

THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

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

VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

JUNE 2010 ISSUE #71

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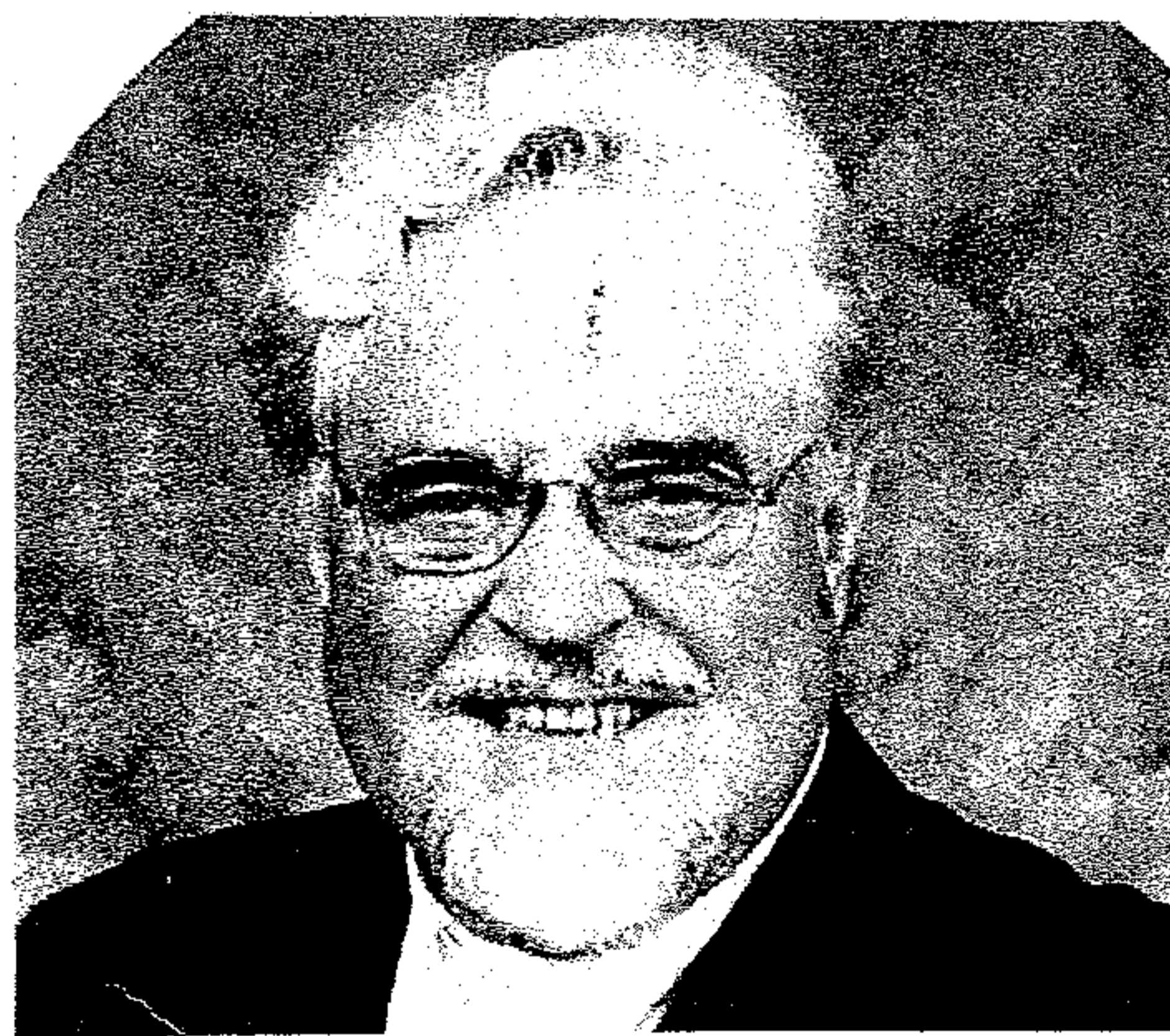
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OTTO ELECTED PRESIDENT

The Rev. H.J. Siegfried Otto, a long-time director of our Society and a past honoree at our awards banquet, was unanimously elected President by the Board of Directors at its April meeting. He began working closely with our Society when, in 1989, as Pastor of Zion Church, he met with Donald Tillman, then our president, and Judge Gerard Wittstadt, president of the German historical society, to plan our first ecumenical service after the fall of the Berlin Wall. He has been active as a member of several committees, including the Executive Committee and his sage advice has aided the Society over the years.



Pastor Otto said that he is both elated and humbled by the honor of being selected as President. His wife, Baerbel Otto, is our office manager.

PICNIC JUNE 26 SEND CHECKS NOW

Notices were sent to all members for "The Great German Picnic" set for Saturday, June 26 at the North Point State Park (rain or shine). We have secured the street-car pavillion, with picnic benches for 300 people. A 21-piece brass band from York, PA, the Dockenspieler, will perform and provide music for listening dancing and singing. "Schnitzelbank" charts will be provided to all. Valerie Mathers will be in charge of games for children and adults, and prizes will be awarded. The picnic site is on the Chesapeake Bay within site of the area where the British fleet assembled to unload troops for the Battle of North Point, where they were defeated by troops led by General John Stricker, a former vice-president of our Society.

Make this event a family affair: bring your relatives and friends. The caterer, Brian Schafer, owner of Big Boy Foods, has promised that we will not run out of food and drink. Our members will oversee the beer and enforce the MD drinking laws.

So that we can purchase adequate food and drink, the deadline for payment of June 21 will be enforced. More details are contained throughout this newsletter.

KALENDER

- June 26 GERMAN SOCIETY PICNIC
July 24-25 Annual German Festival - Timonium
Oct 3 Ecumenical Service (German Society, Zion church and Society for History of Germans)
Nov. 13 German Society Annual Awards Banquet

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 now be found on our web site.

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

RECENT EVENTS IN THE MD-DC GERMAN COMMUNITY

Zion Church in City Hall Plaza, a center of German American culture, was active with its Maifest and Springfest in early May. Both attracted good attendance. AGAS, the Associated German American Societies of Greater Washington, DC held its annual fund raising event at Blob's Park, also in early May. The Deutschamerikanischer Buergerverein von Maryland, Central Maryland's umbrella organization of German clubs, celebrated its 110th anniversary with a banquet at the Crown Plaza in Timonium, MD. Our Society is a founding member of the Buergerverein. The Edelweis Club held its annual picnic at the Patapsco State Park in May.

ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL AWARDS EVENT NOW INCLUDES COLLEGE STUDENTS

On Sunday, May 16 our Society presented awards totaling \$8,000 to high school and college students from Maryland institutions who have excelled in German language studies. Over 50 awards were made to high school students. Our Society presented 4 awards of \$750 each and The Baltimore Kickers Club presented two \$750 awards to college students; the schools represented were the University of Maryland at College Park and at the Baltimore County campus, Towson University and McDaniel College. The event was held at the Adlersaal of Zion Church, which was filled with the students, their teachers and parents and with representatives from the

embassies of the German-speaking countries: Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Our Society has achieved national acclaim for encouraging the study of German language and culture among students; our program is nearly 20 years old and is the only one of its type in the United States.

We were delighted to have the participation of The Baltimore Kickers in this year's program. The Kickers offer free German language courses at its clubhouse on Broadway, and are a leading organization in Maryland for promoting the study of German.

The college winners were nominated by their German professors and were selected by our Education Committee consisting of Prof. Dr. Armin Mruck, Prof. Dr. Mohamed Esa, Dr. Maureen Helinski, Linda Butt and past presidents Brigitte Fessenden and John Aymold, all of whom are directors of our society.

LAST CALL FOR OUR PICNIC

The biggest fear of a picnic organizer is running out of food and drink. We need to buy the food and beer in advance so we won't run out and this is the reason we must insist that you get your checks in the mail. Mail them by Saturday, June 19th so we will put your name on the list and get our count by Monday, June 21.

Admission is \$14 for 21 or over; 6 or under is free; 7 to 20 is \$7. All food and drink included.

Mail your check and the names of your group to Ted Potthast, Treasurer, 1819 Leadburn Road, Towson, MD 21204-1830 (phone 410-828-8137)

PARKING

The North Point State Park charges \$3 per car to get in. There is a parking lot near the picnic site for 150 cars and an over-flow lot about a mile away. We will run a shuttle to the distant lot. To be shuttled to the picnic site, call our office phone (now a cell phone): 410-685-0450. The cell phone will be at the picnic site. Call from the far lot for the shuttle.

WRIST BANDS

A list of all who have paid will be kept at the picnic area entrance and wrist bands will be issued for food and beer; one wrist band for those 21 and older and another for those under 21. We must strictly enforce the MD drinking age law.

MEMBERS AMEND BYLAWS

At the annual meeting of the members on April 9, the bylaws of the Society were amended for the first time since 1985. The bylaws committee's draft was unanimously approved, as amended at the meeting by the "Werner Amendment". Tom Werner's motion to amend the draft to confirm the role of the Board of Directors in the management of the Society's business was approved by a majority of the members in attendance. The committee will put the amended version of the bylaws on our website. Bernard Penner presided over the bylaws discussion and the voting. The bylaws committee consisted of Dr. Penner, Shelley Arnold and the members of the Executive Committee.

ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING

Our annual meeting is held on the Friday after Easter. Earlier the meeting was held in February, but due to ice and snow, the meeting was often postponed or poorly attended. It was changed in the 1990's to the "after Easter" date when the danger of ice and snow would be gone. The meeting is usually attended by about 120 members, but this year's turnout was smaller; nevertheless we had more than enough to transact business. Food was provided by Old World Deli of Randallstown. Many varieties of German cold cuts and wurst were available, along with two types of German potato salad, and another favorite, cucumbers and onions in a creme sauce. A plethora of desserts were provided by our members. The beer, soda and wine were "schlepped" to the event by our hard-working president, James Schaub. Christel van der Berg provided flowers for the tables. Pastor Holger Roggolin of Zion welcomed the members to Zion's dining room and led the members in the recital of the blessing before meals in English and German. Membership chairman Dan Brooke greeted the members at the door. President Schaub spoke of the events of the past year and the activities for the present year. Walt Mathers spoke about the upcoming Society picnic and our role in the Veterans Day ceremonies honoring Henry Gunther, a Maryland soldier who was the last one killed in World War I. Our treasurer, Ted Potthast, reported on our financial condition.

MEMBERS CITED FOR ROLES IN THE GERMAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

President Schaub, at the annual meeting cited those members who are leaders in other organizations: Tom Werner, pres. of the Buergerverein; Gerhard Meinzer, president of AGAS (Associated German American Societies of Greater Washington); Frank Hobbs, pres. of The Edelweis Club; Betty Niemann, pres. of the Baltimore Kickers Club; absent from the meeting was Fred Riedel, pres. of Fidelitas Club, who is recovering from surgery; Brigitte Fessenden, a director of the Baltimore-Bremerhaven sister cities project; Phil Hildebrandt, pres. of the Friends of the Mencken House; and past presidents of our Society, John Aymold and Ted Potthast.

GRANT BY GRASMICK ANNOUNCED

Pastor Siegfried Otto addressed the annual meeting to announce a grant of \$2,000 from Louis Grasmick, as seed money to inaugurate an education program. Mr. Grasmick is an expert in fund raising: he has raised millions of dollars for the Johns Hopkins Hospital's heart surgery program, and for the Reginald Lewis African American Museum and for other civic programs. He and his wife Nancy also contributed \$2,000,000 to the Johns Hopkins University. Mr. Grasmick's contribution is set aside for advertising purposes once the program is planned and approved. He told our education committee that the Society needs to learn the basics of fund-raising, and that advertising is one of the basics. He cited examples to the committee of how he has been successful in using advertising. Mr. Grasmick asked Pastor Otto to design a project; Pastor Otto explained that as a high school boy, he was an exchange student to the United States from Germany and the experience changed his life. He would not have become a pastor and would not be in the USA except for that experience. He would like to see a program which would send high school students from Maryland to Germany for a school year. Our education committee is exploring ways to accomplish such a program and will report its findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors. If the project is approved, it will be the Society's first major fund-raising project.

OUR PICNIC IS AN EVENT YOU SHOULD NOT MISS - BE THERE! JUNE 26

Something to think about for our picnic:

1. a 300-seat pavillion right next to the Chesapeake Bay
2. a 20 piece brass band
3. a good selection of German food
4. a sauerkraut-making contest
5. plenty of cold beer and soda
5. wading in the cool waters of the Chesapeake
6. a chance for a family reunion
7. horse shoe contests for all ages
8. kids' games: bag races (we already have the burlap bags); other games -
9. German-American folk singing (song sheets to be provided)
10. The Arion Sangverein to help lead the songfest
11. Singing of the Schitzelbank song: charts provided; we'll teach it to young and old
12. Stroll through the park along the shores of the Chesapeake, plus many hiking trails
13. See the historic area where our Maryland patriots defeated the British in the Battle of North Point in 1814
14. See the beautiful vistas and the sea where once lay the invading British men of war.
15. Plenty of other activities are being planned by our picnic committee
16. The park is easy to find: it's minutes from Beltway (I-695) exit #42 and #43.
17. The caterer, Brian Schafer of Big Boy Foods, has solemnly pledged we will not run out of food or soda.
18. Rain or shine, we have a huge area of picnic tables under roof. The food is under a tent.
19. You'll see old friends and make new friends.
20. We have asked our new president, The Rev. Siegfried Otto, to prepare a special prayer for good weather for the day of the picnic.

MAKE THIS A FAMILY REUNION

Bring your relatives and friends. Use this occasion to show the young folks how our ancestors acted when they came together to eat, sing and be merry. Experience Gemuetlichkeit!!

THE DOCKENSPIELERS FROM YORK, PA.

The brass band was founded by a group of doctors from York. We heard they wanted to expand their presence in our region so we hired them for our event. The band has asked us to supply them with requests, so they can get the music and practice in advance. So if you have requests (and/or the music and lyrics) please contact our office (410-685-0450) or Ted at 410-828 8137

COMMITTEE NEEDS HELP

We need some more volunteers to make the picnic work. People to help set up; to help with the beer distribution (our society holds the beer license and we must enforce the drinking age laws); to help the folks to the tables; to supervise and be judges at the games; to pass out the prizes; and of course, a clean-up committee (since it's a state park, we can't leave anything: everything we bring into the park must be taken out.)

GIVING A HAND IS PART OF THE FUN OF GOING TO A PICNIC - WE'RE FAMILY

Participation is the key to a great picnic. Just as in a family, everybody should jump in and help where needed. You meet new people when you work side by side with them. So please don't be bashful - jump in and volunteer to serve on the committee.

WALT MATHERS & TED POTTHAST CO-CHAIRS

We twisted the arm of Walt Mathers until he agreed to serve. Walt is handling the details and Ted is looking for volunteers. Call Ted (at 410-828-8137). Or just call our office (410-685-0450) and leave your name and phone number. You'll have fun as a worker, and you'll still have plenty of time for picnicking, dancing & singing.

A BENEFIT FOR OUR MEMBERS

Our Society is not a social club, but the picnic gives us a chance to get together. The Society subsidizes the park rental and the band but the admission charge is expected to cover the food and drink. Enjoy one of the benefits of membership and come.

CENTENARY OF VON STEUBEN STATUE TO BE COMMEMORATED DEC. 8, 2010

On Dec. 10, 1910 a statue of Baron von Steuben, the German general who trained George Washington's army during the American Revolution, was unveiled in Lafayette Park in D.C. across from the White House amidst pomp and ceremony. President Taft attended and his daughter unveiled the statue. The unveiling was attended by 10,000, including 1,000 singers from the Northeast Saengerbund. There were speeches by congressmen and the German ambassador and music was provided by the Marine Band. The event was followed by a parade. The Washington Post commented on the cold temperature and a recent snowfall remaining on the ground. We understand that there may be an event commemorating the 100th anniversary, and if so, our Society will plan to have a presence at it.

"THE FIRST GERMANS IN AMERICA" BY GARY GRASSL - 2ND EDITION IN PRINT

Gary Grassl, a long-standing member of our Society, has just updated his excellent book on the Germans who came to Jamestown, Virginia in 1607, and with the new edition, has included a myriad of photos, drawings, designs and maps, many in color. The book is an easy read and is only 103 pages. It is full of information about the relations with the Indians; the German carpenters even built a house for Chief Powhattan, in the European style. The book is a rarity, in that there are few books on the current market which tell the story of the first Germans in English North America (even though it was a German mapmaker who gave America its name). Although the book is written for all ages, it will be an excellent gift to young people who seem to have a fascination with this era of history. The illustrations in the new edition make the book especially attractive, informative and exciting.

Dr. Laverne J. Ripley of The Society for German American Studies, has this to say about the book: "*The First Germans in America* is a myth breaker. Because we speak English, we tend to think that the English established and developed America. Even as the Anglo-Saxon language came

from Germany to England (Anglo-land) in 500 A.D., so the German craftsmen and specialists came to the English colonies; for example, Jamestown, Virginia from 1607 on. Likewise, as the German mapmaker, Martin Waldseemüller charted and named this continent, German settlers contributed to its development. In this book we find the truth."

We heartily recommend that our members purchase this book. It may be obtained directly from the purchaser, Global Printing, Inc. 3670 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia, 22304 for the price of \$19.70, which includes shipping and handling. For inquiries call 703-751-3611

BALTIMORE AS IMMIGRANT PORT OF ENTRY FOR TRANSPORT TO MIDWEST

By Merl Arp

The Pomeranian Society of Central Wisconsin published in its newsletter the story of the use of the port of Baltimore by immigrants with midwest destinations. (Pomerania, formerly a German region, is now part of Poland). The story was told by Bob Gruling, who began by studying the close relationship between the city of Bremen and Baltimore. An 1867 agreement between the North German Lloyd steamship line and the B & O Railroad allowed immigrants to buy a single ticket for ship passage and a railroad trip to midwestern cities. Gruling's article describes the major German imprint on the social and economic structure of Baltimore, listing many 19th century German societies, including our own. Immigrants from Germany were inspected aboard the ships docking at Piers 8 or 9 at Locust Point and upon disembarking could directly board trains for points west. Those who could not leave immediately could stay at the boarding house of Mrs. Koehler who operated it under contract with several steamship lines.

Bob Gruling took his story from the book *Forgotten Doors; Other Ports of Entry to the U. S.*, editor, Mark Stolarik; publisher The Balch Institute

NEW MEMBERS NEEDED

Low interest rates on investments have sorely reduced our income and dues are now our major source of income. Please make an effort to recruit new members. Come to our picnic and invite a prospective new member to come along with you

North Point State Park

Emergency 24-Hour Assistance: 1-800-825-7275

Set your GPS to the address of the Park:
8700 North Point Road
Edgemere, MD 21219

Visitor Center Hours
Memorial Day – Labor Day
Wednesday – Sunday
11:00 am – 4:00 pm

Pets – Dogs must be on a leash at all times.

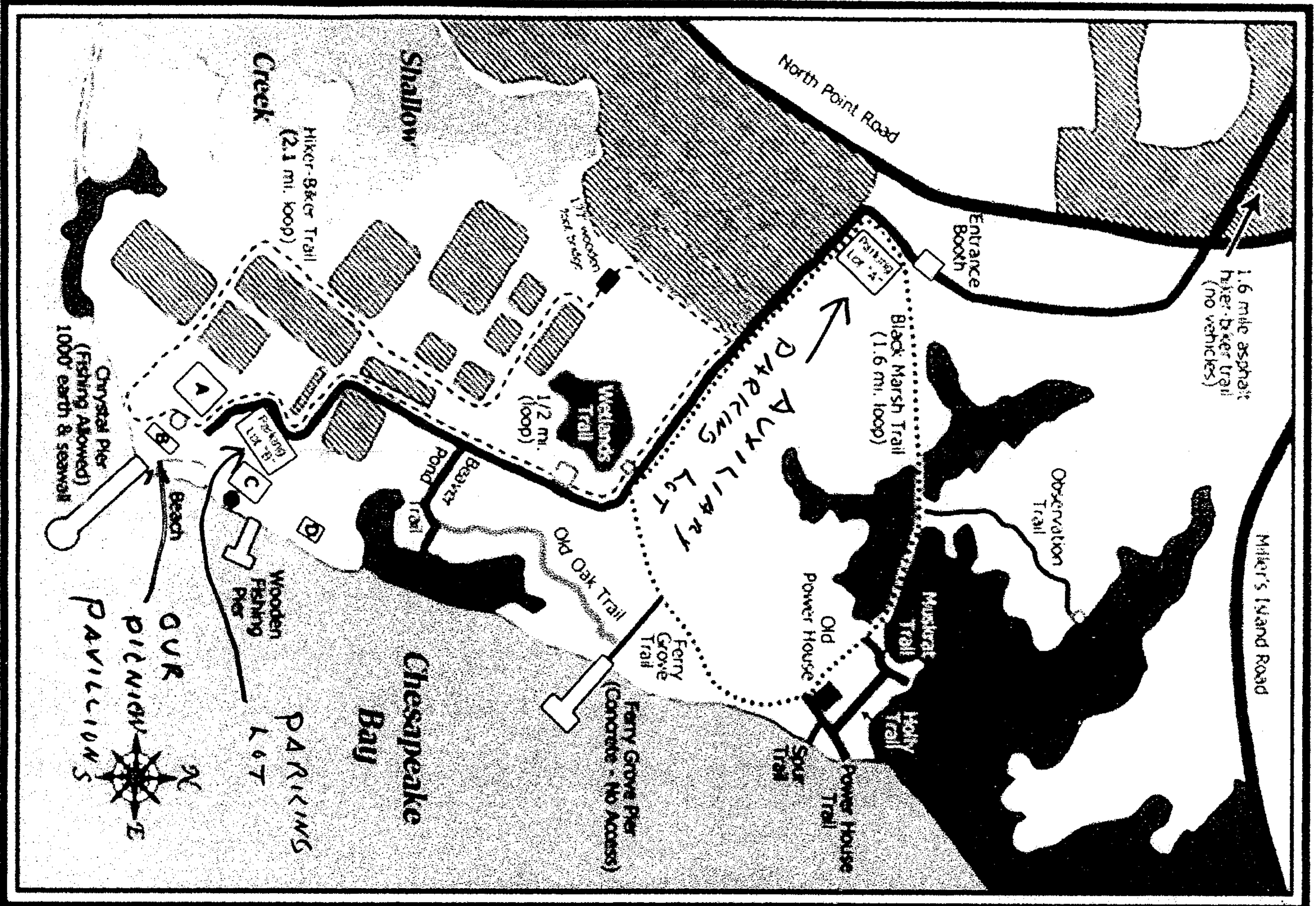
Bikes on Trails – Bikes are only allowed on the Hiker-Biker and Wetlands Loop Trails.

Alcohol – By permit only

Wildlife – Please do not disturb any wildlife – animals or plants. This is a fragile habitat.

Life guard – There is no life guard on duty at the beach.

The park closes at sunset every day.



MAP KEY

- ☐ Woods
- Marsh
- ▨ Farm Field
- Ⓐ Visitor's Center
- Ⓑ Trolley Station
- Ⓒ Maintenance Area
- Ⓓ Private Residence
- Fountain
- Gazebo

TRAIL LENGTHS

- Black Marsh 1.6 mi. loop
- Hiker-Biker – 2.1 mi. loop
- Observation – 2,297 feet
- Muskkrat – 422 feet
- Holly – 560 feet
- Power House – 607 feet
- Spur – 185 feet
- Ferry Grove – 740 feet
- Old Oak – 1,848 feet
- Beaver Pond – 792 feet
- Wetlands Loop – 1/2 mile

There are 5,280 feet in a mile

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends and Members,
It is a privilege and an honor to serve you as your new president.

Let me begin by thanking Dr. James Schaub for his dedicated leadership in the past years. His untiring efforts on behalf of the Society have set a high standard and example.

Permit me to introduce myself to you and share some thoughts about "our" directions and goals of the Society. I purposely am writing "our" directions and goals because they as a vision are established as a team effort. They grow out of dialogue and discussion. Our mission statement sets the framework for us without confining us to a narrow museum of the past.

For me "German" is not primarily a political concept but a cultural one. When immigrants came to America from German speaking areas of Europe they thought of themselves as Prussians or Austrians, as Swiss or Swabians, as Hessians or Palatinates. Only here in America they were called "Germans" because of their common language.

Furthermore German-American implies a historical process which now covers a period of 500 years. German-American identity is a complex phenomenon and

cannot be reduced to beer and Lederhosen, or sausage and Sauerkraut.

It takes courage to affirm the German-American heritage because although German Americans have been loyal American citizens who fought and died for America - yet they have been discriminated against for the crimes committed by the Nazi regime in Germany.

I was not born in America but I want to be an American because I have experienced the inclusiveness and acceptance of the American people. Born in Silesia my family lived as refugees or "Flüchtlinge" (a new word invented after WWII) in Bavaria. In 1951/52 I had the privilege to spend a year in Skaneateles N.Y. with my foster parents Louisa and Harold Stanley. Graduating from Skaneateles High School in 1952 was a climax of a wonderful school year. This year in America laid the foundation for my own German-American identity.

I am looking forward to contribute to the welfare of our Society.

The Rev. H.J. Siegfried Otto

GERMAN AMERICAN HISTORY PRESERVED ELECTRONICALLY

Der Deutsche Correspondent, a newspaper published in Baltimore in German from 1841 through 1918, is being digitized for preservation by the Maryland Historical Society. The paper was started by 19-year-old Frederick Raine, a printer's apprentice who came to Baltimore from Westphalia in 1840 and saw the need for a newspaper to serve the large German population of the city. The paper prospered and its circulation soon outpaced the two other German newspapers in town. It began as a weekly, but quickly advanced to daily. Over time, Raine became active in civic affairs and served time as a member of the City Council. From 1885 to 1890 he served as the U. S. Consul in Berlin. Gov. Oden bestowed on him the honorary title of "colonel". The newspaper merged into the Baltimore *Korrespondent*, which published a weekly German paper until 1967 when it merged into the *Washington Journal* which itself merged about 10 years ago into *Amerika Woche*, which is still being published from its headquarters in New York.

Jenifer Ferretti is in charge of the digitizing project. She invited President James Schaub and past presidents Brigitte Fessenden and Ted Potthast to the reception to launch the project. Members Walt Mathers and Cecilia Herman also attended.

The project is being funded by a grant from the Estate of Charles Edward Hilgenberg and by John Hilgenberg and his family.