

# THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

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

## VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

JULY-AUG 2010 ISSUE #72

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### 110TH GERMAN FESTIVAL JULY 24-25 WEEKEND

The Maryland German Festival will take place at the Timonium Fairgrounds on Saturday and Sunday, July 24 and 25. The magazine *Southern Living* cites it as a July highlight in the South. It calls it one of the oldest German festivals in the country; we believe it is in fact the oldest. Tom Werner, chairman of the festival and president of the Buergerverwin is planning new features this year, so that the event will not become repetitive. The old favorites, German wurst and beer, will be there in abundance along with non-stop German music. There will be dancers in festive trachten (regional costumes) and other entertainment.

#### **Volunteers needed**

Our Society will be present and we need help at our society's booth. to distribute literature and speak to the visitors. Please sign up for a couple of hours on Saturday or Sunday by contacting Mike Nieberding, chairman, who is scheduling time for workers. Mike can be reached at **410-796-7491**. Please let Mike know when you can be available. Our volunteers from past years tell us that it's a lot of fun talking to the visitors and that they learn a lot about German culture themselves from things that are told to them. All who come to the table are pleasant and there are no grouches at the festival.

### OUR LADIES, THE BAND AND BEER SAVE THE PICNIC

Our Society's June 26th event at North Point State Park was saved from disaster by our fast thinking ladies, by the presence of plenty of ice cold beer and by the band striking up their lively marches. When the caterer failed to show up, the chairmen, Walt Mathers and Ted Potthast thought they would need to fall on their swords. Brian Schafer, owner of Big Boy Foods, had promised a feast of German foods in vast abundance, and we advertised accordingly. Disaster struck when we had to announce that the food was not going to be at the picnic. A team of Kim Wittstadt, Shelley Arnold and daughter, Betty Nieman and Jean Arp quickly put their minds to it and ran out to buy food from the local markets.. In a short time they returned with pizza, chicken, cold cuts and other picnic food. Doug Polaski returned with cases of water to supplement the 22 cases of cold beer which the committee had brought to the site early in the morning. While many people left at the announcement of no German food, many stayed and enjoyed the event. In fact, member John Geppi said it was the best picnic he had ever been to. The location on the banks of the Chesapeake Bay and the gentle breezes all afternoon, and the geniality of our members and guests and the singalong made the event most delightful.

**KALENDER**

- July 24-25 Annual German Festival - Timonium
- Aug 21-22 Hagerstown Augustoberfest
- Oct. 2-3 Oktoberfest Frederick MD Fair Grounds
- Oct 3 Ecumenical Service (German Society, Zion church and Society for History of Germans)
- Oct. 16 Crabtoberfest Cambridge MD
- Nov. 11 Commemoration of Henry Gunther
- Nov. 13 German Society Annual Awards Banquet

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 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](http://www.md-germans.org)

**SOCIETY GOES CELLULAR**

We still have the same office telephone number which the German Society has held for the past 60-plus years, but now it's not a land line at an office. Our phone number (410-685-0450) now rings on a cell phone. Our office secretary Baerbel Oto keeps the phone with her, but when she is out of the country (as will be the case when you receive this newsletter) the phone will be in the custody of one of our officers. The officers will take turns answering the line and fielding the calls. Give it a try, the next time you need to talk business with our office.

**ECUMENICAL SERVICE PLANNED**

When the Berlin Wall fell in November, 1989 our Society joined with the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland and with Zion Church to hold a service of thanksgiving for the freedom of our German brethren from the throes of communism. The event has been held each year. Originally it was held on the eve of Thanksgiving Day, but as time went by and as family ties claimed the time of our members, the date was moved to a more convenient date, the Sunday closest to the feast of St. Michael (the patron saint of Germany), Sept. 29. This year it will be held on Sunday, Oct. 3. A reception, with food and drink, will follow in Zion Church's beautiful Adlersaal.

**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

The President and Board of Directors of our Society is pleased to announce that the following new members have been accepted into our Society:

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Barrick, Laura           | Barrick, Lee              |
| Dausch, John K.          | Dausch, Sally             |
| Garcia, Christiane O.    | Herbert, Artemis          |
| Fleiter, Dr. Thorsten R. | Hirsch, Theresa Potthast  |
| Hofmeister, Carla        | Hofmeister, Raimund       |
| Linke, Brian Avery       | Linke, Dawn Dippel        |
| Miller, Charles W.       | Miller, Nancy D.          |
| Mitchell, Todd E.        | Opalka, Klaus O.          |
| Potthast, Andrew Joseph  | Regelin, Corey D.         |
| Regelin, Gale S.         | Rizzo, Lauren             |
| Rowe, Brian              | Rowe, Susan               |
| Schneck, Kay             | Katherine Elizabeth Walsh |
| Sara ie Walsh            |                           |

**DR. HELINSKI GIVEN LEADERSHIP AWARBY BY TEACHERS OF GERMAN**

The American Association of Teachers of German has named Dr. Maureen Helinski to receive its highest honor, the prestigious Friends of German Award. She was selected for her exemplary leadership in the advocacy of German language education and for her outstanding support and promotion of the study of the German language at all levels, local, regional and national. The presentation will take place at the AATG's annual meeting on Nov. 28 in Boston. Her selection was made by the national executive council of the AATG. Dr. Helinski has taught German at the high school and college level in Maryland. She has served as a Director of our Society and is the webmaster of the Society's website. She has been a member of our Education Committee for many years and has serviced the Society in many capacities.

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE PLANS DRIVE**

Our Board of Directors approved a proposal for a membership drive to help increase the ranks of our Society and thereby bring in new talent as well as new revenue for our charitable and educational goals. The plan involves allowing our current members to give gifts of memberships at a discounted rate. Details will appear in our next newsletter.

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:**

Our most recent event, "The Great German Picnic" has been a wonderful experience. Over 200 people came to the historic location of the Battle of Baltimore at North Point State Park, where one of our vice presidents of the past, General John Stricker defeated the British in the war of 1812.

Some of our Old Timers cherished more recent memories when they as children came over the water to Bayshore Park and Trolley Station by way of the trolley cars.

For all of us this picnic will be lodged in our memories when on arrival we heard that our caterer Big Boy Foods would not show up. After a moment of paralyzing panic four ladies of our society took the initiative and went out to buy enough fried chicken, pizzas, and cold cuts with all the condiments. Within an hour they were back and all who stayed - that is most people - had enough to eat.

Beck's Beer was available from the beginning because in wise foresight Ted Potthast had brought it into the park himself. We have to thank Mr. Rowland King who was our "Biermeister" and made sure only ice cold cans were served.

The presence of the 21 piece brass band, the "Dockenspieler" from York, PA contributed significantly to the success of the picnic. Members of the "Arion Gesangverein" led in the singing of familiar German American favorites during the afternoon. Of course we opened the picnic with the presentation of flags from America and Germany by a three men color guard in historic uniforms. One gentleman wore an 1812 Pomeranian Prussian Landwehr uniform while the other two wore historic American and British uniforms. We sang the national anthems of Germany and America and remembered our very own vice president of the Society, General John Stricker, for his victory over the British in the Battle of Baltimore in this historic location. Mr. Edward Seufert, Royal Marines Re-enactor - a Star Spangled 200 Conference Presenter - illustrated the battle action on a superbly detailed giant colored canvas map.

The amazingly energetic co-chairman of the picnic, Mr. Walt Mathers, acted as a master of ceremony, getting us going and calling out numbers for door prizes with a huge bull horn. All the prizes he had secured through untiring solicitations. We also have to thank him for securing the historic location, and inviting Mr. Seufert and the Dockenspieler Brass Band. For me Walt Mather's website "Der Wecker" is not just a reminder of the German paper or periodical that existed in Baltimore but a symbol for his seemingly unbinding energy. The old German "Wecker" or alarm clock could even raise dead from their sleep.

Of course the other half of the success for the picnic goes to our treasurer and former president Ted Potthast and his dear wife Connie. They published and publicized the event several times, collected the checks, made the lists, signed people in and paid all the bills and some refunds for the picnic to people who did not stay.

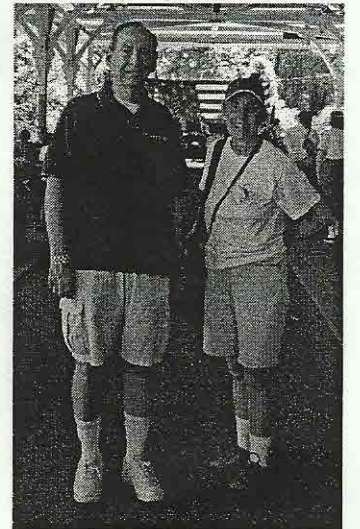
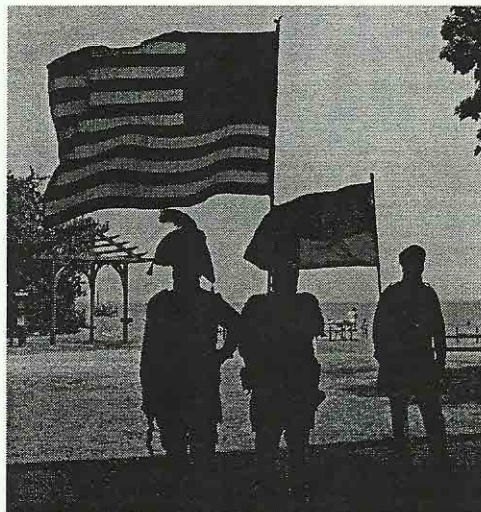
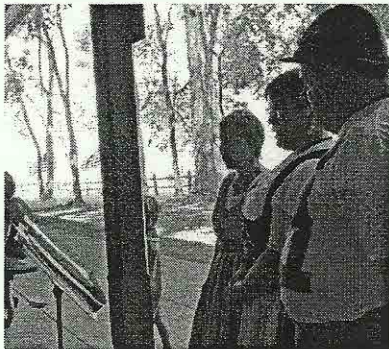
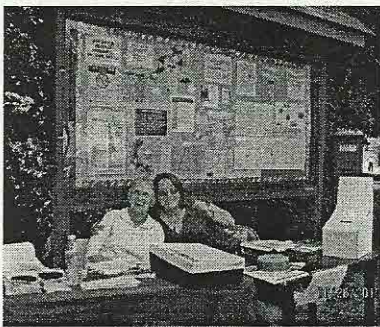
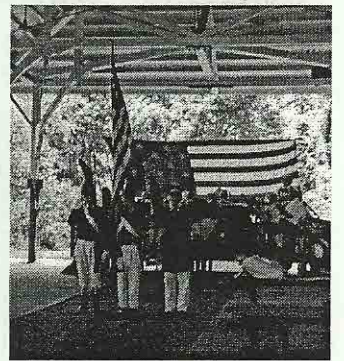
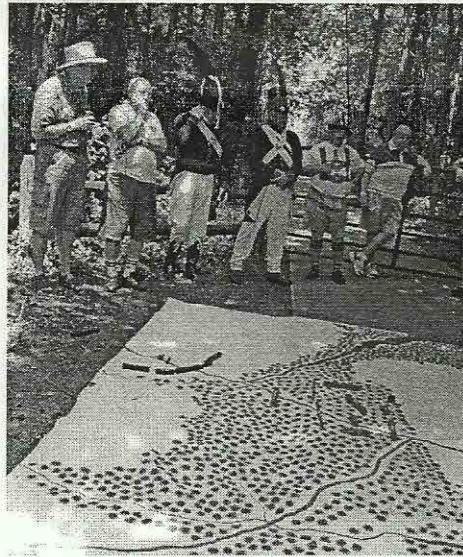
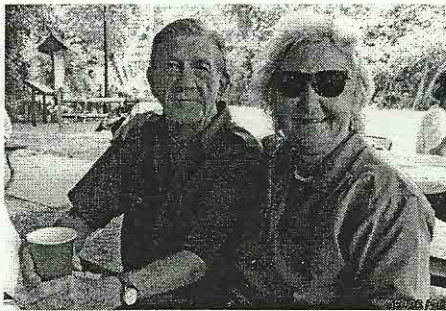
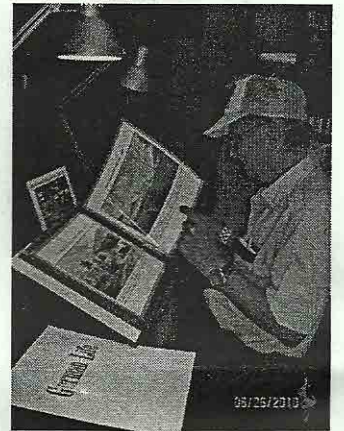
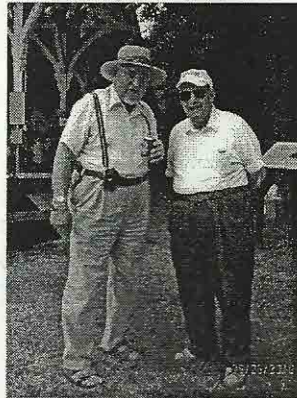
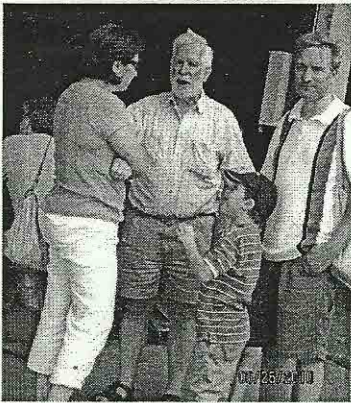
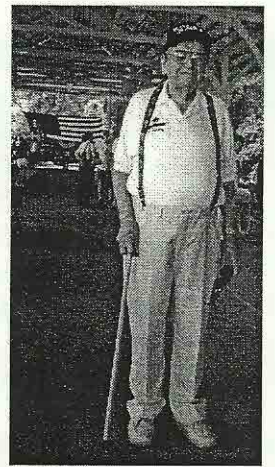
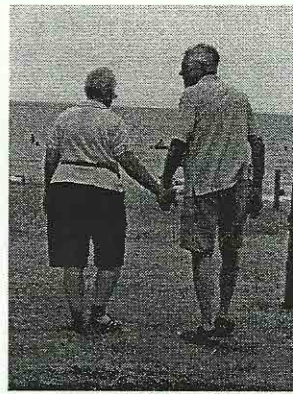
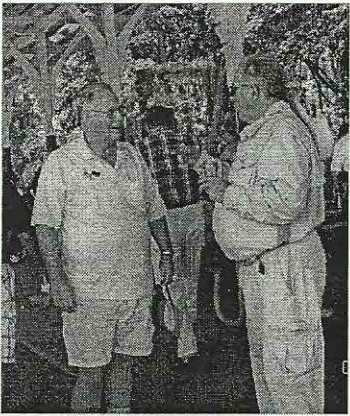
Special thanks go to our "Food Angels": Mrs. Shelley Dolch Arnold, Mrs. Jean Arp, Mrs. Betty Niemann, and Dr. Kim Wittstadt.

We enjoyed the singing of the Arion members: Mr. Brad Schlegel and his sister, the Reverend Beth Stoverschlegel and Mrs. Cathy Barnes.

Thanks to Mrs. Shelley Dolch Arnold, two members of the Maryland legislature attended the picnic with their families: Mrs. Susan Aumann and Mr. William J. Frank. Eighteen directors and their families attended with a special mention of Mr. Fred Riedel and his wife and Mrs. Robert Fritzsche and his family. Some guests expressed the wish to become members of the Society.

In my visit to each table, I felt encouraged by the cheerful atmosphere and joyful spirit present. The Great German Picnic was a great success. Wouldn't it be wonderful if all German American organizations could have one joint picnic next year?

Hopefully yours,  
H. J. Siegfried Otto



**THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO HELPED ON OUR "THE GREAT GERMAN PICNIC"**

Although our picnic suffered a major snag (the caterer didn't show up with the food) the preparations had been so detailed that it still came off to the satisfaction of those who stayed. We therefore must acknowledge the contributions of our workers, those who helped with the advertising and those who gave us gifts for prizes. We list below those who come to mind, and apologize to anyone whose name has been omitted:

-- **Walt Mathers**, who suggested and reserved the site at North Point State Park and who solicited the many gifts, arranged for the band, decorated the site, set up and helped clean up.

-- **THE DOCKENSPIELERS** of York, Pa. for providing the music with its 20 piece brass band.

-- the beer crew, **President Siegfried Otto, Ted Potthast, Marshall Jones and Mark Potthast** for buying, cooling and bringing the beer to the picnic.

-- **Connie Potthast**, for recording and depositing checks, preparing the lists of attendees, sending out refund checks and correspondence.

-- **Rowland King**, for serving as our biermeister.

-- **Baerbel Otto, Connie Potthast and Cathy Barnes** for greeting the guests and taking attendance.

-- **Kim Wittstadt, Shelley Arnold, Betty Niemann and Jean Arp** for saving the day: they went to the store and bought food for the picnic.

-- **J. Douglas Polaski** for set up, clean up, purchasing many cases of water and for his photography.

-- **Valerie Mathers**, for preparing for the children's games and soliciting prizes for them

-- **Ceci Muth Herman and Dr. Mary Upman** for photographing the event. **THANKS TO CECI HERMAN FOR THE PHOTOS SHOWN ON OPPOSITE PAGE.**

-- The **Arion Gesangverein** for assisting in the singalong at the picnic

-- The staff of the **Maryland State Park Service**, which aided in the picnic arrangements on site

**TO THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS FOR DONATIONS OF GIFTS AND SERVICES:**

**Albert Kirchmayr, chocolatier,  
Dundalk and Patapsco Neck Association  
WTRR Radio AM 1470 Westminster, MD  
Johnsonville Sausage, Sheboygan, WI; Al's  
Seafood House, Essex  
Embassy of Switzerland, Cultural Dept.  
Royal Marines rR-enactors - Fort Meade  
German Life Magazine  
Through the Hourglass - Glen Burnie  
Baltimore Orioles Baseball Club  
Chick-Fil-A Maryland Region**

We are grateful to the following organizations for helping to publicize our picnic:

**Baltimore United Volunteers, 5th Regiment  
Infantry, Baltimore  
General Society of the War of 1812  
The Baltimore and Chesapeake Steamship  
Company, Fairfax, VA  
Zion Church of the City of Baltimore  
Project Liberty Ship, SS John W. Brown  
DER WECKER -German American Discussion  
Group - on line  
Baltimore German Language Meet-up Group  
Ultimateoldiesradio.com  
Deutschmamerikanischer Buergerverein von  
Maryland  
AATG - American Association of Teachers of  
German  
McDaniel College, Modern Language Dept.**

A very special thanks goes out to Walt Mathers who provided the 9 x 20 foot 13 star American flag of 1812 and hanging it as a backdrop for the band, and for borrowing and placing a dozen 13-star flags on the columns of the picnic pavillion.

Since the caterer (Brian Schafer, of Big Boy Foods failed to show, the picnic committee announced that refunds would be given to all who requested. The beer was ice cold and the band had arrived, so those present were invited to enjoy free beer, to hear the concert and join the singalong. Most people stayed. A woman's brigade went out for food, so those who stayed had something to eat. \$520 in refunds was requested and paid.

## **WHAT DO YOU HAVE FOR GERMAN AMERICAN DAY?**

Middle and high school students studying German in Maryland come together each year at McDaniel College for German American Day - an event at which they learn about the German language and culture, and in particular the effect which Immigrants from Germany have influenced or affected our lives,. The person who established the event and who does the most to make it a success is Dr. Mohamed Esu, professor of German at the college and one of the directors of our Society. His influence as a leading teacher of German in the USA has been acknowledged by the German Ambassador awarding him Germany's Cross of Merit. Dr. Esa is reaching out to the German American community for help in imparting knowledge to the young students. What can you tell these culture-thirsty young people about your own experiences? If you were born in Germany, how did you adapt to life in America and what was it like learning a new language and living in a different culture. What was it like when you lived in Germany, attended school; how was it different from the USA? What is it like today? Do you have a background in German history which you can share with the students? How do these topics relate to today? The theme of the event is "Got Deutsch - German in the 21st Century". There are many topics the students want to learn about. The event will take place on Tuesday, October 19., 2010: Please send Dr. Esa a letter about your lecture or workshop ASAP, but not later than July 31. Write to Dr. Esa at: Dr. Mohamed Esu, Chair, Professor of German, Dept. of Foreign Languages, McDaniel College, Westminster, MD 21157.

## **CENTENARY OF VON STEUBEN STATUE TO BE COMMEMORATED DEC, 10, 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. 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.

## **A THANK YOU LETTER**

"It was wonderful meeting some of you at the AATG/ German Society awards ceremony several weeks ago. Thank you so much for the honor of the college merit award. I am grateful for your recognition and inspired to continue my pursuit of studying German both for the remainder of my college experience and afterward. I think it's fantastic what the Society does to promote German language and heritage in the area and I hope to stay in touch!  
Sincerely, with gratitude, Rebecca Gu "

## **LONG-TIME MEMBER RESIGNS**

We received the following letter from an old time member living in Annapolis. Maybe a member living in or close to Annapolis could befriend her. Please get in touch with our office for contact information.

*"President of the German Society:*

*I am sorry that I cannot continue to be a member because my friend Elfrieda Fowler who lived in Arnold, MD passed away two years ago. She always picked me up in Annapolis to take me to the picnic and other functions. She was one of my best friends and I really miss her. She got me interested in my mother's side of the family. I also joined the Edelweiss Club through her interest. She was only 72 years old. We made two trips to Munich together where she was born. I really loved our visits there and I began learning to understand and to speak some German.*

*Thanks to all the members of the German Society for making me feel welcome. God's blessings to all. "*

## **OUR MEMBERS ARE WONDERFUL**

Our recent picnic served to demonstrate what a fine group of people our members are. Their friendliness, their upbeat attitude in the face of adversity, their quick witted action showed the best of our heritage.

## **WORLD POWER BRITAIN BEATEN BY MARYLANDERS SEPTEMBER, 1814**

The State of Maryland is planning a two-year commemoration, commencing in June, 2012, of the events which led to the Maryland militia defeating the world's greatest army in The Battle of Baltimore in September, 1814. Baltimore County is gearing up to commemorate the Battle of North Point which set up the American victory in Baltimore. Our Society will form a committee to participate in the celebration by the local governments, with our emphasis on General John Stricker, "The Hero of the Battle of North Point" who was a vice president of The German Society of Maryland and who was a signatory to the charter of our Society issued by the Maryland legislature in 1818. If you are a history buff, please sign up to join our committee: we need ideas on projects which will make known the participation of the many members of our Society who fought alongside General Stricker in the battles which saved our nation from domination by a foreign power. Unless we take firm action in getting our message out, the country will not realize that the heroic action of MD German Americans played a major role in our country's freedom.

## **TWO GERMAN AMERICANS VIE FOR MARYLAND'S GOVERNORSHIP**

Governor Martin O'Malley and former governor Robert Ehrlich (a member of our Society) oppose one another in the Nov. gubernatorial race. O'Malley's mother is of German origin; Ehrlich's ancestry is German, as is the origin of his name. O'Malley stresses his Irish side. Regardless of the outcome of the election, Maryland will have a German American as governor.

## **SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP DOWN**

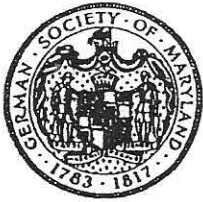
Our Society office manager, Baerbel Otto, announced at the annual meeting that our Society now stands at 534 "units" A unit consists of an individual or a man and a woman as a unit, so that the actual number of members is about 800. At one point there were more than 1,000 members, but many have been dropped for nonpayment of dues. With investment income down and a poor stock market, our investment revenue, once our principal source of income, has now taken second place to dues. Our membership chairman, Dandridge Brooke, has set a target of 20 new members per month. If this can be achieved, dues as a source of funding our projects could increase by several thousand dollars per year. Our finance committee has also changed many of our investments to concentrate on production of income while still hoping for a modest growth in valuation.

## **FRANK AND AUMAN PROPOSE GERMAN AMERICAN MONTH FOR MARYLAND**

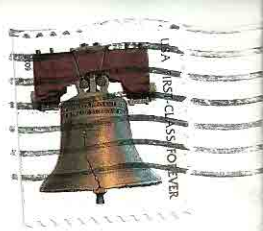
Bill Frank and Susan Auman, members of our Society and also members of the Maryland House of Delegates were in attendance at our picnic at North Point State Park on June 26. They announced their intention to introduce a resolution in the General Assembly to designate October as German American Month in Maryland. The strong German heritage of our state should be recognized by such an action. 2011, Bill and Susan are seeking other members of the legislature to co-sponsor the resolution. We will be asking our members to contact their legislators in the House and Senate to vote for the resolution. We also need a large group to turn out at the hearing (probably in the first two weeks of February, 2011) to show the General Assembly the support of the German Americans.

## **MEMBERS HONORED BY GILMAN**

Lauren Rizzo and Paul-Gerhard Otto were recently honored by The Gilman School for their services and achievements. Lauren demonstrated initiative, enthusiasm and the positive attitude which bodes well for the future of the school. Paul's cheerfulness, enthusiastic and selfless participation has endeared him to the entire Gilman community.



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 www.germansociety-md.com



**JULY-AUG, 2010  
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**GERMAN FESTIVAL: SATURDAY JULY 24, 11 AM TO 10 PM SUNDAY 11 AM TO 8 PM JULY 25 AT THE TIMONIUM FAIRGROUNDS. PLEASE COME AND PAY A VISIT TO THE GERMAN SOCIETY'S TABLE. MEET HAPPY PEOPLE. GOOD GERMAN MUSIC AND FOOD**

*"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](http://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](http://www.md-germans.org)

This newsletter is published by The German Society of Maryland, an organization founded in 1783 and incorporated in 1817 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.