

THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

DIE DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT VON MARYLAND

VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

JULY-AUGUST

ISSUE #55

106TH ANNUAL
**GERMAN
FESTIVAL**

New Location
MARYLAND STATE FAIR GROUNDS • TIMONIUM

JULY
SATURDAY - SUNDAY
29TH - 30TH
12 to 10 12 to 8

Admission...
ADULTS... \$5.00
SENIORS... \$4.00
CHILDREN UNDER 12
FREE WITH PAYING
ADULT

KALENDER

July 29-30 German Festival Timonium Fair Grounds
Sept. Date to be set: Michaelmas Ecumenical Service
Oct. 7-8 MD Oktoberfest at 5th Regiment Armory
Oct. 17 German American Day at McDaniels College
Oct. 21-22 Oktoberfest at Schifferstadt, Frederick, MD
Oct. 25-26 Zion Church Sour Beef lunch and dinner
Oct. 28 German Society Annual Awards Banquet
Nov. 25-26 Christkindlmarkt at Zion Adlersaal

Visit the German Society's website:

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

ATTEND THE GERMAN FESTIVAL; IT'S IMPORTANT TO OUR SOCIETY

Our Society was a founder of the Baltimore German festival 106 years ago. We are a member of the "Biergerverein", the group of German American organizations in the Baltimore region which sponsor the event. Through the years it has been held at various sites within the city limit, but now the location will move to the Timonium Fair Grounds in Baltimore County. Change is always a cause of concern. People who have attended in the past may not find their way to the new location. We have a major stake in this event and we are hoping that our members will publicize it to their family and friends. We hope that all of our members who are physically able will come. It is part of our heritage and we count on our members to help preserve the tradition. The chairman of the festival is Tom Werner, one of the directors of the German Society.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The German Society will have a table and we need volunteers to tend it, to pass out literature and to answer questions about our Society. We typically gain new members from this event. Our professionally engineered display, featuring the Society's history and accomplishments, will be exhibited. Please call our president, Brigitte Fessenden at 410- 532-7581 to volunteer an hour or two at the Society's station at the event. Leave your name and number on Brigitte's answering machine if she is not home when you call.

COMPUTER WILL RESEARCH YOUR ANCESTRY

Through the courtesy of our member and benefactor, Josh Cockey, our Society's table will feature a computer and a program to research your German ancestry. Josh has a heritage store in Towson and Annapolis where you can learn research techniques and purchase heritage items.

RAIN OR SHINE

The festival will be under the protection of the grandstand at the race track. Enter the fairgrounds from the southern entrance on Timonium Road. There is ample parking. The fairgrounds are also accessible via light rail.

YOUR HELP IS ESSENTIAL

In a sense, the new location makes this a new enterprise and changes are always a cause for concern. Please support the festival: tell your friends and neighbors; persuade your family to attend; and finally, bring yourself, have fun and celebrate your heritage!

McDANIEL SEEKS SPEAKERS

The German American Day program set at McDaniel College in Westminster on Oct. 17 is recruiting speakers to address the high school German language students who will attend. One of the functions of the session is to educate students in German history, customs and culture. The speakers need not be academics. One of the most popular sessions not long ago was a holocaust survivor who told the students what it was like to live in a concentration camp.

Our Society has many members who have lived for part of their lives in Germany. Many were children when the Allies bombed the cities and have tales of the terrors of the bombs and the loss of fellow students. Some helped in the rebuilding of Germany and participated in the hauling away of the trash, the saving of the bricks for re-use in rebuilding their homes. Many can describe what it was like to live during the American, French, British and Russian occupation after the war. They can tell about what it was like to go to school in Germany in the years from the 1940's through the 1980's. American students want to know what it was like and to hear it directly from those who had direct experience. If you would like to be part of a session with other members of our Society to tell the young Americans what it was like in the not-too-distant past, call our office to express an interest and we will try to organize a session for the German American Day at McDaniels.

ANNUAL PICNIC A PLEASANT EVENT FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

The Sunday morning rain ceased by the time our picnic began and by mid-afternoon the sun was shining upon the Maryland Germans as they enjoyed the food and German beer provided by the caterer, Old World Deli. The bratwurst, sauerkraut and German potato salad were all in ample supply, with American hot dogs and hamburgers for those with less ethnic appetites.

Chairman Tom Werner arranged the rental of the pavilion in Baltimore County's Oregon Ridge Park. He also selected the successful menu and contracted with Old World Deli to cater the affair. The early morning weather played some tricks by causing a power outage at the pavilion and frustrated our plans for playing recorded German music, as well as wetted the grounds causing the cancellation of the children's games and the horseshoe tournament. But the spirits of the crowd were not dampened and a good time was had by all. Our Society's banner fluttered in a gentle breeze. A few of the participants wore Lederhosen and sported Alpine hats to add to the atmosphere.



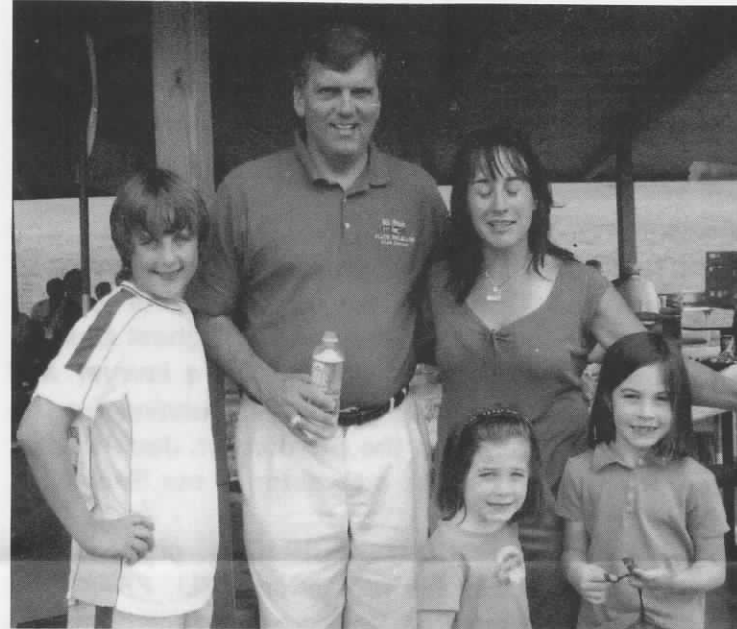
Josh Cockey at the picnic wearing a hat advertising the upcoming banquet honoring our deceased member of happy memory, Monsignor Martin Schwalenberg.

President Brigitte Fessenden talked some Society business at the picnic and arranged with Josh Cockey for a computer at our table to research ancestry. Many of the members discussed upcoming trips to Germany and received advice from veteran travelers on ways to get around and places to visit.

The 206 picnic was the first time the annual event was held in a Baltimore County park. Oregon Ridge featured a great playground for the young children and the pavilion was spacious. Past picnics have been held in at Blob's Park and in various parks in Howard

County. In former times some of our members provided spacious grounds around their private homes, but as the picnic became more popular and the numbers rose above a hundred, it became too much of an imposition.

We are always looking for new venues which are convenient to our members, and so we ask you to make suggestions to our officers and directors for future times and locations for our annual picnic.



Member Bill Frank, a state legislator, chats with Mia Walsh and some constituents at the picnic



President Brigitte Fessenden is seen with director Merl Arp and member Bill Frank getting ideas for the Society's projects

DR. GERD H. PETRICH, 65

Our loyal member, Dr. Gerd Petrich, died June 18, survived by his wife, Helen Kellner Petrich, a daughter, four sons, a stepson, stepdaughter and two grandchildren. A full obituary will be published in the next issue of the newsletter. The Society extends its condolences to his wife and family.

UPCOMING PRIMARY ELECTIONS

Among the members of the German Society of Maryland who are candidates in the upcoming primary elections in September are:

DEMOCRAT: WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER and **JACK R. STURGILL**. Don Schaefer, former mayor of Baltimore and Governor of our state, is up for reelection as Comptroller, the second highest elective office in the state. **JACK STURGILL**, a lawyer and special assistant attorney general, is running for the House of Delegates from the 6th district. Jack's wife, Marcy formerly served as a Director of our Society.

REPUBLICAN: ROBERT EHRlich, our current governor, is running for reelection. **BILL FRANK**, a member of the House of Delegates representing the 42nd district, is also running for reelection. **Gerald W. (Rod) Wittstadt, Jr.** is a first-time candidate for the House of Delegates for the 37th district (Cecil, Queen Anne, Kent and Caroline Counties).

SCHAEFER SUPPORTS EDUCATING LEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN ENGLISH -IS VICTIM OF MEDIA ATTACKS

At a meeting of the Board of Public Works last week, Comptroller Schaefer spoke in favor of funding courses for teaching English as a second language to persons legally in Maryland, but complained of the expenses in educating illegals. His views were attacked by a primary election opponent. Schaefer has long pointed out the high costs of providing services to illegals (whom many refer to as "undocumented immigrants").

Schaefer has been the subject of hostile stories by The Baltimore Sun and by WJZ-TV with increasing frequency since the election campaigning has heated up. Governor Ehrlich has been a target of The Sun during his entire term in office, but tasting the possibility of unseating him, the Sun's anti-Ehrlich campaign has swung into high gear.

SCHIFFERSTADT IN FREDERICK MARKS ITS 250TH ANNIVERSARY

In 1756 Joseph Brunner, an immigrant from the town of Schifferstadt in Germany, bought some land near Frederick, Maryland from an Englishman and built a home which he named after his hometown. The English man sold the land cheaply because he wanted to bring German farmers to the area and also to create a buffer from the hostile Indians. Brunner built the house nearly like a fortress. The lower level was solid except for slits from which the dwellers could fire their guns at the attacking Indians. The house was built above a spring to assure a supply of water during a long siege. The Brunner home is now a museum, preserved by local historical-minded citizens and by some of Brunner's descendants.

Dr. David Denisch, an 11th generation grandson of Joseph Brenner, is a director of our Society. He is active as a docent at the Schifferstadt museum.

There will be a special celebration at the museum on Saturday, October 21 from 10 am to 5 pm and on Sunday, October 22 from 12 to 5 p.m. The public is invited. Admission is \$3 which includes a tour of the Brunner home, a juried craft show, a colonial cooking exhibition, blacksmith and shingle-making demonstrations, a French and Indian living history exhibition and a tour of an 18th century garden of plants imported from Europe as well as those native to the new world. Wurst by Egon Bingert, micro-brewed beer and vendors will be on site. The event is highly recommended to our members.

The preservation of Schifferstadt for 250 years as an important part of Maryland's German American heritage has prompted our directors to celebrate this accomplishment by honoring the preservationists at our annual awards banquet. The Society will honor our director, Dr. David Denisch, as a symbol and representative of the Brunner family and all of those who, throughout the years, have devoted their time, efforts and resources to the preservation of this remarkable piece of Maryland's German history.

MEDIEVAL GERMAN MANUSCRIPTS

Henry Walters collected 29 illuminated manuscripts produced in present day Germany, Austria and Switzerland from the 9th to the 16th centuries. They are on exhibit at Baltimore's Walters Art Museum from July 22 through October 6. The high quality of their decoration signifies the importance of these books to readers of the Middle Ages. They are on exhibit as a collection for the first time.

HECHTS MOVE TO MALIBU

Longtime members Bill and Frederike Hecht have moved to California and bought a home in Malibu as a result of Bill's new job as CEO of an Australian firm which owns shopping malls in the USA. Freddie, an interior designer, hopes to start a new business in California. Last year the couple spent some time at the German embassy in Moscow where Freddie's uncle is the ambassador of the Federal Republic.

OLD GERMAN NEIGHBORHOOD STUDIED FOR RENOVATION

The area in the 20 blocks surrounding "The American Brewery" in East Baltimore has declined worse than any other neighborhood in the city, with boarded up homes, drug infestation and crime. In the late 1800's this was populated mostly by German immigrants. The brewery was built by a Bavarian in the "German American Baroque" style of architecture. Since 1970 the population has dropped from about 7,000 to just over 2,000. No German Americans remain. The brewery has been vacant for nearly 40 years and is now owned by the city. Prospective tenants are scared away by the crime rate. Employers will not move into the brewery building until the streets around it are safe for their employees. Since the area has reached rock bottom, studies indicate it is ripe for renovation, but only if major sums are invested in crime prevention.

A BEAR KILLED IN GERMANY

Although a bear is the symbol for Berlin and there are many restaurants throughout Germany bearing the name "Bear", there are no wild bears in Germany. However a brown bear whom the Germans named "Bruno" wandered up from Italy, through Austria and into Bavaria, knocking down honey-pots, killing livestock and outraging the Alpine farmers. Bruno was the first bear known to run wild in Germany in 150 years. He eluded farmers and hunters for a month, but was finally shot. Wild bears are common in America, especially in the mountains. Last year Maryland opened its bear hunting season, but issued only 20 hunting licenses, by the drawing of lots. There are about 340 wild black bears wandering the forests of western Maryland. (The farmers in Maryland are just as unhappy as were the Bavarian farmers.)

DECLINE NOTED IN SINGING OF GERMAN FOLK SONGS LOCALLY

Senior citizens who grew up in German American families in the 1930's and 1940's in central Maryland learned the German folk songs which were sung at family gatherings and in the summer beer gardens where the families often spent their evenings. As inter-marriages diluted the German heritage, the singing sessions became fewer and fewer so that today's youngsters would not recognize any of the old standbys such as "Mein Vater war ein Wandersman", "Die Lorelei" etc. Our annual banquet always featured the singing of a few folk songs, to give the event a German touch, but for the past few years, even that little piece of ethnicity has fallen by the wayside. About 10 years ago the Society formed a committee to study the prospects of publishing a book of folk songs for the use of German Americans, but the seed money to get the project off the ground was not available at the time. Perhaps the committee should be resurrected. A good songbook might well be a money-maker and could help spread our Society's reputation on a national basis. If any of our members have an interest in joining a committee to select folk songs, please contact Barbel Otto by calling our office and leaving a message on our answering machine.

THE SOCIETY NEEDS MONEY -- ALL MEMBERS CAN HELP

Everything is more expensive. Costs go up but our revenues are not keeping pace. The Society is reluctant to increase dues and will do so only as a last resort. But we have to get funds, because our programs are being stifled and we cannot move into new areas of opportunity to spread knowledge of the heritage of our German speaking ancestors and foster the study of their language and culture.

Some have remembered the Society in their wills, but we need funds now and we can't sit like vultures waiting for someone to die. We ask our members to do something now.

We have met great success in promoting German language studies in Maryland high schools. Our program just won a national award and focused the spotlight on Maryland as the only state where membership among the American Association of Teachers of German has increased. While we are inducing more students to take up German, we need more funds to reward the increasing numbers.

Sit down today and mail the Society a check.

GERMAN AMERICAN JUDGE GIVES POLICEMAN 315 YEAR SENTENCE

Judge Fred Motz of the U. S. District Court for Maryland handed down a 315 year sentence to a Baltimore City cop convicted by a jury of multiple counts of robbing drug dealers of their drugs. The cop had claimed he used the drugs to get information from informants, but the jury found that he sold some for his own gain. Judge Motz criticized the law requiring mandatory sentences because the results are often disproportionate to the crime. He said he felt like Pontius Pilate. On the same day he sentenced a drug dealer for conspiring to sell 5 kilos of cocaine. Judge Motz' father, a prominent Baltimore banker, was a loyal member of The German Society of Maryland.

LOCAL GERMAN AMERICAN NUNS VOLUNTEER IN ALZHEIMER STUDY

A neurologist from Kentucky is close to finishing a 20 year study of Alzheimer disease which has involved nearly 700 members of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. The study concludes that persons who lead an active and imaginative intellectual life are more likely to avoid the disease. A 93 year old nun who has been a participant in the study recently appeared on national TV to explain it. A feature article in the Baltimore Sun of June 15 showed photos of the daily life of elderly nuns at the SSND motherhouse on Charles Street in Baltimore County. The Notre Dame Sisters came to Baltimore from Bavaria in 1848 and have operated many parochial elementary and high schools in Maryland as well as the College of Notre Dame of MD. The participants take annual physical and mental exams and donate their brains to the project. So far over 350 of the nuns' brains have been collected and studied, perhaps the largest collection in medical history for such a study. The vast majority of names of the sisters which appeared in the Sun article were German: Kumlel, Hettel, Staab, Klug, Kieffer, Spaeth, Fellerz, Brandl, Eichner and Zeller. One of the nuns who volunteered for the study is a member of The German Society of Maryland. The sister managing the program is Sr. Berniece Feilinger.

FRENCH STAR EVICTED

France's superstar, Zinedine Zidane was thrown out of the championship game for head-butting an Italian player who said some words to him. Local Baltimore wags speculate that the insult was: "You play like an American!" French president Chirac called him a hero.

MARITIME MUSEUM FOR BLACK HISTORY OPENS IN FELLS POINT

While ethnic museums struggle to get started in Maryland, there is no scarcity of funds for African American projects in Baltimore. A new maritime museum honoring black shipbuilder Isaac Myers and abolitionist Frederick Douglas opened on June 28 in Fells Point. This is the third museum for the preservation of black culture opened in Baltimore the past decade. The first was The Black Heritage Museum, costing over fifty million dollars. Then two years ago the Reginald Lewis Museum opened on President Street in the Inner Harbor, prompted by a gift of over five million dollars from the late black business man, Regional Lewis. To date, no large benefactors have stepped up to fund the establishment of a German American museum. The closest institution for preserving a German heritage is the Jewish Museum next to the Lloyd Street Synagogue. The majority of the Jewish institutions memorialized in that museum were founded by Jewish immigrants from Germany. Several million dollars have poured into that museum and continue to do so. It is well worth a visit by all Marylanders of German ancestry.

GERMANY PLACES #3 IN WORLD CUP

In June and July the world's attention was centered on "football" (soccer) games taking place in the big cities all over Germany. The great accomplishment of Team USA was tying Italy, 1-1. The Italians considered it a shameful defeat. In the semi-finals Germany defeated Portugal to gain the number 3 spot in the tournament. France and Italy fought it out on Sunday afternoon, July 9 as hundreds of millions of viewers watched the game on TV. The game was played in Berlin. Americans universally rooted for Italy. While the celebrations in the streets of Baltimore's Little Italy did not match the pandemonium in Rome, it nevertheless was a joyful day. Soccer is the national sport of Germany and all of the European, African and South American countries. It ranks fourth in popularity in the USA, behind baseball, American football and basketball. It has become more popular in the USA in recent years as "soccer moms" steer their boys away from the more dangerous American style football. Soccer clubs have long been big with German Americans. The Baltimore Kickers Club celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2005 amid great festivities and tournaments. Nearly all American high schools and colleges now sponsor soccer teams, a phenomenon which has occurred only in the past 25 years.

GERMAN MOTHERS OF FAMOUS AMERICAN- A LOOK INTO HISTORY

The face on the \$50 bill - BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. His mother was a German woman named FOLGER. Ben was the youngest of 12 children and could not pursue his goal of becoming a clergyman because it required an education and the family had no money to send him to school. From his mother's tutelage he spoke and wrote extensively in German and when he decided to be a publisher, his first newspaper was in German. Ben was brilliant: he invented bifocals, discovered electricity, was a famous writer and publisher, was sent to Paris as a diplomat and became the darling of the international community. Despite his German background, he feared the German influence on our new country and vehemently argued against making German our native language.

JOHN PHILIP SOUZA was raised by his German mother and grandmother after his Portuguese father abandoned them when John was an infant. He inherited the German love for music and himself became America's greatest composer of marches, particularly patriotic ones such as STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER. He entered the military, taught music at the Academy at West Point and was the leader of the U.S. Army Band. While stationed in Washington, he often visited Baltimore and it is rumored that he paid visits to Zion Church. All Germans love marches and even today when they march in Germany, it is often to the sound of the tunes of John Philip Souza.

(After retiring from the army, he joined the faculty of Gonzaga College High School on Capitol Hill, where I also taught some 40 years later. TJP)

GERMAN MOTHERS - If our newsletter readers will send in "German mother" information, we will make this a regular feature.

ROETHLISBERGER MOTORCYCLE MISHAP EVOKES SCHADENFREUDE

Ben Roethlisberger, the handsome German American quarterback, who lead the Pittsburgh Steelers football team to victory in this year's Superbowl, was injured when an auto turned into his motorcycle. He underwent 7 hours of surgery to repair broken bones and lacerations in his face. He lost two teeth and chipped several others. It occurred in Pennsylvania, which does not require motorcycle helmets (as does

Maryland) and he was not wearing one. He apologized to the Steelers' fans for his risky behavior. Some fans of rival teams expressed Schadenfreude over Roethlisberger's plight. (Schaden: injury, harm. Freude: joy.) A prominent psychiatrist stated that persons who take pleasure when another human being is injured suffers from "an undeveloped brain".

THE MYSTERY OF ISAAC MYERS

The most common name in Germany (like Smith in America) is Myer(s), Meyer(s) or Meier(s) all of which are pronounced alike. A maritime museum costing \$14,000,000 opened on June 28 in Fells Point in Baltimore City honoring Isaac Myers and Frederick Douglas, two black men with close ties to Fells Point. Isaac Myers was the first black shipyard owner in the United States. Our Society challenges its members to research the question of how Myers traces his German name.

There is usually an interesting story behind the names of African Americans, a spokesman for former Baltimore mayor Kurt Schmoke related. Schmoke family members were freemen. The family's original name was "Smoke". A white slave-owner whose name was also Smoke challenged the mayor's ancestor and demanded that he change his name. A German farmer whose name was Schmoke stepped forward and told the mayor's ancestor that he could use the Schmoke name, which he accepted with the ultimate result that a black mayor of Baltimore proudly carried the German name, Kurt Schmoke.

Let's investigate how Isaac Myers came to be.

JEROME W. ULLRICH, 90

Jerry Ullrich, a prominent member of the Baltimore area real estate community, died July 3 at Gilcrest Hospice in Baltimore County. At age 15, upon his father's death, he helped his mother operate a confectionery store on Patterson Park Avenue and Oliver Street. He was a 1934 graduate of Calvert Hall College High School. He sold real estate for nearly 50 years and maintained his office on Belair Road and Brendan Avenue. He valued his German heritage, which was nurtured by the ethnic community around Patterson Park. He is survived by his wife of many years, the former Dorothy Koerner, by a son, a daughter, 6 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. His wife of 33 years, the former Charlotte Zink, died in 1970.

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



The German Society of Maryland

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COME TO THE
GERMAN FESTIVAL
AT THE MD STATE
FAIRGROUNDS IN
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SATURDAY AND
SUNDAY JULY 29-30
UNDER THE GRAND-
STAND - PROTECTED
RAIN OR SHINE
--USE TIMONIUM
ROAD ENTRANCE
PLENTY OF PARKING
--VISIT OUR STAND
AND OUR EXHIBIT

=====
INVITE YOUR FRIENDS
TO JOIN THE
GERMAN SOCIETY

=====
GIFTS TO OUR
SOCIETY ARE TAX
DEDUCTIBLE

=====
REMEMBER OUR
EDUCATION FUND

=====
ANNUAL AWARDS
BANQUET SAT.
OCTOBER 28
IN ADLERSAAL

MAIL TO:

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ Zipcode: _____

Spouse (Optional): _____ Phone: _____

Referred by: _____

"I hereby apply to be a member of the German Society of Maryland"

Annual dues \$15. Spouse may be included at no extra cost.
Make check payable to "The German Society of MD" P.O.
Box 22585, Baltimore MD 21203-4585

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 Der 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.