

# THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

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

## VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

FEB/MARCH 2010 ISSUE #70

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## A BUSY SEASON

Our schedule for the past few months has been full of activity.

Starting with The German Festival at the Timonium Fairgrounds in July, we exhibited our historical display and volunteers greeted guests and handed out information about our Society. In August we attended the 50th anniversary of the christening of the N.S. Savannah, the world's first civilian nuclear ship, the idea of Pres. Dwight Eisenhower. The Arion Gesangverein and the Washington Saengerbund performed at the Inner Harbor ceremonies. In September we joined the Oktoberfest at Fort Meade and our volunteers met many military people who had served in Germany and were interested in Maryland's German American organizations.

In early October, we joined in sponsoring an Ecumenical Service to commemorate the 20th year since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Our president, Dr. Jim Schaub and past president Brigitte Fessenden attended the celebration of German Unification at the German Embassy on October 3; and on Oct. 6, they and other members also celebrated German American Day at the German American Friendship Garden at the Washington Mall.

Our plans for a booth at the Schifferstadt Oktoberfest hit a snag when the outdoor event in Frederick suffered a setback by the rain.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

If you are reading this, your mind is on the German Society of Maryland, making this the ideal time to open your checkbook and pay your 2010 membership dues. If you have already paid, thank you very much and I hope you were able to contribute something extra to support the newsletter or the education fund. Every year our dedicated office manager, Bärbel Otto, send reminders to members who did not respond to the first notice mailed in mid-January. Let's save the Society the expense of a second mailing.

If you aren't a member or have a friend who might be interested in the German Society, 2010 is a great year to join. The Society will have events throughout the year. Your membership helps preserve German heritage and traditions. See the last page of this newsletter for an application for membership.

JAMES D. SCHAUB, PHD  
President

### **NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING**

*You are cordially invited to attend the annual meeting of the German Society to take place in the dining room of Zion Church at 400 East Lexington Street on April 9 at 6:30 p.m. Food will be provided. Besides keeping you updated on our activities and objectives we will approve the revised bylaws at this meeting. We hope to see you there!*



## KALENDER

- April 9 Annual Meeting of German Society
- June 26 German Society Picnic
- July 24-25 German Festival – Timonium
- October 3 Michaelmas at Zion Church

Website of our Society:  
[www.germansociety-md.com](http://www.germansociety-md.com)

Website of the Deutschamerikanischer  
Buergerverein von Maryland:  
[www.md-germans.org](http://www.md-germans.org)

## BYLAWS COMMITTEE TO MEET

Nearly 20 years have gone by since the current bylaws of our Society were published. Much has occurred since then, requiring an update. The Bylaws Committee will meet soon. If you would like to serve on the committee, please contact President Jim Schaub (301-776-9094) or Chairman Ted Potthast (410-828-8137). The work of the committee will likely require two four hour meetings plus some homework.

## MEMBERSHIP LIST IN PROGRAM

Each year the membership roster of our Society is published in the printed program distributed at our awards banquet. The program is retained in our archives and serves as a historical record of our membership roster. Until this practice was initiated some 15 years ago, the only record of membership was contained on index cards maintained at our office. We do not distribute the addresses of our members to the public and unlike many organizations we do not sell our membership lists.

The last time any list of our members was published was in the History of the German Society, a book published in 1909 and authored by our then president, Louis P. Henninghausen. Another history of our Society, by Klaus Wust, was last published in 1983. We hope that in the not too distant future, an updated history of the Society will be published.

## RARE BOOK: 1909 HISTORY OF THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND ON INTERNET

You can read it online or print it out and have your own copy. It's a very rare book, not many were printed when it was written. It is sometimes found in a local library. The book was written by Louis P. Henninghausen, a longtime president of our Society and published by the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland. The early history of our Society is fascinating and if the reader is a Marylander of German heritage, it almost reads like a thriller. It lists the names of all the members of our Society for one hundred years prior to its publication in 1909. It also contains the names of every benefactor who ever made a contribution to our Society – those gifts were not tax-deductible, since there was no income tax in those days. (Photocopies of it have circulated among our officers: Ted Potthast inherited a copy from his grandfather and made several photocopies of it which he passed around). Now its out there for all the world to read. You will find it at: <http://www.archive.org/details/historyofgermans00henniala>

The author, Louis P. Henninghausen, was an amazing person. He was one of the founders of the Society for the History of Germans in MD and also served as its president. He was born in 1840 in Fulda to an officer in the Prussian army; he came to Baltimore at age 15, served as an officer in the Union Army in the Civil War, fought in the siege of Fort Pulaski, Georgia and led a company in the battle of Secessionville, James Island, S.C. where he contracted swamp fever which disabled him. He came to Baltimore, graduated from the University of Maryland Law School and practiced law, where he tried many cases, some of which went to the U.S. Supreme Court. His law partner was Charles Stein, who was the father of one of our Society's presidents and grandfather of a former director.

Louis Henninghausen traveled to every major capital of Europe and visited the West Indies. He was a prolific author and was a member of 24 benevolent, charitable, educational, historical, literary and social societies, including the Germania Maennerchor, the German Aged Peoples' Home and the Grand Old Party. He died at age 78 in 1918.

(Many thanks to Walt Mathers who discovered this information and reported it to our Newsletter.)



## ESA NAMED "THE OUTSTANDING GERMAN EDUCATOR OF 2009" BY AATG

Dr. Mohamed Esa, a member of our Society's Board of Directors, was named by the American Association of Teachers of German as its Outstanding German Educator of 2009. Dr. Esa is a professor of foreign languages at McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland. Our Society is justly proud of his accomplishments. He has played a major role in the educational program of our Society. Dr. Esa has also chaired our Awards Banquet Committee and has produced the program which has attracted widespread attention and commendation. He is an acknowledged leader of German language matters throughout the entire Baltimore-Washington region. A McDaniel College news release stated that "His language courses, study tours and festive dinners featuring world menus have earned him a steady following of students and off-campus speaking engagements."

Dr. Esa received the AATG award at its annual convention held this year in San Diego "for outstanding achievement in furthering the teaching of German in schools in the US." The award recognized personal innovation, talent and leadership that reflect uncommon excellence.

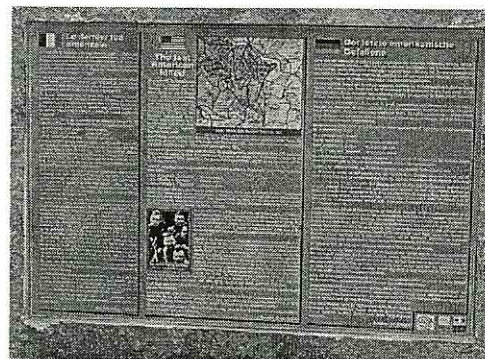
## GERMAN CHANCELLOR ADDRESS JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS; THANKS USA

Angela Merkel appeared before a joint session of Congress on Nov. 3, a week before the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and, speaking mostly in German, expressed the gratitude of Germany for the support America has provided to Germany over the years and lauded American efforts to reunify her country. She reflected upon her life as she grew up in East Germany under communism and longed for the things of the West, including blue jeans. She urged the U. S. to buy into the Copenhagen treaty on global warming. She called for economic sanctions on Iran if it does not comply with international nuclear inspectors and said that the safety of Israel was "non-negotiable. News reports referred to the scheduled celebration of the Nov. 9th, 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall, which will be attended by international leaders, although President Obama will not attend due to other priorities.

## FRANCE DEDICATED MEMORIAL TO BALTIMOREAN HENRY N. GUNTHER



We have just learned that on June 24, 2008, a memorial was dedicated in France in honor of Henry N. Gunther, the Baltimore soldier who was the last soldier to die in World War I. The war ended at 11 am, Nov. 11, 1918. Private Gunther was killed at 10:59 a.m. on that day. The memorial stands on a hilltop above the hamlet of Chaumont-devant-Damvillers, department of the Meuse, France. Chaumont is 10 miles north of Verdun. The memorial features in French, German and English, a description of the events leading up to the death of Henry Gunther. The memorial was raised under the initiative of Pierre Lenhard, a local historian, with the support of the mayor of Chaumont and the local authorities. The memorial was dedicated by Jean-Marie Bockel, the French Secretary of State for Defense and Veterans.



(Photos and information supplied by Christina Holstein, on the internet.)

Henry Gunther was originally buried in France, but was re-interred in Baltimore in 1923. Our Society, along with the Veterans of Foreign Wars and The American Legion, plan to honor the memory of Henry Gunther at a ceremony on Veterans Day (Nov. 11), 2010 at his grave in Holy Redeemer Cemetery in Baltimore. A monument has been commissioned and will be donated by the cemetery officials. A committee is forming; please volunteer to serve on the committee.



## CONGRATULATIONS...

...to **Lawrence E. Schmidt, Esq.** upon his recent appointment to the Baltimore County Board of Education.

...to **Jim McAlister**, until recently our Society's most eligible bachelor, age 52, a trial lawyer in a big city law firm. A long-time member of our Society, Jim, never married, has claimed for years that he was searching for a wife so he could get the full benefit of his membership dues by having a wife as a member at no extra charge. Jim introduced his bride, Suzanne to the Society at our recent banquet. Suzanne was greeted as a heroine.

## THANKS...

...to **DR. MARY UPMAN** for her diligent work in publicizing our Society's events by writing articles in German and having them published in German American news media; and for her photography in documenting our events.

...to **DR. MAUREEN HELINSKI** for her diligent work in keeping our website up to date.

## N.Y. STEUBEN PARADE

The Buergerverein von Maryland took a busload to New York City for the 2009 Steuben Parade, followed by an Oktoberfest in Central Park. Many of our members attended the event and raved about the event. Tom Werner, president of the Buergerverein and a member of our Board of Directors was delighted with the turnout. Everyone on the bus had tickets to the Oktoberfest, which made them a part of the privileged few: the event was a sell-out and hordes were turned away. When one who signed up became ill and missed the bus, Tom had an extra ticket which he sold to a New Yorker who jumped for joy: "I've got a ticket to the fest!" There were a few complaints about long lines for the W.C. in the park: Tom, in charge of the event, said he felt like a bomber pilot - "There's always some flak!"

## THE JULIUS HOFMANN MEDAL

Sometime in the 1930's, our Society commissioned a medal to be struck bearing the image of Julius Hofmann, one of our members who was pastor of Zion Church and a leader in the German American community. He strongly supported the study of the German language. At that time, German was taught in most of the public schools in the city of Baltimore. The purpose of the medal was to reward the students. The scholar in each public school who attained the highest grades in German was awarded "The Julius Hofmann Medal".

The medal was designed by one of Baltimore's most famous sculptors, Hans Schuler. It is a masterpiece in its field.

The study of German in the public schools stagnated for many years and the medal was no longer awarded. The supply of medals had diminished. About a dozen years ago a box containing less than 20 were found in our Society's office. Rather than keep them hidden away in a drawer, our Board of Directors decided to use them to reward the Maryland student who attains the highest score in the national German language exam sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of German. We have only a few left, and when they are gone, we will not have any more of the original Hans Schuler design.



Hans Schuler established a school of sculptor which still exists and is operated by his descendants. It has been suggested that we contact the school to see if it could duplicate the medal so that the tradition may continue beyond the present supply of medals.



## **HILGENBERG SPONSORS PRESERVATION PROJECT AT MD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Deutsche Korrespondent, a German newspaper published in Baltimore between the 1840s and 1916 will be digitized and placed on the internet, courtesy of a substantial grant from the Hilgenberg family. At a reception held on Jan. 23 at the MD Historical Society, our President James Schaub addressed the 100 persons in attendance to acknowledge this accomplishment and thank the Hilgenberg family and the Historical Society for preserving an important piece of our German American heritage. Past President Brigitte Fessenden also spoke to commend the project. Other German Society members who attended were Cecilia Muth Herman, Walt Mathers, Dr. Nicholas Fessenden and Ted Potthast. The project covers over 43,000 pages of the newspaper, printed in the German script and will take 5 years to complete and publish with a search engine to find names of all persons and institutions mentioned in the paper and will be accessible to anyone in the world having an internet connection. The newspaper was founded by one of our Society's members, Frederick Raine who allowed the Society's "intelligence bureau" space in the newspaper's offices via a contract dated Jan. 16, 1845. (per "The History of the German Society" by Louis P. Henninghausen).

## **DR. SCHNEIDER, HOPKINS PEDIATRIC EMERGENCY SURGEON HELPS IN HAITI**

Dr. Karen Schneider, a pediatric emergency room physician at Johns Hopkins Hospital, recently returned from a week's stint in Port au Prince, Haiti where she attended to injured children. Speaking in Towson the day after she arrived home from Haiti, she reported that the injuries she treated from children crushed under the earthquake rubble were worse than she had ever seen as a trauma physician at Hopkins. Dr. Schneider is a nun, a member of the Sisters of Mercy. She appeared on the "Good Morning, America" show holding an injured child.

## **GERMAN SOCIETY PICNIC SET FOR SAT. JUNE 26 AT NORTH POINT STATE PARK**

The 2009 picnic was canceled for the lack of a venue, so our executive committee ordered that a site be secured on the first business day of 2010. Walt Mathers contacted the State Park Service and we sent in our deposit for June 26. We have already begun planning for activities, including securing the world's smallest "tall ship" to be brought to the picnic, so children can board it and play the role of seamen. We are looking for live music (since the park bans recorded music via loudspeakers).

We will need a large contingent of volunteers, since our current intentions are to cook the bratwurst, hamburgers and sausages ourselves and do our own catering. We have secured a pavilion capable of handling 300 people. We expect a large contingent of our members, their families and friends to attend. Our committee also hopes to be able to make the picnic open to members of other German clubs.

## **CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE**

The electronic media is able to disseminate news much faster than the print media, i.e. our newsletter. Our website provides more and quicker information than our newsletter. So if you are connected to the internet, be sure to make frequent visits to our site: [www.germansociety-md.com](http://www.germansociety-md.com). Our webmaster, Dr. Maureen Helinski is diligent in keeping it current. She keeps the website interesting and exciting with photos and links to other sites. Our Society owes Maureen a debt of gratitude.

### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Barrick, Lee  
Barrick, Lana  
Butt, Matthew  
Hofmeister, Raimund  
Hofmeister, Carla  
Linke, Brian  
Linke, Dawn  
Rizzo, Lauren  
Scheihing, Brian  
Scheihing, Sharon  
Shockey, Gary  
Wolfe, Betty Ann

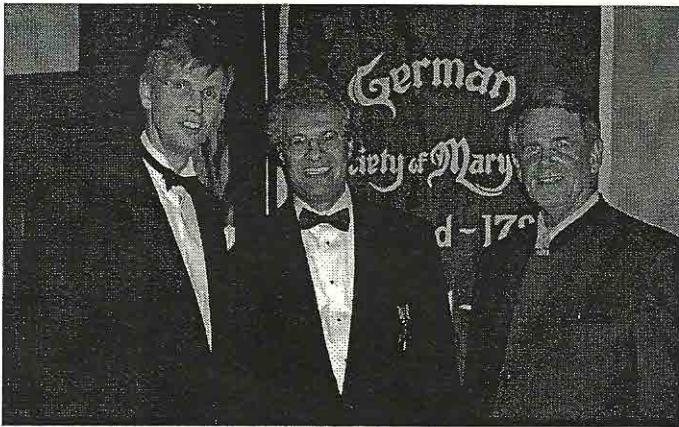


## GERMAN: A HERITAGE LANGUAGE

In her acceptance speech at our Society's annual awards banquet, Honoree Dr. Nancy Grasmick spoke of the study of German as a "heritage language." This provoked discussion: it possibly explains the decline of the study in the schools as a modern language. 60 years ago, French and German were the two modern languages taught in Maryland high school. Spanish was a rarity. French was the language of diplomacy; German was the language of science and medicine. Both have now been replaced by English. Our schools teach Spanish so our students can deal with the commercial aspect of the immense Hispanic immigration. The study of Spanish begins today in the elementary schools.

China is the largest single trading partner of the USA, and so Chinese is now being introduced into the schools. Japanese was popular in some private schools, but seems to be on the wane. A Lutheran school in Silver Spring recently announced it will be adding Russian, to accommodate a large local population of immigrants. (It doesn't teach German.)

As we look at motivation for students to study German heritage and culture seem to be the dominant forces; commerce is a distant second.



## SCHAUB THANKS BANQUET COMMITTEE

President Jim Schaub expressed the thanks of the entire Society to all those who served on the banquet committee and helped make it one of our finest: Special thanks to Bill Kommalan, as master of ceremonies; Dr. Mohamed Esa for his leadership in organizing the event; Shelley Arnold for her work on the printed program; Brigitte Fessenden and Gisela for the flower arrangements, and Maureen Helinski for the seating plans. Additional thanks are extended to Pastor Roggelin and the staff of Zion Church and the folks at Old World Delicatessen and Bakery.





## SCHAUB TRIPLE PLAY

German-American baseball greats include Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and Fritz Maisel who played in the big show. There were also three German-American cousins who distinguished themselves in local baseball. William "Buck" Schaub and Herb Schaub of Catonsville and Charlie Schaub of Denton played baseball in the first half of the last century.

Buck grew up playing baseball with Fritz and the other Maisel boys – Buck and Fritz were the same age and neighbors. Buck was the star pitcher and team captain for Mount Saint Joe in 1909 and 1910. He pitched in an era when the Mount played against true collegians as well as high school teams. He was a strike out specialist. In 1910 he pitched for Norfolk in the Virginia League. At the end of the season he was signed to play the 1911 season for the New York Yankees. We'll never know how that might have turned out. Buck returned to St. Joe in the fall of 1910 where he captained the football team but died in November from pneumonia.

Herb Schaub was another Mount St. Joe ballplayer. He played four years (1927-1930) and was named All-State first baseman. His forte was defense. Hard statistics aren't available but the oral history is that he set records for fewest errors in the years he played. A golf talent from his youngest days, he was a top flight amateur playing for Rolling Road Country Club through the 1950s.

Charlie Schaub played for the Denton Maryland team in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Baseball was his passion. He had a try out with the International League Orioles but didn't make the cut. He played with the Denton team and counted a young Harry Hughes, future governor of Maryland, among his teammates. Charlie gave up his baseball uniform for an army uniform and fought in Europe from D-Day until he was killed in action at age 27 in April 1945, just three weeks before the VE Day. In 1947 the people of Denton dedicated Schaub Park a baseball park named in honor of Charlie.

## REUNIFICATION MEMORIES

I was visiting my cousins in Bavaria soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the start of reunification and saw the emotional reactions of the Germans. Early one morning my cousin Hildegard went out to get the newspaper, came back in and said: "There's a car full of people parked in front of the house." She went out and invited them in for breakfast. They were an

East German family from Karl Marx Stadt (formerly and now again Chemnitz). They had been waiting for the post office to open. Every Ossie (East German) who came to the West was entitled to receive 100 marks for spending money, from the government. This family had a tiny "Trabi", the cardboard auto made in the East, and had packed it with people; little kids and infants, to get as many as possible to fit inside the car. (No seat belts or restrictions about kids under 5 feet sitting up front!) The Ossie's spoke excellent English (better than did my own cousins), They were most grateful for my cousin's hospitality, and we had an enjoyable chat with them.

At the time there was a bit of a strain. The younger Ossie's had never tasted a banana or an orange (tropical fruits) so the shelves of all the stores were empty - all headed back to the East. My cousins in the Rhein region wanted to fix their home, but all of the curtains, paint and building materials were being sent to the East to repair 40 years of neglect under communism. Another big sacrifice was the reunification tax: one cousin had 75 marks deducted from her modest social security pension to pay for integrating the Ossies into the "Wessie" form of government. (T. Potthast)

## FALL OF THE WALL CELEBRATIONS TRIGGER REFLECTIONS ON ITS RESULTS

The days after Nov. 9th brought much speculation on the impact of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the USSR. At the time the western world rejoiced that freedom would come to all. While it happened that way for Europe, it did not spread to the rest of the world. The Russians left Afghanistan, but the Taliban and AlQuaida moved in and took over. When the Chinese tried to shake free, the totalitarian government crushed them in Tianamin Square. Castro continued in power in Cuba. Nothing changed in the Islamic world. Women still can't drive cars in Saudi Arabia and are treated as second-class humans throughout the mid-east. Communism still thrives in China. Vladimir Putin of Russia was a KGB agent in Dresden in 1989; he recently said he had fond memories of Germany, including learning German, mountain excursion and his contacts with local KGB agents. Dictators still rule Myamar and Iran. One wonders how many centuries will pas before freedom in universal in the world; and again, one wonders if our own descendants will still have the freedom which we have enjoyed up until now.