

# THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND

DIE DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT VON MARYLAND

## VEREINSNACHRICHTEN

FEBRUARY, 1996

ISSUE EIGHT

### **MEMBERS INVITED TO AWARDS BANQUET AT WESTERN MARYLAND COLLEGE**

The Society will award prizes to students who are studying German in Maryland high schools at a banquet at Western Maryland College, Westminster, MD on Saturday, April 27. Members of the Society are urged to attend, to encourage the students in their efforts. Cash prizes will be awarded to those students who score in the 90th percentile in the national German language test administered by the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG). The Society has set aside \$3,000 for the cash prizes for the students. Each qualifying student will receive a \$100 prize; provided the amount will be adjusted to stay within the budget.

The college will provide a hot buffet dinner to Society members at a cost of only \$12.50. The event will take place from 5 to 7 PM and will feature the awards program, music and entertainment. Checks for the dinner must be received in the Society's office by April 15th.

The awards banquet is held in conjunction with the convention of the Maryland Organization of German Students (MOGS). The German Society joins with the AATG to promote and assist MOGS, a new entity formed to unite students of German from throughout the state.

### **CONGRESSMAN EHRLICH ADDRESSES SOCIETY**

Congressman Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., a member of the Society, spoke at our Awards Banquet and extolled the virtues of our Honoree, Louis L. Goldstein. The congressman is a freshman Republican member of the House of Representatives, representing Maryland's 2nd District. He said that Mr. Goldstein serves as a model and exemplar for all elected officials for his integrity and his dedication to public service.

***"The purpose of the German Society of Maryland is to preserve and promote the German heritage, language 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."***

### **CALL FOR PLANNING CONVENTION**



The Executive Committee of the Society has called for a meeting of the membership in early 1996 to plan for implementing the various purposes of the Society. Two sessions were held in 1994 to redefine the Society's purposes.

The Committee report states that it is now time to analyze how the Society's programs have met those purposes and to determine a future course of action. The Board of Directors will meet in January to set the time and place for the conference. All members will be urged to attend.

### **ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 8**

The Annual Meeting of the Membership of the Society will be held on Friday, March 8 in the dining hall at Zion Church, City Hall Plaza. All members are urged to attend. A buffet dinner will be served beginning at 6:30 PM. The buffet is free to all members. The meeting will commence at 8 PM and usually lasts one hour.

The Society will provide a fine spread of German food, plus the usual German drinks of beer and wine, coffee and soft drinks. Members of the Society who would like to volunteer to bring their own specialties or desserts are invited to do so. Call our office to advise what you will bring, so that the dinner can be planned accordingly.

# Activities & Events

## Bürgerverein Elections

The Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von MD held its annual elections on Jan. 26th and elected the same officers who have served for the past several years. The Bürgerverein is apparently having the same problem experienced by many ethnic organizations, namely, a shortage of new people willing to serve as officers.

The Bürgerverein holds monthly meetings on the last Friday of the month at 8:30 PM at the Kickers Clubhouse on South Broadway in east Baltimore. The German Society is entitled to send 3 voting members to the meetings. We we have been having difficulty finding volunteers to represent the Society at the Friday night meetings. Anyone wishing to be one of our delegates to the Bürgerverein should call our office, please!

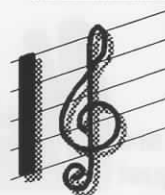
## March 10 Concert & Reception



Reverend Kenneth Homer welcomes the membership of the German Society to attend a concert and reception featuring the **SPENGE BRASS CHOIR** on Sunday, March 10, 1996 at 3 p.m.

The Concert and reception will be held at the Christus Victor Lutheran Church located at 9833 Harford Road. The Church is located off Beltway exit 31 North. There is convenient Beltway access and ample parking available.

## JOIN THE SINGERS



The Arion Gesangverein is A singing group in Baltimore whose repertory consists of, but is not restricted to, classical and traditional folk songs, sung in German.

Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays at 8 PM at Zion Church, City Hall Plaza. Membership is open to all who love to sing. Ability to speak German is not required. The group invites you to visit its rehearsal to learn about its activities. For information call 410-665-4135.

## LOCAL GERMAN RADIO SHOWS



The German Radio Klub and The Edelweiss Klub offer broadcasting of interest to the German community of Central Maryland on radio 750 AM. The schedule:

### GERMAN RADIO HOUR:

Every Saturday at 3 p.m.

Sundays at 2 p.m.

Sundays at 8 p.m. (summer schedule starting on June 5).

### EDELWEISS HOUR

Sundays from 9 to 10 a.m on RADIO WBMD, 750 AM

## GENEALOGICAL SEMINAR CANCELLED

The Society's planned seminar in October was canceled for lack of a sufficient number of participants. Although chairwoman Jane Awalt had arranged for an outstanding panel of speakers, not enough members of the Society were interested in the event. Nevertheless, the Society will pursue its goal of offering interested members a genealogic program, but through cooperative efforts with other organizations. When arrangements are complete, the program will be publicized.

**GERMAN AND ITALIAN OPERA IN ANNAPOLIS****SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM  
DEADLINE**

The deadline for applications for German Scholarships is April 15, 1996, for the school year beginning in the fall. To be eligible, a student must be attending a four-year college or university located in the State of Maryland and be of German ancestry. Preferences are given to students in need and to those studying German language, history or culture. Applications for scholarships may be obtained by writing to (P.O. Box 22585, Baltimore, MD 21203-4585) or calling our office (410-685-0450). Sarah Daneker who teaches German at Baltimore City College is the chair of our scholarship committee.

**GERMAN FOR TRAVEL**

The German language school at Zion Church offers a 6 week course to acquire basic German needed in everyday situations. Saturdays 10-noon March 9 to April 20. Tuition \$45. To enroll, call Eva Kelleher 410-377-9508

The Annapolis Opera Company stages one opera each year in November and numerous musicals on Sunday afternoons throughout the year. For example, "The Mother's Day in Vienna" musicale held in 1993 at Quiet Waters Park outside of Annapolis remains an unforgettable experience. The singers, dressed in period costumes, dramatically entered the park in coaches pulled by Lippizan stallions. After enjoying an array of Viennese Opera and Operetta favorites, the audience gathered for a tasting of Viennese foods and good conversation.

However, most musicals take place in one of the historic houses in Annapolis. For its annual full-scale performance, the Annapolis Opera moves into The Hall for the Creative Arts close to downtown Annapolis. A special dinner at one of Annapolis' fine restaurants precedes the performance for those who make reservations to participate. To get further information and to be put on the Opera's mailing list, call Thea and Harry Lindauer at (410)263-2710.

**HOSTS NEEDED**

Host families in the Ellicott City/ Catonsville area are needed from September 27 - October 11, 1996 for part-time English students from a community college in Hildesheim, Germany; professionals ages 35-45, and 2 children ages 11 and 12 for the purpose of a cultural learning experience.

We need to accommodate 2 couples with 1 child each, 1 single man and 3 single women. In exchange, our guests invite hosts for a return-visit to their homes in Germany or offer to help with household expenses (\$200 - \$250 per week) during their stay in Maryland. The group's teacher, Sandra Seiler, is originally from Ellicott City and will stay at her mother's house in the area. She will take her students on six day-trips.

This is a great opportunity for members of the German Society to make new friends and learn about German culture. Please call Ingrid Rieger at our office number for further information.

**FREE SPEECH FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS OF GERMAN**

If you are a native speaker of German and want to call your friends or relatives in the old country, you may be able to make a free 30-minute call and get paid \$10, at the expense of the University of Pennsylvania. Scientists and educators there are collecting spoken German. For details, call 1-800-380-PENN (7366).



## SOCIETY'S OFFICES TO MOVE

### **PRESIDENT CLINTON'S MESSAGE TO D.A.N.K.**

President Bill Clinton congratulated Ernst Ott on his election to a third term as President of the German-American National Congress at the National Convention in Milwaukee. In his message, Mr. Clinton praised the German Americans: "The abundant gifts of the German people and culture have helped make America strong, and each of you can take pride in your efforts to maintain and advance this important legacy." The German Society of Maryland is a member of DANK (Deutsch-Amerikaner National Kongress).

### **Fr. Losemann Preaches at Thanksgiving Service**

Father Heinrich J. Losemann, Jr., secretary to Cardinal William Keeler, gave the sermon at the Thanksgiving Eve Ecumenical Service at Zion Church. He pointed out that the act of thanksgiving involves two persons: the one giving thanks and the one to whom thanks are given. The concept of our Thanksgiving Day implies the action of God, to whom thanks are given for His many gifts. Fr. Losemann also recalled the origin of our ecumenical service in 1989, when the German Society joined with the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland and with Zion Church to give thanks for the fall of the Berlin wall and the unification of the two Germanies. He explored the concept of unification and unity. From biblical times to the present, he explained that unity of all peoples is God's plan for peace on earth.

Father Losemann's father emigrated from Germany. As a child, Fr. Losemann spent his summers with his relatives in Germany. He is also a lawyer and studied law for a year at the University of Heidelberg.

After 25 years of operating at our Chase Street offices, the Society has outgrown that space and is planning to move. We have been the tenants of the Wiesand family. William and Vernon Wiesand are long time members of the Society. Vernon served as our President for several years. The rent has been minimal and the Wiesand never raised the rent for all those years. The Society is most grateful to the Wiesands for their kindness and generosity.

We do not yet have a lease for a new office but hope to have a location within the next few weeks, and move by the end of March. The Society will need some help in moving archives, documents and books, and we are requesting volunteers. If you can help, please call the office and leave your name. Volunteers will be notified of the moving date(s).

### **BISHOP MOCKO IS LITURGIST AT ECUMENICAL EVENT**

Bishop George P. Mocko, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Conference of Maryland and Delaware, attended the Thanksgiving Eve Ecumenical Service at Zion Church, acting as Liturgist, along with Pastor Siegfried Otto.

Two hundred members of our Society, the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland, the Zion congregation and their guests participated in the ceremonies. A reception followed in Zion's renovated Adlersaal, where all joined in a gala social gathering.

Edwin O. Wenck, Esq. was the Society's chairman for coordinating the services. He is a prosecutor in the State's Attorney's office and is also an ordained minister.

The Rev. Dr. John Deckenback, Conference Minister of the Central Atlantic Conference of The United Church of Christ, participated in the liturgy. In attendance was The Rev. Dr. Thomas Hamilton, Area Minister for Baltimore and Frederick, also of The United Church of Christ. Lay participants who are members of the Society were: Hon. Gerard W. Wittstadt, crucifer; Herbert Rieger and Fredericke Hurdle-Hecht, readers; and Margarete Kramer and Edith Kellner, petitioners.

The event featured outstanding musical presentations. The Maryland State Boychoir, under the direction of Frank T. Cimino and accompanist Vincent Craig, sang "Lob und Ehre und Weisheit und Dank" and "Gaudet in Coelis." The Children of the German Language School, directed by German Society member Bärbel Otto, sang "Du hast uns deine Welt geschenkt." The Zion Church Choir, led by director and organist John Heizer, and accompanied by trumpeters Lengston Fitzgerald and Ted Jones, presented a wide selection of hymns of thanksgiving. Irma Tillman chaired the Food and Drink Committee. Betty and Harry Gruel and Donald Tillman assisted as well.

The Society extends its gratitude to all who made this event so significant and meaningful, reverent and happy!



## MEMBER NEWS

Teacher-Researcher of  
German Literature

A long-time member of our Society and our scholarship committee, **Dr. Hanna Geldrich-Leffman** was featured in the Winter issue of the Loyola College magazine. She teaches German and Spanish literature at Loyola and undertakes research in those subjects.

Dr. Geldrich-Leffman left her native Hungary, fleeing the Russian occupation for Germany with her pediatrician father. After three years, they moved to Argentina, remained there for a decade before she came to the United States at age 25. She earned her Ph.D. in German literature from The Johns Hopkins University in 1967.

The magazine quoted Dr. Geldrich-Leffman as she praised the teaching profession: "Teaching is a challenge, a wonderful challenge. To awaken in a student an interest in language and literature, and to teach it so they want to do more is a rewarding task. And each generation has a different profile because the world has changed so. Students today are so sophisticated about technology, and we as professors have to keep up as well. It enlivens our work."

## PROFILE OF NEW MEMBER

**Daniel A. Swope, Ph.D.** and his wife, **Betty**, of College Park, Md. joined the Society as a result of receiving a copy of our newsletter from one of our members, **Col. Harry Hasslinger** of Mayo, Md. Dr. and Mrs. Swope are both of Pennsylvania German ancestry and both are natives of Myerstown, PA. Dr. Swope speaks the Pa. German dialect fluently and regularly attends functions at the Grundson Lodges in Myerstown and Shartlesville and the Heidelberg Fersommling. He also is a member of the German Society of Pennsylvania.

*Please notify the Society of any items of interest about our members so we can keep our membership informed: visits to Germany and visitors from there; activities of interest; births of children and grandchildren; sick or homebound members. We often learn of deaths of our members only when their mail is returned, so please advise us of the deaths of any members as soon as possible.*

## Fund Raisers Honor Gunther

**Mary Ellen Steiner Gunther** received the 1995 Outstanding Volunteer Fund Raiser Award by the National Society of Fund Raising Executives, Maryland Chapter. Her husband, Frank A. Gunther, Jr., received the same award in 1986. Mr. and Mrs. Gunther were the joint honorees of the German Society's annual award in 1993 and both are members of our society.

PASTOR OTTO ELECTED  
PRESIDENT OF NORTH. AMERICAN  
CONFERENCE

The Evangelical Lutheran Conference of German Speaking Churches in North America has elected **Pastor H. J. Siegfried Otto** as its president for the 1995-1996 year. The conference held its annual convention in September in Baltimore. Zion Church at City Hall Plaza hosted the event.

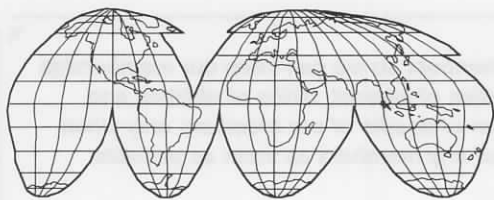
JUDGE WITTSTADT TEASED  
AT BAR BANQUET

In local legal circles it was well known that **Judge Gerard Wittstadt**, a director of the German Society, had legitimately traced his ancestry back to Charlemagne in 8th century Germany. Judge Wittstadt was recently teased about his passion for genealogy. Retired State Delegate Tim Mallone, Esq., speaker at the annual Baltimore County Bar Association banquet at Martin's West on Jan. 27, broke the news of an earth-shattering genealogical discovery: one of the Judge's ancestors (Geraldus the Lesser) was present at the Last Supper. Unfortunately, he wasn't seated at the head table and missed the big photo opportunity; but he did get to take the centerpiece home!

***"Where the Germans Came  
From and What They  
Brought With Them."***

This is the theme of an illustrated presentation to be made at annual banquet and meeting of our sister organization, The Society for the History of Germans in Maryland, to be held at Martin's West on Monday, April 29th. The speakers are the famous husband and wife team, Dr. Ruth Reichmann and Dr. Eberhard Reichmann, of the Max Kade Institute in Indianapolis. The institute is a joint venture sponsored by the University of Indiana and Purdue University. The Doctors Reichmann have a nationwide reputation for their entertaining and scholarly lectures on topics of interest to the German-American community.

The banquet will have a preliminary feature of hot hors d'oeuvres and a selection of prime rib or chicken, and a cash bar. The affair will begin at 6:30 PM. Dinner tickets are \$30 and may be obtained by calling the historical society's president, Gerard Wittstadt at 321-8608.



**DIGNITARIES ATTEND ANNUAL BANQUET IN NOVEMBER**

The Society's annual awards banquet was held on Nov.10 at Martin's Eudowood. Many visiting dignitaries attended the banquet. Frau Dorthea Janitzke Wenzel, Counselor of the German Embassy, brought greetings from the Ambassador. Dr. Otto Rechert represented the German Society of Pennsylvania. The following Maryland ethnic organizations were also represented: The Saint George's Society (English), by its president, R. Douglas Chambers; The Saint Andrew's Society (Scot), by its president, Bernard J. Patterson; The Hibernian Society (Irish) by its president, F. David McNamara, III; and The Sons of Italy by Mr. Peter J. Basilone. Local German organizations were represented by their presidents: Benjamin F. Sheppard, Jr. Der Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland; Margarete Kramer, The Women's Auxiliary of the German Society; Betty Niemann, The Edelweiss Club; Kurt Schultz, the German Radio Klub; Maria Skowronek, the Verein Deutscher Trachten von Baltimore; and Robert Karl Fritzsche, the Arion Sangverein. Mr. Fritzsche led the assemblage in the singing of the German and the American national anthems.

**THE BROTHERS GRIMM VS. SESAME STREET**

"Is Big Bird good for Kids?" asks a Washington syndicated columnist during the recent controversy over congressional funding for public television programs such as Sesame Street. The show's creators defended the beneficial effects on children. Sesame Street is a paragon of political correctness, clever and carefully crafted, but some educators believe that television does little to stimulate children's imaginations.

Psychologist Bruno Bettelheim believes that traditional fairy tales - especially those featuring witches and danger - serve important functions in the education of every child. The Grimm Brothers' Cinderella, for example, resonates with every child who has ever felt isolated or ill-treated. The tale teaches the importance of hope and punishes envy and spite. Columnist Mona Charen points out that the Sesame Street retelling, "like its treatment of all fairy tales, is barely recognizable."

The Grimm brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm, who lived in Germany between 1785 and 1856, were not mere story tellers. They were serious scholars and researchers who started their careers as librarians and later assumed professorships at the University of Göttingen. When the king of Hannover made himself an absolute dictator, they led a protest reaffirming their allegiance to the constitution of 1833. They are two of the most famous etymologists of all times. The Brothers rode through the countryside on horseback and collected the tales told by country folks which they later rewrote into a more refined version. Children and adults are still fascinated by their tales, which are constantly being retold. Some of their better known stories are: Cinderella; Hansel and Gretel; Little Red Riding Hood; Rapunzel; Rumpelstiltskin; Snow White; Sleeping Beauty; and the Pied Piper of Hameln.

### **REV. HAMILTON RETURNS FROM VISIT TO EASTERN GERMANY**

The Rev. Dr. Thomas Hamilton has recently returned from a sabbatical in eastern Germany where he assisted in various Lutheran parishes. Reverend Hamilton is the area coadjutor for the Chesapeake Area of the United Church of Christ.

### **SISTER MARY ADELAIDE SCHMIDT**

Sister Mary Adelaide Schmidt died earlier this year at the age of 97. Senator Barbara Mikulski, in a speech published in the Congressional Record, praised as a hero this nun who taught her in 6th grade. Senator Mikulski credited Sr. Adelaide from rescuing her from shyness, helping the Senator develop her speaking voice and (as Paul Harvey says), "You know the rest of the story."

### **GERMAN LIFE MAGAZINE**

German Society members can subscribe to the Magazine, German Life, for the discounted annual rate of \$12.55. The discount is arranged through our membership in the Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Md. The Magazine is published in Maryland and contains articles on German immigration, heritage and culture, both in the United States and in Germany. The Society recommends it highly to our members.

### **"German History Month ?"**

Maryland public schools have designated February Black History month, and Black history is taught to all students. Rarely do other ethnic groups learn about their culture and heritage in school. The two world wars had a terrible impact on the promotion of German heritage in America, so that in a nation with 25% of the population having German ancestry, many people still carry over a bad image of the Germans. The German Society is pledged to promote the German heritage. The largest portion of our funds are allocated to projects affecting students. We also urge support for German-American publications, radio hours, local and regional German activities and memberships in other German organizations.

THANKS . . . .



TO H. ZITTRAUER for her generous gift to the works of the Society, particularly for our Defender's Day activities.

### **German Nuns Get the Work Done**

As you drive up Charles Street toward the Baltimore Beltway, you pass Villa Assumpta, the well-manicured lands of the motherhouse of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, which also includes their retirement home and infirmary. A group of sisters, many of whom have names reflecting German ancestry run everything efficiently. Sister Betty Koehn, the Coordinator of Services, supervises the dietary and housekeeping departments, the "fleet" of cars and vans, the telephone system and the grounds, keeping them green and beautiful. She rotates on call for emergencies, with Sisters Berniece Feilinger, Louis Marie Koesters and Caroleen Baummer. She shares responsibilities for things mechanical with Sister Rita Marie Helldorfer.

Sister Betty switched her career as a teacher at Notre Dame Prep School for the role of major domo at Villa Assumpta where she has learned the job of each of her employees. "If you expect people to do their job, you should be able to do it also", she comments. So it is not uncommon to find her moving sheets from the washers to the dryers in the laundry, chopping vegetables in the kitchen or riding the tractor as she cuts the grass. When snow needs removal, she has risen at two in the morning and ridden in an open tractor for four hours, plowing the lots and driveways. An enthusiastic gardner, Sister Betty has planted over 5,000 spring bulbs, numerous dogwoods and forsythia, purchased with the profits from aluminum recycling efforts.



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# The German Society of Maryland

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1995-1996

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685-0450

mail to:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

"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 a publication of The German Society of Maryland—an organization founded in 1783 and incorporated in 1817. The German Society of Maryland is a member of the following national and local organizations: Deutsch- Amerikanischer National Kongress (DANK), United German American Committee of the USA (UGAC-USA); Deutschamerikanischer Bürgerverein von Maryland; General German Aged Peoples' Home of Baltimore (Edenwald).

Editors and Desktop Publishing

Catherine A. Potthast  
Mia Potthast Walsh

All members and friends are encouraged to submit items of interest to Theodore J. Potthast, Jr. at 1819 Leadburn Road, Towson, Maryland 21204-1830