

THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

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

VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am writing this message in the heart of Oktoberfest season. When we think October, we think Oktoberfests and fun. We should also think with similar joy of German-American Day, designated by Presidential Proclamation as October 6. In November we recall with joy the fall of the Berlin Wall 20 years ago and the reunification of Germany. This transformation of the heart of Europe is marked in Germany and around the world as affirmation of democratic ideals and freedom. I and several other members of the Society attended the celebration of reunification, freedom and friendship between Germany and the United States at the German embassy and celebrations at the German-American Friendship Garden in Washington. Such events should remind us that despite economic problems, influenza and military conflicts, we should be optimistic and make this century better than the last.

JAMES D. SCHAUB, PhD.
President

BROCHURES AVAILABLE

Fliers explaining the Society's purpose and programs will be mailed to you on request. Call our office: 410-685-0450. Use them to recruit new members.

ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET HONORS NANCY GRASMICK

Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, will be German Society's honoree at our awards banquet on November 14. Dr. Grasmick is the nation's longest serving state school superintendent, having held the office 17 years under four governors. Her record of leadership has brought Maryland's public school systems to prominence in the country.

As our newsletter goes to press, there are still a few seats remaining for the event. If you wish to attend, please call our President, Jim Schaub at 301-814-9860 to inquire about availability. Tickets are \$55 a piece.

The event will feature a fine German dinner catered by Old World Caterers. A 3-piece ensemble will perform music during the event.

The printed program will feature commemorative pages sponsored by members and friends honoring ancestors and relatives and will include names of our benefactors who have taken ads as patrons and sponsors.

The event is not a "fund-raiser" but is an opportunity for our Society to show public admiration for a person of German-American heritage who has made a significant contribution to our state and nation. We are proud and delighted that Dr. Grasmick has accepted this award.

KALENDER

- Oct. 29 "Club Night" Sour Beef Dinner at Zion
- Nov. 14 Annual Awards Banquet
- Nov. 28-29 Christkindlmarkt at Zion
- Feb. Fasching - Buergerverein (Mardi Gras)
- April 9 Annual Meeting of German Society

FRITZSCHE AWARDED MEDAL OF THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

ROBERT K. FRITZSCHE, a lifetime director of our Society, was awarded the Society's medal for his service and accomplishments within the Society and within the Maryland German-American community.

Our Society met in a special ceremony on October 13 to honor him. We were joined at the Zion Church by the Arion Gesangverein and members of other Buergerverein organizations.

Rob is an architect and an accomplished musician. For more than 20 years he has served as the president of the Arion Gesangverein, a choral society which has functioned in Baltimore for over 150 years, and which performed at the dedication of the military cemetery in Gettysburg when Lincoln gave his famous address. Rob Fritzsche has led our Society in singing of the American and the German national anthems, as successor to another of our famous musical members, Dr. Eltermann at our annual banquet.

Rob serves as chairman of our Song Book Committee. He is near completion of the songbook, having supervised the collection of 100 songs and aided by a computer program which prints the lyrics and music, he has prepared the selections for publication.

He was recently diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease. Although he is still able to work, the disease has limited his communication abilities. He carries a portable computer which permits him to speak by putting words on the screen.

Bob is a fluent speaker of German, having grown up in a German family; he spent several years studying in Germany while a youth.

Rob has served on our Board of Directors for nearly 20 years, and has assisted on a number of our committees. The awarding of our Society's medal to him was long overdue.

GERMANY CELEBRATES UNIFICATION

Our Society's President Dr. James Schaub and Past President Brigitte Fessenden attended a gala event a guests of the German Embassy in Washington, DC on October 3 to celebrate the unification of East and West Germany. They reported that the ceremonies were awe-inspiring, the food lavish and the music expressive of the best German traditions. The weather graced the outside event and provided a beautiful evening. Our officers brought our Society's greetings and congratulations to the Federal Republic of Germany.

SOUR BEEF DINNER

According to newspaper reports, church suppers of sour beef and dumplings are becoming a lost tradition in Baltimore. An exception is Zion Church at City Hall Plaza. Twice a year Zion puts on the best sauerbraten dinner to be found anywhere. Last year it began a "club night" for the local German organizations to come together for a repast and a chance to see some familiar faces. The current Club night is Oct. 29.

Jacques Kelly, well known columnist for The Baltimore Sun, compiled a list of some of this year's sour beef events, and there are not many remaining. One of our directors, Irma Tillman, reports that Zion's future in the sour beef business has been assured: Irma, one of the "old guard" and her contemporaries, have recruited and trained younger members of Zion's congregation in the art of making large quantities of sour beef and dumplings, and the task has passed down to the younger generation.

While the Church supper tradition in the city has been declining as the workers grow older, it seems that Baltimoreans will not give up on sour beef: many restaurants (even the Greek ones) have put the delicacy on their menus. It can be found all over town, especially in the suburbs where most Germans have moved. Quality varies. Rallo's on Fort Ave. serve the dish every Thursday and theirs is excellent. The Towson Diner serves a huge portion; it's good, but a bit sweet. If you find a restaurant which serves good sauerbraten, let us know and we will pass the word.

