

# THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

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

## VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

JUNE 2015 ISSUE #97

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Bärbel Otto  
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\* = past president

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Liebe Mitglieder- Dear Members,

The nice warm weather has finally arrived and I hope all of our members are doing well.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone that helped organize and attend our annual meeting on April 10th, 2015 at Zion Church of Baltimore. It was nice to see many familiar faces but also quite a few new ones. While our membership remains strong, it is our goal to recruit a new generation of members that will carry the message The German Society has been promoting for the past 232 years.

In my 2nd term as President for the German Society, we will have a series of outreach events to provide a greater understanding of not only of who we are as an organization but how we support the Language, Culture, and Heritage of the German speaking community in the State of Maryland.

Recently we had our Awards Ceremony for Maryland Students of German and this was a very well attended event. It truly is amazing to see so many students taking German and most importantly, all the dedicated teachers that make all of this happen in their respective schools. Here are some of the very important announcements that we made at the meeting in regards to our outreach program:

1. Effective immediately, all students studying German will receive a free membership to The German Society

of Maryland. This membership is a requirement in order to receive the other listed benefits.

2. Free entrance to the Great German-American Picnic to be held on June 6/28.
3. Free entrance to the German Festival on July 25th and 26th. We will also provide a voucher for some free food.
4. Paid internship to be our new social media guru.

More information in regards to the Picnic and German Festival can be found on our website, [www.md-germans.org](http://www.md-germans.org). On this site you will also find many other activities that are sponsored by other German organizations currently active in Maryland.

I would like to see as many students as possible at either of these events so please take the time to attend and see the many great things the German community has to offer. I am currently taking applications for the paid internship so please email me if you are interested.

The German Society of Maryland is always looking for new members that are energetic and willing to put their talents to work. I encourage all of you to spread the word of this noble and honorable organization to anyone that would like to learn more about us. As always, please feel free to email me any time you have a need.

Best wishes and speedy recovery to any of our sick or shut-in members. In addition to the above-mentioned events, we are planning on many other activities and outreach opportunities for anyone that is interested in their German Heritage. I look forward to seeing and chatting with many of you this coming year.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,  
Anton G. Smoot, President  
[agsmoot@verizon.net](mailto:agsmoot@verizon.net)

**KALENDER**

- June 28 Annual picnic at KURTZ's Beach
- July 25-26 German Festival in Timonium
- Sept. 29 Historical Society banquet
- Sept tba Kirchgang - Berlin Wall Commemoration
- Oct. Events German American Heritage Month
- Friendship Garden event in Washington
- DeKalb Memorial in Annapolis
- Buergerverein Oktoberfest
- German American Day at McDaniel
- Nov. 11 Sgt. Henry Gunther Memorial
- Nov. 14 Annual Awards Banquet--  
Valley Mansion, Cockeysville
- Nov. 28-29 Christkindlmarkt at Zion
- Nov.28-Dec 24 Christmas market at Inner Harbor

Visit the German Society's website:  
[www.germansociety-md.com](http://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 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 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

**STRICKER MONUMENT STATUS**

Plans for the dedication of the bust of Gen. John Stricker are still bogged down in the Baltimore City approval process. We had hoped to hold the event on Defenders' Day this September but the city processes have again frustrated our efforts. We want to place Gen. Stricker on Federal Hill, with the other two heroes of the War of 1812, Gen. Sam Smith and Col. Armistead. Our officers are pursuing alternative sites, perhaps at North Point where Stricker battled the British troops.

**THE GERMAN FESTIVAL - NEW AND IMPROVED**

Saturday and Sunday, July 25 and 26 at the fairgrounds in Timonium. Be sure to visit our Society's table and talk to our volunteers. Identify yourself as a member of the German Society and tell us what we can do to make our Society a better organization.

Officers of the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland will again be seated at our table and will have copies of past issues of its historical publications available for purchase, most educational and inspirational publications.

We will also be connected with the internet radio station "germanamericanradio.com". Last year many of our members were interviewed and the segments were broadcast later in the day on the radio. Hopefully the same will occur this year. The station is making plans for live broadcasts of future events.

The festival will feature German food, beer. German entertainment and plenty of live music. It is a great opportunity to expose your family, especially the younger ones, to some of their German heritage and culture. Tell your family and friends. Come one and all!

**MAIFEST CANCELLED; 3 GERMAN RESTAURANTS CLOSED**

The Baltimore riots at the end of April resulted in the cancellation of the traditional Maifest at Zion Church, across from the city hall. Unrelated to the riots, the venerable Eichenkranz Restaurant in East Baltimore, Regina's in Annapolis and the Duesenberg in Catonsville closed their doors in early May. All these eateries were meeting spots for the German community and their loss brings sorrow to us all. It should encourage us to patronize the few remaining German restaurants and institutions to encourage them to remain in business.

**MENCKEN FEATURED AT BANQUET**

Henry L. Mencken, the Bard of Baltimore, a former member of our Society, will be the subject of a lecture by Marion Rodgers at the annual banquet of the Society for the History of the Germans in MD. Tickets for the dinner and lecture are \$40. Members of our Society are encouraged to attend to learn more about one of our own most famous members, Mencken. The banquet is set for Tuesday, Sept. 29 at Zion's Adlersaal at 6 p.m. Details for ticket sales will appear in our next newsletter.

## RECRUITING STUDENT MEMBERS

When the membership amended the bylaws to waive dues for student members, the Society entered a new era and a great goal: to bring youth into an aging Society. Until now, student members were charged dues of only \$5, but the concentration was on a very limited cohort of students: those few who were studying German in school. Now all young people are included. The only requirement is an interest in German culture and heritage, and especially those who trace their identity, even in part, to a German ancestry.

We start by reaching out to our own members. We are asking you to speak to those in your own family who are students and encourage them to sign up to join the Society as a student member. All students are eligible for free membership: elementary, junior high, high school, college and university students.

We plan to come up with many benefits to entice students to become members. For starters, the Society will provide free tickets to student members for admission to the July German Festival in Timonium. It has finally dawned on the Society's members and directors that we must invest in the future, and that the students are our future.

So, round up all the students in your own family and among your friends and sign them up. Call the office at 410-485-0450 and request student application forms.

Our Society is 232 years old. Do your part to make sure it is around for another 232 years!

OR TELL THE STUDENT TO JOIN ONLINE:

E-MAIL, with "student member join-up" in the "subject", his/her name, school, grade and preferred e-mail address to [germansociety@verizon.net](mailto:germansociety@verizon.net) stating

I HEREBY APPLY for student membership in the German Society of Maryland.

## \$1,000 BREMERHAVEN PROJECT

Our Society has donated \$1,000 to assist students traveling from North County High School in Anne Arundel County to Bremerhaven as part of an exchange program with the Geschwister Scholl Schule. The German language students, led by their teacher, Cora Hofstetter will soon depart and participate with students in Germany in a cultural exchange. North County has a flourishing German language program and our Society has supported some of its programs in the past.

## MEINZER SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Thanks to a grant from our director Gerhard Meinzer, the German Society will again send a student to Germany on a summer program sponsored by the AATG. Our scholarship committee has selected Eleanor Young, a 10th grader at North County High School in Anne Arundel County. The award usually goes to an 11th grade student, but this year's selection was so unique and exceptional that she stood out above the other applicants.

Our Society has been working closely with the American Association of Teachers of German for more than 25 years. Our long-time member and director, Prof. Dr. Mohamed Esa of McDaniel College in Westminster, MD is currently serving as the national president of that organization.

## MAKING BETTER CITIZENS

Last week a man from the Italian American Businessmen's Association appeared on local TV with this message: teaching your children who their grandparents and great-grandparents are, what they did and where they came from makes the children better citizens. It is important for young people to know who they are and how they got here. They can better see how they fit into the community and, based on their ancestors' accomplishments, will be motivated to accomplish more themselves. So make sure to pass along your family heritage to the young people in your family. It's important.

## CLUB FIDELITAS - 60 YEARS

Our fellow member of the Buergerverein, Club Fidelitas, is preparing to celebrate its 60th anniversary this year. It was formed as an association of German American business people. The business requirement has been dropped and it has morphed into a German American cultural and social organization. Its activities include two membership brunches in January and July, club bus trips and crab feasts, dinner dances and participation in Buergerverein activities such as the German Festival and Oktoberfest. It is one of the 3 members of the German American Verein, Inc., along with our Society and the Buergerverein. Unlike other groups, Fidelitas membership is limited by its bylaws to 85 members. It now has 78. Many of its members are also members of our Society. Congratulations!



## DR. MOHAMED ESA AND PRES. ANTON SMOOT PRESENT HIGH SCHOOL GERMAN AWARDS



For the 23rd consecutive year, the German Society has joined with the high school German teachers to reward the students for high achievement in the national German language exam. 48 Maryland students scored in the 90th percentile or above, and 27 scored between 85 and 90. Maryland ranks among the highest in the nation in the test scores. Although many schools in Maryland have dropped German as a language course, those courses which have survived seem to attract the best students.

The awards ceremonies took place on May 17 in the Adlersaal at Zion Church and played to a packed house. The 75 awardees were accompanied by their parents, siblings, teachers and friends, plus members of our Society.

Our Society was well represented on the stage. The national president of the American Association of Teachers of German, Dr. Mohamed Esa, and its Maryland, D. C. Metro Chapter president, Shirley Santora, and Dr. Maureen Helinski, one of the speakers, are directors of our Society. The testing chair, Dr. Deborah Mifflin, an official of AATG, is a society member.

Since the program's inception, our Society has contributed more than \$115,000 for the high school awards.

In addition to this year's \$5,000 awarded to the high school students, our Society awarded 3 prizes of \$1,000 each to the winners of our college program for German majors and two prizes of \$500 for German minors.

Speaker's at the event included:

Anton Smoot, German Society president  
 Andreas Gebart, of the German Embassy  
 Craig Childers of the Goethe Institute, Washington  
 Gerhard Meinzer, German Society director  
 Frank Faust, 2014 winner of the Meinzer award  
 Deborah McGee Mifflin, Master of Ceremonies,  
 of Johns Hopkins University

Entertainment was provided by the Alpine Dancers, which demonstrated a series of dances from Bavaria and Austria.

Frank Faust made a power-point presentation of the many sites he visited in Germany during his summer program sponsored by Gerhard Meinzer.

The 300 seats in the Adlersaal were filled, with many left standing along the walls. A social event followed the presentations, which included Kaffee und Kuchen, sodas and other food.

The students were most appreciative of the work of the German Society in its sponsorship of the event. Several communicated via email with our Society to offer their gratitude. There were also two offers by students to help host our Facebook account which is aimed especially to students. Our Society has received national acclaim for this program.

## EIGHTY MEMBERS ATTEND ANNUAL MEETING AT ZION IN APRIL

The annual meeting of the society was held in the dining room at the Zion church, attended by the officers, directors, and many members of the society. The meeting was preceded by a dinner of German food, beer, soda, and coffee. Food was provided by Old World Deli and consisted of German cold cuts and wurst along with creamed dill cucumbers and Old World's exquisite potato salad and cold slaw. Food was provided pursuant to the "Tillman Doctrine", based on the philosophy of former president Donald Tillman who believed that Germans could do no work on an empty stomach.

The meeting was conducted by President Anton Smoot. He announced that the balance of the year 2015 would be dedicated to outreach, particularly reaching out to young people to recruit them as members and to engage them in projects. The membership approved bylaw amendments, one of which was to allow all students free membership in the society. The treasurer presented a financial report for the past year and declared the solvency of the society. The membership also received committee reports and listened to plans for the forthcoming year. The membership elected Bernard Penner, Esq. as a lifetime director.

Top Right- Gerhard Meinzer and Eleanor Young of North County High School, who was awarded the Meinzer Summer Scholarship in Germany.

Middle- Members enjoying dessert following the dinner and before the meeting.

Bottom Right- Shawn Dippel, a lifetime member of the society, and the gigantic and delicious German chocolate cake, which she baked for the annual meeting.

## THE GREAT GERMAN FAMILY PICNIC-JUNE 28 AT KURTZ'S BEACH WAS WELL ATTENDED

Look for photos of this event in the next newsletter.





## THE GREAT GERMAN CHOCOLATE CAKE

A wonder to behold! Truly amazing. With a diameter of 14" and a height of 6", with dark chocolate cake under a thick coconut chocolate icing, the temptation was overwhelming. At least 25 slices. A heavenly taste. Lifetime member Shawn Dippel baked it and carried it from the northern ends of Baltimore County to our annual membership meeting at Zion Church, The lucky ones whose dessert it was could sit contentedly through the business meeting with large smiles of happiness. Member Bruce Alderman, a veteran German chocolate cake eater pronounced it the best he had ever had. Shawn, 25 of your fellow members thank you profusely.

## THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

Most of our members don't speak German. Many hesitate to accept positions as officers or directors because lacking a knowledge of the language, they don't feel "German" enough. This may explain the high number of native Germans and teachers of German among our leadership. As we look toward the future, we see that immigration from Germany has become almost non-existent and the teaching of German in the schools is in rapid decline. These elements will influence the make-up of membership in our Society in the future. We will not be able to rely on an abundance of immigrants and teachers to carry the load. Thus, it is important to stress the concepts of heritage and culture if the Society is to survive and thrive. We need some thinkers and planners who will be looking to the future.

## GIFT OF BUDDY BUTT BOOK

Our Society has received a gift of the autobiography of our long-time member Buddy Butt, who died earlier this year. Buddy (William) was born, lived and died in the Germantown section of Baltimore County and was its pride and joy. He kept Germantown on the map despite the efforts of the real estate industry to create subdivisions and delete the name from the records. His book is the story of Germantown through the eyes of one who loved it and who was its unofficial mayor. Buddy promised our office manager, Bärbel Otto, a copy for the Society's archives, but died before the book was printed. His family, through our director Linda Butt, a family member, delivered it to us.

## ZION: A MIGHTY FORTRESS

Zion Church in the City of Baltimore has been a bulwark of Maryland's German American Community. Founded in 1755, it provided the German Society of MD with its first president, Dr. Charles Frederick Wiesenthal, referred to in "The Maryland Germans" as one of its most prominent members. Over the centuries, hundreds of our members have been members of that church. It still conducts a Sunday service in the German language. Its pastors have always been of German origin. It has been a home for many German American organizations. Even during World War II, it was the locus of a ceremony attended by the Governor and the Mayor to tell the world that German Americans are true Americans, loyal to our country. The church facilities have been made available over the years to our Society for many functions, including our annual membership meeting, banquets, student awards gatherings and many other activities. Our Society truly owes Zion a debt of gratitude and a pledge to help support it in its journey into the future.

## ZION'S OWN SENTIMENTS

(After writing the foregoing, our editor picked up a copy of Zion's Easter bulletin and noticed a comment by its council president, Noreen Herbert.)

"We remain the cultural home for many German American organizations -- hosting their meetings and events. ...The Pastors support and embrace the mission of Zion, to both address the spiritual needs of our congregation, help it flourish and grow, and also to remain a gathering place for the German community. We are neither one nor the other, but both, and both must be nourished and cared for with equal importance."

## DESCENDANT OF 1812 SOLDIER

Our long-standing member, Mary Louise Broadbeck is a direct descendant of a soldier in the Maryland militia in the War of 1812. Her ancestor Peter Sipe was born in Prussia on Aug. 5, 1795, arrived in America in 1803 and served in the Maryland Militia under Captain John Owings of Baltimore County from Aug. 25, 1814 to Oct. 27, 1814. He was a defender of Hampstead Hill in Baltimore. He was naturalized in 1827. Records at the time describe him as 5' 5", with black hair and a fair complexion. Congress authorized pensions for the veterans of 1812 and Mary Louise found some information about her ancestor among the pension application records.

## DAVID W. CROSBY

An active member of our board of directors, David W. Crosby died April 23 at age 70. A native Baltimorean, Dave was active in the air filtration and respiration industry for over 50 years. He started with Air Techniques International (ATI) in 1962 and retired in 2010. After retirement, he served as a consultant to ATI and remained active in various professional organizations.

Dave was very proud of his German heritage and was a long time member of our Society before being elected a director last year. He was also a member of the Baltimore Kickers and was a student in its German language classes.

Dave's many interests included history, fishing, travel and computers. One of his joys was advising people on computer purchases and fixing hardware and software issues. Dave contributed articles to our newsletter and helped the editor with proofreading.

David is survived by his wife Sharon Startt, two brothers, two sisters and several nieces and nephews.

Dave will be greatly missed.

## DR. FREDERICK M. GOETHE

Dr. Frederick Martin Goethe, a lifetime member of our Society, died on Jan. 12, 2015 of cancer at age 77. He was born in Philadelphia. His father, Herman, was born in 1884 in the village of Oberboesa, northwestern Thuringia near Sondershausen, and immigrated to America in the 1920s. His maternal grandparents immigrated from the village of Goldenstaedt, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, and his mother was born in Philadelphia on July 15, 1910.

Fred earned a Bachelor of Arts from U. Penn on full scholarship, and a Master of Arts in Education and Doctor of Education from GWU. He taught in St. Mary's County for two years, Baltimore County for twenty-eight years, retired in June 1989, and enjoyed twenty-five years of retirement. He carried a voluminous correspondence in both German and English and enjoyed visits to Germany (Erfurt, Weimar, etc.) nearly every six years. After extensive research and collaborating with a cousin Fred in Tampa, FL he published the family history in 1995.

He was a Director of the Soldiers Delight Conservation Association, church committees, sang bass in choir, rang handbells, worked on church repairs and grounds, and was a "right hand" for his wife, Elizabeth, a music director. His daughter Anne is also a member of our Society.

Fred's widow, Elizabeth, writing to advise us of his death, preceded her letter to our president as follows: "First let me thank you for your outstanding and dedicated service as President of this fine organization! You are a very special blessing indeed!"

## DR. MRUCK JOINS THE CLUB

Our vice president and lifetime director, Armin Mruck, has joined the exclusive nonagenarian club, along with other lifetime directors Dandridge Brooke and Christel van der Berg, and former director Jane Awalt. Dr. Mruck recently turned 90 and was feted by his family and friends at an important birthday party. Dr. Mruck is a retired professor of history from Towson University. He was wounded in WWII and published a book of his experiences. Ad multos annos, Armin.

## FROM OUR ARCHIVES: A MENU

Our Society's annual banquet, held on Freitag, 8 Februar 1895 at the Germania Club, must have lasted many hours. The menu for the event was discovered among our archives. It featured appetizers and many courses of fish, meat, vegetables, fruits and wine, followed by cheeses, cigars, coffee and desserts. The menu did not mention the liquid used for the many toasts: to the Danish Society, our own German Society, Our Adopted Country, The City of Baltimore and our Sister Societies. The menu was printed in German, and contains some items which we are unable to translate. The reference to cigars implies that not many, if any, women attended. We know from other sources that the event was accompanied by the singing of many songs in German, some of which in today's America would be considered politically incorrect.

## PENNER LIFETIME DIRECTOR

Bernard Penner, Esq. was elected a lifetime director at the annual membership meeting having served as a director for 10 years. He has held many committee and program chairmanships and has made significant contributions to the Society. Bernard is an assistant attorney general of Maryland. Since childhood he has been active in the German American community. His father was pastor of Zion Church and Bernard has served as president of its Church council. He has been one of our Society's most active directors.



The German Society of Maryland  
P.O. Box 22585  
Baltimore, MD 21203-4585  
410-685-0450  
www.germansociety-md.com  
germansociety@verizon.net

#### NEW MEMBERS

Valerie Armstrong  
Karen Ayd  
Bob and Mary Cullen  
Nicole Guajardo  
Marcia and Craig Hackett  
Dietrich Homer  
Ronald and Marianne Kreitner  
Joseph Lim Karcher  
Robert Mathers  
Marilyn Murphy  
Robin Newcomb  
Charles and Kim Wagner  
William Wascher

#### NEW STUDENT MEMBERS

Emma Rose Adams  
Lauren Beckjord  
Luke Cullen  
Giorgio DeFilippo  
Erich Delles  
Edwin Wellington Froelich  
Victoria Gulas  
Jacob Keppler  
Nora Malatinszky  
Hanna Porter

***“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  
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This newsletter is published by The German Society of Maryland, an organization founded in 1783 and incorporated in 1818 by Act of the General Assembly of Maryland. It is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation pursuant to the provisions of §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Society is a member of the Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland, D.A.N.K. (German American National Congress) The United German-American Committee of the USA, Inc. and other civic groups which promote German-American culture and heritage. Please submit items of interest to Theodore J. Potthast, Jr., Editor, at 1819 Leadburn Road, Towson, MD 21204-1830 or fax 410-832-2903.