about \$1.20. Even more as postage rates go up. The savings may allow us to publish a monthly newsletter, to better communicate with the membership.

Don't worry, though. The printed newsletter will always be available.

And since it's posted to our website, the newsletter will eventually also be available to the public.

ROBERT F. AWALT MEMORIAL

The memorial fund honoring our deceased member Robert F. Awalt now totals \$65,000, thanks to a gift of \$25,000 recently made by his widow, Jane. Jane served for several years on our Board of Directors until she had to resign to care for Robert, an Alzheimer's patient. After Bob's death, Jane wrote a book on caring for Alzheimer patients, which was acclaimed by the Alzheimer's unit at the Johns Hopkins Hospital. Jane Awalt has been a staunch supporter of our society. Her current gift is to be used for the promotion of cultural activities and the preservation of the German American heritage. Thank you, Jane.

THE WISE GUYS

Professor Doktor Mohamed Esa, an integral member of the German Society's Board of Directors, introduced his recently published book, *Wise Guys: Die Lieder der Band im Unterricht.* at the IDT (Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband) Conference in Bolzano, Italy, in late July. The book is written in German and contains background information about the well-known German a cappella band, "The Wise Guys," lyrics for ten of their songs, and many creative worksheets that accompany these songs and can be used to integrate music into German classrooms. Dr. Esa's presentation was met with a warm and enthusiastic response from the participants who represented teachers of German from around the world. Herzlichen Glückwunsch, Dr. Esa!

CONDOLENCES

...to the family of our member JACK WEGLEIN who died since our last newsletter. Jack was a retired Baltimore City police officer and after his retirement from the force, became a successful business man. His friends included mayors, senators and governors, the leaders in law enforcement, as well as detectives and patrolmen, the rich and the poor. Jack was humble and self-effacing, charitable and kind and respectful of his German heritage. He was the son of a Lutheran Pastor. He is survived by a son and his widow, Joan, also a member of our Society.

WOW! WHAT A MONTH!

October, 2013. The first official German American Heritage Month in Maryland, enacted into law by the legislature. The 31 days were packed solid with events sponsored by our Society and by the many German American groups of Maryland and Washington. Since the legislature has made October our heritage month, we are now able to plan future cultural and heritage celebrations and make the German American presence known to our fellow citizens by publicizing the accomplishments of our predecessors.

GERMAN AMERICAN DAY IN D.C.

Ronald Reagan's G-A Day, Oct. 6 and the celebrations planned for it by the German Ambassador at the Friendship Garden on the Washington Mall was "rained out" by the infamous Government Shutdown. The event was moved to The German American Heritage Museum on 6th Street where the Cultural Attaché brought the Ambassador's greetings and Mark Wheat, president of the museum, read President Obama's proclamation praising the contributions to our country by Americans of German-speaking ancestry.

MY MOTHER WILL BE HAPPY

When our president Thomas A. Werner read a proclamation from Maryland's Governor Martin O'Malley, he revealed that when the governor signed the law making October German Heritage month in Maryland, Tom was standing directly behind him. The governor leaned over and said "This will make my mother happy. She's German."

OTHER PROCLAMATIONS

Proclamations from the Governor of Virginia and the Mayor of Washington were also read. All of the proclamations applauded the contributions of German Americans to this country and urged the preservation of our heritage.

OUR REPRESENTATIVES

Our Society was well represented by Pres. Tom Werner, past presidents Brigitte Fessenden and Ted Potthast and director Betty Niemann, as well as many members. Dr. John Butt stood in for his wife, our director Linda Butt, Ben Potthast, age 16, from Harford County represented our student members.

25TH ECUMENICAL SERVICE

For 25 consecutive years our Society has joined with Zion Church and others to commemorate the fall of the Berlin wall. This year's ceremony was held on Sept. 30 to celebrate the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels. St. Michael is the patron of Germany. Preacher for the ceremony was The Rev. William Gohl, Pastor of Epiphany Lutheran Church. The Rev. Holger Roggelin, Zion's Pastor was the presiding minister. Participating clergy were The Rev. H.J. Siegfried Otto, past president of our Society, Rev. Thomas Davison, member, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Rev. Father John Biermann, SAC, St. Jude's Shrine, The Rev. Father Richard Lawrence, St. Vincent dePaul Church, The Very Rev. Father Paschal Morlina, OSB, St. Benedict's Church and The Rev. Breonna Roberts, Christ Lutheran Church.

The services were held in English, German and Latin. Afterwards, a placque was unveiled on the front of the

Church designating Zion as an historical building by the U. S. Dept. of the Interior.

Bernard Penner, president of Zion Church council and a director of our Society, who served as master of ceremonies, greeted the attendees in the Adlersaal. Dr. Nicholas Fessenden, President of the Society for the History of the Germans in MD also addressed the assembly.

Councilman William "Pete" Welch presented congratulations from the Baltimore City Council to Zion Church and mentioned that he had learned to speak German while a student at Loyola High School.

Our Society was well represented by many members, including directors Christel van der Berg, Bernard Penner, Esq., Shirley Santora, Dr. Maureen Helinski, The Rev. H.J. Siegfried Otto, Brigitte Fessenden, and Ted Potthast. Our Society contributed towards the cost of the trumpeters and the food.

FROM THE GERMAN EMBASSY

The German Embassy sent our Society words of praise on the occasion of our award honoring the legacy of Hans Schuler. The letter concluded:

"The core function of The German Society of Maryland, the fostering of the German language and culture, supporting the German American community through social and cultural events, and promoting a fertile dialogue between the German Americans and the larger Maryland society, remains as important as ever. Thanks to your longstanding commitment to the German heritage of Maryland, the State legislature dedicated October as German American Heritage Month. Your activities help to keep the German identity vibrant and animated in this land of progress and diversity.

In this, the 230th year of the German Society of MD, the German Embassy wishes to extend its hearty congratulations to the Schuler family for this well-deserved award, as well as thank the Society for fulfilling the crucial function of convening the community and for recognizing the achievements of outstanding Americans of German background. We look forward to continuing our long-standing relationship with you, and wish you continued success in all your endeavors."

Karlfried Bergner

Minister of Communications and Culture
Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany

GENERAL deKALB HONORED

On October 9 our Society honored Baron Johann deKalb, the Bavarian who commanded the Maryland and Delaware Lines in the Battle of Camden in the Revolutionary War. He was shot and bayoneted by the British troops and died 3 days later. The event took place on the west lawn of the Maryland State House at the foot of the stature of deKalb which was erected there by the congress of the United States.

The ceremony was opened with a prayer from our Society's past president, The Rev. H.J. Siegfried Otto. Our counsel, Judge Gerard Wm. Wittstadt, a lineal descendant of deKalb's brother, spoke of the General's exploits. The curator of the Maryland State Archives, Sasha Lourie, read a letter written by deKalb in which he interceded on behalf of another officer who later became Governor of Maryland during the war of 1812.

A wreath made by our member Valerie Mathers was laid at the foot of the deKalb statue by the commandant of the Maryland National Guard Armory in Annapolis.

The Honorable Michael Miller, President of the Maryland State Senate, addressed the assembly. He remarked that Thomas Jefferson took walks for his health on the very ground where we were standing; and mentioned that the Marquis Lafayette also came to this hallowed place in the 1820's as an older man, and asked that the painting of him hanging in the State House be updated, as he was just an 18 year old boy during the Revolution. Senator Miller spoke of his own German heritage. His father was the distributor of the "Old German" brand of beer in



Western Maryland: sales dropped dramatically when the U.S. and Germany were at war.

The State of Maryland took advantage of this event to make public a new placque describing deKalb and the statue. Our directors Kurt Wittstadt, Gerhard Meinzer and President Tom Werner unveiled the placque

In addition to directors G. Wittstadt, K. Wittstadt, Werner and Meinzer, other board members present were Brigitte Fessenden, Dandridge Brooke, Anton Smoot and Ted Potthast. Other of our members attended including General M. Hall Worthington, representing the military.



The Honorable Michael Miller, President of the Maryland State Senate, at the deKALB event

The event was arranged by Walter Mathers who coordinated the presentation and served as Master of Ceremonies.

deKALB NOT A WIMP

When Johann deKalb led the Maryland Line, he was right in the middle of his men. When they shot his horse and he fell, the Redcoats were right on top of him, shooting him 3 times and bayonetting him repeatedly. He was a true fighter. No cruise missiles or drones controlled from an office in Arizona. They don't make them like deKalb any more.



Ted Potthast, Dr. David Denisch, Captain Michael Setzer (Naval Attaché to German Embassy) Walter Mathers

ties to Maryland that Captain Paul Koenig may legitimately be considered a part of our German American heritage. We expect to commemorate the centennial of his historic July, 1916 visit.

Dr. David Denisch, one of our directors, is a relative of Koenig. Captain Michael Setzer served 18 years as a U-boat commander. He will serve on our Koenig Centennial committee.

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

The 100th anniversary of Koenig and the U-Boat Deutschland will create an opportunity to display Maryland's German American heritage. A committee is being formed to make it happen. Please sign up.

(Captain Michael Setzer has agreed to serve.)

KOENIG'S MEMORY HONORED

Our Society joined with nautical groups on Sept. 15 to honor the memory of Captain Paul Koenig aboard the Nuclear Ship Savannah in the Baltimore harbor, within sight of the dock where Koenig's U-boat Deutschland was moored in the historic 1916 visit. We contributed funds for the music for the ceremonies. When Koenig eluded the British blockade to enter the Chesapeake in July, 1916, Baltimore was a pro-German city. Koenig was treated to a banquet attended by 1,000 citizens, including the mayor of the city and the governor of Maryland. He solicited funds for the German cause and it appeared that some members of our Society were contributors, since the commemorative iron cross bearing the impression in brass of the submarine and of Koenig was recently discovered among the archives of our Society. The cross was awarded for significant donations.

Captain Paul Koenig is a part of Maryland's German American heritage. He hobnobbed with one of our members, H. L. Mencken and invited him to take a return trip to Germany in his submarine (Mencken declined). After WWI he visited Baltimore and was treated as an honored guest, even though our two countries engaged in war. At his death in 1933, memorial services were held in Baltimore at Zion Church. The ceremony commemorating the 80th anniversary of his death was held Sept. 15, 2013 aboard the Nuclear Ship Savannah. Books about him have been published in Maryland, including a biography by the Naval Academy Press, There are so many

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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increased unity in the German-American community in our area in recent years and I hope that this trend continues to strengthen.

The Deutschamerikanischer Buergerverein von Maryland, of which we are a member organization, is holding a Fasching in the Adlersaal at Zion Church on March 1st. This is an excellent opportunity for our members to gather for a social event and to mingle with members of other German-Americans in our area. Music will be provided by Die Immergrün Musikanten, a fine band that performed at the Maryland German Festival. For more information contact us at: Phone 410-685-0450 or email germansociety@verizon.net.

As shown on the Kalender, our Annual Meeting will be on April 11th. We must break again from the tradition of holding the meeting on the first Friday after Easter. Easter comes late this year and our Board Meeting which must follow the Annual Meeting in April will be on the 24th. The Friday after Easter is the 25th.

I hope to see you all at the Annual Meeting. Details will follow.

Thomas A. Werner, President

**"Dueling Pens" Thomas Nast/Adalbert Volck
An Uncivil War of Illustration
Zion Church
Opening January 25, 2014 7-9 pm
Exhibit through February 16
Call for more information 410-727-3939**

A GERMAN VILLAGE IN MARYLAND

Go back in history and imagine a tiny village, no roads, paths paved with red bricks among patches of green beneath large leafy trees and tall evergreens, populated by citizens all between the ages of 11 and 18, with a few older folks appearing here and there. The youth are happy, carefree, some with books or papers, chatting with one another, with German words being flung to the winds. That describes the atmosphere on Oct. 15 at German American Day on the campus of McDaniel College in Westminster, MD. 2,000 students from Maryland high schools and middle schools invaded the campus to attend programs of all things German: music, language, heritage, history and current events. Our Society was represented by our Directors Lauren Bukszar, Ted Potthast and Dr. Armin Mruck, who was one of the presenters at the sessions. Many of the German teachers who accompanied the students are members of our Society, and some of our student members were also in attendance.

Our director, Dr. Mohamed Esa, a professor of German at McDaniel, is the founder and promoter of German American Day at the school.

HARFORD CO. LEADS THE WAY

Harford has the greatest number of students studying German of all the Maryland counties. One of the middle schools has nearly 100 students enrolled. At a meeting of German teachers on Oct. 31, the topic was how to maintain and even expand German language studies amidst an era of budget cuts. If there is a demand, the Board of Education will accede and provide the programs. The demand must be created at the middle school level by presenting events to the youngsters to make German an attractive alternative when a language is being selected in high school. A representative of our Society attended the meeting and suggested that The German Society could aid in some way. The teachers want to hold County-wide sessions for students to introduce them to German culture, music, food and language, but budget cuts resulted in eliminating the use of buses to bring the children together. Our representative thought the Society could help defray the cost of busing to such events. German must be promoted at the lowest level to make it thrive in high schools and keep it alive in the colleges. Our Society has spent money on college and high school students: now it makes sense to give financial support at the bottom in order to build the college superstructure.

Teachers Rick Jones and Joshua Brown were among the members of our Society who attended the meeting. Treasurer Ted Potthast also made an appearance. President Tom Werner wanted to attend but was prevented by another commitment.

IS AN HISTORIAN IN THE HOUSE?

Not many of our members have had the chance to study the history of the German speaking countries, the places from which our founders originated. Our Society was called "German" because its founders all spoke a form of Germanic language. They came from the kingdoms of Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Westphalia and Baden-Wuerttemberg; from Austria, Switzerland and from the dozens of duchies, principalities and other sovereign "countries" of our forefathers. Most of them joined together around 1870 to become "Deutschland". If our Society sponsored it, would you attend a lecture series to learn our origins?

GEN. JOHN STRICKER COMMITTEE

We are ardently seeking Society members willing to join the committee to commemorate John Stricker, an incorporator and vice-president of our Society, known as the Hero of the Battle of North Point. Our plans are extensive but our ranks are meager. We want to erect a monument, publish and distribute pamphlets and brochures, sponsor lectures and events and publicize "our man" in the war of 1812 remembrances. If you have an interest in history, please join. Contact co-chairman Jim Schaub or Ted Potthast via our office phone 410-685-0450 or P. O. Box 22585, Baltimore, MD 21203-4585 Or call Jim Schaub at 301-776-9094 or e-mail at germansociety@verizon.net.

CONGRATULATIONS

...to PROF. DR. ARMIN MRUCK upon his receipt of a newly created president's award at Towson University. The presentation reads: "The President, Faculty Staff, Students and Alumni of Towson University extend their gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Armin Mruck for his continued service and exemplary dedication to the University and recognize his selection as the first recipient of the President's Honored Emeriti Award. Maravene Loeschke, President" Dr. Mruck is a vice president and lifetime director of our society.

MEMBERS CAN INITIATE ACTION

When a member of our society has an inspiration and acts on it, marvelous events can result. It just takes initiative. Our member Walter Mathers is a perfect example. He is not an officer or a director, just a member with a strong dedication to his German American heritage. His efforts produced a plethora of projects:

-- He noted that the grave of Sgt. Henry Gunther, the last American killed in WWI did not memorialize his heroism, persuaded the cemetery to erect a monument and supervised the dedication ceremonies,

-- He volunteered as co-chair of our first "Great German Family Picnic", and obtained the venue, the pavilion at North Point State Park and the next by lining up Kurtz's Beach.

-- He found the band, The Dockenspielers.

-- He arranged donations of prizes from many firms, including 500 bags of gummy bears and the lion's costume from Haribo; he brought two antique fire engine pumps for the children to pump and squirt one another with Chesapeake Bay water.

-- He persuaded officials at the Md. State House to permit us to conduct ceremonies honoring General Baron Johann deKalb, the German who led the Maryland line in the Revolutionary War, and served as master of ceremonies.

-- He single-handedly secured for our Society the rights to use 3 internet stations to set up German American Radio.

-- He organized the ceremonies aboard the nuclear ship Savannah on Sept. 15 honoring Captain Paul Koenig at which the German Embassy sent its naval attaché, a former submarine captain,

-- He arranged for the music and the dramatic presentation for the Koenig ceremonies.

-- following his interest in the history of Maryland Germans, he contributed to many items in our newsletter.

-- He created and supervises the operation of a German American forum, "Der Wecker".

-- He arranged for the donation to the Society of large quantities of Trachten, conveying them from Annapolis to Towson and to our office, for use in our Society's functions.

Walt has shown what a member can accomplish for the good of our Society and the German American community. Many of us have good ideas but are too bashful to step up and put them into action. Hopefully other members will follow his example.

A GRATEFUL STUDENT

by Brittany Whiteside

Our Society sent a student to Germany. She writes:

"I would like to thank the members of the German Society for choosing me as the winner of the Gerhard Meinzer Summer Scholarship. It was truly a life-changing experience to live in Germany and meet new people. Thank you very much!

After a 9 hour plane ride from New York, I finally arrived at Reichenhall. The first thing I noticed about Germany as I got off the plane were the mountains that surrounded me. It was July and the mountain tops still had snow. Wow! What a beautiful sight. I met my host sister, Julia and her family and her school, Karls gymnasium. She had brought me a few gifts and a welcome poster. My host family lives in Ainring, which is close to Salzburg in Austria. On the day I arrived we went by car from school to home, but I quickly found out that on most other days we would go by train. It was a quick 15 minute train ride, but 30 minutes by car.

While I was in Germany my host family had many gatherings with its extended family (aunts, and uncles) and I had a chance to meet them as well. I even had a chance to attend a Confirmation. The entire family was very nice and I grew close to each of them as my time in Germany went on. Some of my favorite things were going to the bakeries and cafes around my town. One of the most fun things I did was going to Munich with my host sister's soccer team to see the German women's soccer team play against Japan.

In addition to visiting places with my host family, I went on trips with the AATG. We went to Passau, which is known as the three river city It's where the Danube, Inn and Ilz rivers join together. We also visited Munich and saw the Glockenspiel, churches and visited cafes.

I saw so many buildings and castles, and I learned so much of the history and background of each place. I learned so much about the German culture and saw how it differed from the American culture. I went to my host sister's school every day and met so many new people and over time became good friends with all of them. I was welcomed into all of their lives by going to birthday parties, soccer games and concerts. I am still in touch with many of the people I met on the trip

My three weeks in Germany is unforgettable. I had so much fun meeting people and participating in my host family's lives. My knowledge of German culture and my German speaking skills have increased so much. I'm so excited that I got the opportunity to go and learn and live with a German family. I will never forget the three weeks spent in Bad Reichenhall.



The German Society of Maryland
P.O. Box 22585
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410-685-0450
www.germansociety-md.com

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Joseph F. Burke
Vanessa J. Burke
Gerald H. Keller
Ingrid I. Kleinsorg
Joseph E. Knepper
Cornelia G. Mueller

SOME FUN FACTS WITH NUMBERS

When the British sailed up the Chesapeake Bay to embark at North Point and fight our hero, General John Stricker, their ships floated in the largest estuary in North America. The bay holds more than 15,000,000,000,000 (trillion) gallons of water, less than the 16 trillions of dollars of our present national debt. John Stricker was an incorporator of our German Society and also of the Bank of Baltimore. As a banker, could he have envisioned a national debt of even a few million? (We had just paid \$3 million to France for the entire Louisiana Purchase.)

“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:

www.germansociety-md.com

Articles from some past newsletters are posted on our website. Dr. Maureen Helinski maintains the site.

“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

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