

**NEWSLETTER ISSUE 56****December, 2006****MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

There are so many opportunities and places to celebrate our heritage and culture, in addition to our homes! An abundance of events offered not only in the Baltimore-Washington area, but also in places such as Frederick, Hagerstown and other locations provide opportunities for sharing and promoting our common interests. For example, literary publications and cultural events are offered by the German Historical Institute and the Goethe Institute in Washington, as well as by the German Embassy and several Colleges and Universities; German/American historical societies regularly publish articles on the history of the Germans in Maryland; religious services are offered in German by Zion Church in Baltimore, as well as German language classes and other cultural events; member organizations of the Buergerverein and AGAS contribute by sponsoring festivals, trips and active club life; German architecture can be admired everywhere, from simple mid-18th century farmhouses (such as "Schifferstadt" in Frederick) to elaborate 19th century brick "castles" as evidenced by a recent one-year-long celebration of Adolf Cluss, a German architect who designed many spectacular buildings in Washington; German classical and contemporary music can be enjoyed at the Baltimore Meyerhoff Symphony Hall and many other locations; German cultural opportunities in abundance!

If you have not already taken advantage of these offerings, do so and get re-acquainted with the "German" in you!

**Merry Christmas and a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!**

BRIGITTE V. FESSENDEN, President

**HISTORIC AWARDS BANQUET**

The Society's annual awards banquet was historic in several respects: for the first time, we celebrated an event, the 250th anniversary of the building of a German landmark, "Schifferstadt" and of the life and works of Dr. David Denisch, an 11th generation grandson of Schifferstadt's founder, Joseph Brunner; our event was attended by the Governor of Maryland, Robert Ehrlich, a member of our Society and the first time our banquet has come out in the black!

The practice of giving an award at our annual banquet to a Marylander who has made significant contributions to our community, state or nation first began 17 years ago and our first awardee was the mayor of Baltimore, the governor-elect William Donald Schaefer.

The banquet chairman this year was Dr. Mohammed Esa, one of our directors and a professor of German at McDaniel College. Dr. Esa produced a presentation which included a video of the story of Schifferstadt and a slide show which exhibited photographs and the display of the pages of the printed program. (The revenue from program ads was the key to bringing the event into the black). Dr. Esa deserves the credit for making the event run smoothly and being entertaining.

The band, The Continentals, performed flawlessly and to the joy and satisfaction of all in attendance. They have been engaged to play again next year which will be on the first Saturday of November, 2007.

Some photos of the banquet, taken by the governor's staff photographer and by the Society's own Denis Smith, are printed in this newsletter.

DECEMBER, 2006 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 2

**KALENDER**

Jan 13 Song book committee

Apr 13 Annual meeting of members

Nov. 3 Annual Awards Banquet

Dates to be announced:

May High school German language awards

June German Society annual picnic

July German Festival - Timonium

October Oktoberfest

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)

## OUR MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Our deceased member, H. L. MENCKEN was not a religious man and had no firm belief in either heaven or hell. We can therefore take lightly a toast which he often raised in his later years: "To Hell: may the stay there be as pleasant as the way there!"

Mencken has been charged with being anti-Semitic. This is the subject of a new book by Mencken scholar David Stewart Thaler who lectured on the topic on Nov. 16 in the George Peabody Library of The Johns Hopkins University. The book is entitled "The Mencken Paradox", 2005 by Mercury House Press.

A reporter asked WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER about his future. He said that he would like to be mayor of Baltimore again, but that given his advanced age (85) it would require "divine intervention". "You hear that, Lord?" he said, looking up toward the ceiling.

JACK R. STURGILL bravely but unsuccessfully ran as a Democrat for the House of Delegates for Baltimore County's 7th district, a Republican stronghold. Jack has a long history of public service as a member of MD's Pharmaceutical Board, Nursing Board, as the chairman of the MD. Association of Boards, Baltimore County Asst.County Attorney and as a MD Special Assistant Attorney General.

Many thanks to HELEN M. KELLNER PETRICH for her generous gift of \$2,000.00 to honor the memory of her husband, Dr. Gerd Petrich. The gift will be used in a manner to preserve the memory of his good works.

## JOURNAL OF OUR SISTER SOCIETY

One of our members spent long hours searching for an article about an ancestor, Philip Muth, a founder of the Muth Drug Company of Baltimore. The search led her to the Maryland Historical Society and from there to the Peabody Library of the Johns Hopkins University; and through an inter-college library system, to a small college in Indiana. That college had a number of volumes of "The Report", the journal of The Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland.

All of the issues of The Report, dating back to 1886 are now on the internet and are available to all members of that Society. Each member is issued an access code to enter into and search through 120 years of The Report. Membership dues are \$20 per year. Access to this publication is a strong motivation for anyone interested in the history of the Germans in Maryland to join the historical Society. If you are interested, write to Judge Gerard Wittstadt, president of the historical society and mail to our post office box (which we share with that Society).

## BANQUET HOPES WERE DASHED

In bygone days, Governor Theodore R. McKeldin, a loyal member of our Society, routinely attended our annual banquet and graced us with a speech. (Public speaking was his forte. He was picked to make the nomination speech for President Eisenhower.)

This year we were hoping to break a record by having two governor-members in attendance at our banquet: William Donald Schaefer and Robert Ehrlich.

Don Schaefer had sent in his \$65 for his ticket. Our hopes, however, were dashed when he was prevented from coming. It would have been memorable to have two members who served as governor present at our annual banquet.

## O'MALLEY'S GERMAN HERITAGE

Based upon a report from an unimpeachable source, we can now confirm that the mother of Maryland's governor-elect, Martin O'Malley is of 100% German ancestry. He will join many members of our Society who are of half-Irish/half-German ethnicity.

### GREEKS AND SAUERBRATEN

A Catonsville Restaurant named "Dimitri's" advertises: "Maryland's Best Sour Beef & Dumplings." Is it possible that the best Sauerbraten in Maryland is made by the Greeks? We invite our members who have tasted Dimitri's sour beef to give us their critique.

## GERD H. PETRICH, D.D.S., age 65

Gerd died peacefully in his sleep on June 18, 2006 in his home in Phoenix, MD. He was survived by his wife Helen M.Kellner Petrich. He was the brother of Elli Vogel, Agnes Findeison and the late Alina Lorens; father of Erin Kasel and her husband Chad; Dane, Hans and Kurt Petrich; stepfather of Karl, his wife Melanie and Athena Kellner; grandfather of Mae and Thomas Kellner.

Gerd was born on April Fool's Day, 1941, in Belchatow, Poland. To avoid the Russians, he escaped with his parents and joined his sisters in Hamburg, Germany. He ate an orange for the first time when he came to Baltimore on a troop ship in 1953. His mother, Leokadia, speaking no English, went to a store and bought all the fresh fruit, thinking it might not be available the next day. His family soon bought a house in Highlandtown. After three months, Gerd mastered English and translated for his parents as needed. His father, August, worked for Paul Schaefer at the Old World Delicatessen and the family moved to Parkville.

Gerd graduated from the "A" course at City College and went to Western Maryland College (now McDaniel), then to the University of Maryland Dental School. He and his wife, Kathy, emigrated to Freemantle, Australia, but returned for the birth of their daughter and he set up a dental practice in Towson. He and Kathy were later divorced.

In 1993 Gerd married Helen. They loved to play squash, attend plays and eat out. Helen tended her garden while Gerd watched and encouraged. Gerd made a practice of donating his time to the poor, spending six weeks per year caring for their dental needs in third world places: Haiti, Brazil, Mexico and St. Lucia.

He maintained his German language, traveling to Germany and England to visit family. He traveled extensively in the U.S., especially loving the deserts of Nevada. Gerd was a member of our Society and other German organizations.

Although he never smoked, Gerd was diagnosed in February with lung cancer. In his last weeks of life, he was able to enjoy Helen's garden at home. In early June, knowing the end was near, Gerd penned a letter which we reprint as follows:

To all the people who have made my life so wonderful.

Thank you for your presence, support, and love. I have been very fortunate in the people I have in my life; wife, family, friends, business associates. I wish I could say goodbye to each of you individually, however, my lack of strength does not permit this. Know that you are all in my heart and mind and I cherish each of you for your contribution to making my life wonderful.

I have been able to see and experience so much during the 65 years I was blessed with on this earth. I was looking forward to retiring with my loving wife, to travel and continue our adventures together. It seems I am not to be granted this dream. My illness took me by surprise and my rapid decline even more so. I have so much that I would like to say to each of you, things I have appreciated, thanking you for your kindness, telling you how much I care about you and cherish knowing you. It is a shame that one only realized these things when it is too late to take action and truly express what someone has meant in our lives. I wish I had taken more time to share how I felt about each of you when I was strong and out in the world. Now it is not possible, and I regret this.

In my life, I have been fortunate enough to travel to many interesting, beautiful, and wonderful places. It is my joy that during my travels I have met many amazing people who became friends and shared their lives with me. Even when the conditions were not the comfortable American style of life, I was thrilled to be part of the adventure.

I'm sorry that my brain is now too muddled from illness, treatment and medications to remember all of the moments of my life that mean so much to me. I also fear that I have not expressed my love and admiration for the people in my life. Sharing my feelings was not a skill I managed to master in this life. Know that each of you touched me and made my life better for knowing you.

Thank you for being part of my journey.

With love

Gerd H. Petrich

June, 2006"

## DECEMBER, 2006 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 4

### CONGRATULATIONS to members:

REV. MONSIGNOR ARTHUR BASTRESS, Pastor of St. Alphonsus Church in Baltimore, upon his 80th birthday on November 5th. Parishioners, family and friends held a gala surprise party for him. His parish was established in the 1840's as a German church by the Redemptorist order, and served as a base for the founding of 18 other German Catholic parishes in Maryland.

REV. RICHARD DIMLER, S.J., who returned to Maryland from Venice, CA where he is serving as a parish priest, to celebrate his 75th birthday. He retired as a professor of German from Loyola College and Fordham Univ. He grew up on Edgewood Street, a block away from Msgr. Bastress (who taught him to be an altar boy) and two blocks from Donald Schaefer.

### GERMAN NAMES IN MD. NEWS

Since many Americans, especially the younger generation, do not recognize names of German origin, we list a few names which have recently been featured in the local news:

**PHILIP NENGEL**, a young immigrant from Germany, was the artist who, in 1865, painted the images of the evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John above the arches in Baltimore's Basilica of the Assumption. His art was hidden for 100 years and has just come to light with the restoration of the Basilica. The paintings were in perfect condition and needed no restoration. They are very striking and are among the most prominent features of the renovated basilica.

**KIMMIE MEISSNER**, the 17-year-old Olympic figure skating champion from Harford County, was selected to throw the switch for the new lights on the exterior of the Baltimore Basilica. This summer she also threw out the first pitches at an Orioles game in Camden Yards and at a Phillies game in the Philadelphia baseball park. Kimmie studies French (not German) at Fallston High School, which has an excellent German program.

**CAPTAIN MARGARET D. KLEIN**, a soon-to-be-Marylander, will be the Naval Academy's first female commandant of midshipmen, serving as No. 2 in the chain of command in Annapolis. Klein, 49, is a naval flight officer and is a graduate of the academy.

**JEAN SCWARTZKOPF MOXLEY** died Oct. 28. She was a nurse who attended to the German prisoners of war at Edgewood Arsenal during World War II. She was a graduate of the Institute of Notre Dame and the Mercy Hospital school of nursing. She often said of the POW's: "They were just boys." She later served as a nurse at Mercy Hospital and after her retirement was a volunteer at Our Daily Bread and at GBMC.

**PHILIP ANSCHUTZ**, owner of the Baltimore Examiner and founder of Qwest Communications, sold part of his stake in Qwest for \$25,000,000. Anschutz is a Denver billionaire.

**WILLIAM ZENTGRAFF** died in November. He served on the battleship USS New Jersey during the Korean war and received several battle stars. He was married to the former June Pitz for 53 years. He was past president of Palestine Masonic Lodge #169.

**MARY ANN SAAR**, the Maryland Secretary of Public Safety under Governor Ehrlich, has tendered her resignation and will retire after 38 years of public service. The Secretary supervises the prison system.

**SAM HOLLENBACH** is the quarterback of the University of Maryland's football team. The team has performed well in the Atlantic Coast Conference and is likely to be picked for a post-season bowl game.

**TONIE STAUDENMAIER Wallace**, a 1965 graduate of Baltimore's Catholic High School, donated \$1,000,000 to her alma mater for improving technology, capital improvements and scholarships. She is the CEO and president of Advanced Legal Technologies based in Virginia.

**CHERLEIN SHARPE**, a member of the Baltimore Kickers Club, died in November at age 86. She was an expert seamstress, homemaker, loved dancing and baking Christmas cookies. Before her marriage to William Sharpe, she was Cherlein Augusta Beckmann.

**JAMES W. HIRSCHMANN, III** was mentioned as the heir apparent to the presidency of the Legg Mason firm specializing in bonds.

**NATHAN WEINBERG** died Nov. 25 at age 89. He was born in Baltimore, the son of immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian empire. He served as a lieutenant in the US army in the Pacific during World War II. After the war he worked in the family auto repair business and later worked with his brother, Harry Weinberg in various businesses. He was president of the transit companies in Scranton, PA and in Hawaii, both owned by his brother. Later he was vice president and a trustee of the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

## DECEMBER, 2006 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland Page 5

### **DON KAMMERER, 73**

**Don died Nov. 26, 2006. The Society extends our condolences to his widow, Janice. Both Don and Jan have been active in attending the society's events. Don will be sorely missed.**

Don was born in Baltimore, was a 1951 graduate of Poly and later received a degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Maryland, College Park. He was a member of its tennis team which won the ACC championship in 1957. He then served in the navy.

In 1961, while his mother was a patient at Union Memorial Hospital, he met a nurse, Janice Mulcahy and they were soon married. Shortly thereafter they opened the Belvedere Pre-School Center in Govans, and later another pre-school center in Parkville. Janice still does nursing at Union Memorial.

Besides his membership in our Society, he also belonged to the M Club (open to athletic letter winners of the Univ. of Md.), the Civil War Preservation Trust, and the U. of Md. Alumni Association.

## **SOME PAST ANNUAL BANQUETS**

Our earlier banquets were often attended by mayors and governors. Theodore R. McKeldin, a member of our Society who served both as mayor and governor rarely missed our banquet and the opportunity to make a speech at it. During World War II the banquet was suspended, but an annual meeting with refreshments was held at Zion's Adlersaal. The mayor and governor made a special effort to

attend, to recognize the loyalty of German Americans during difficult times for them. For many years formal garb was required: all men wore tuxedos and women wore long gowns and corsages. Dancing, accompanied by "big bands" always began with everyone joining in a march.

## LINCOLN AND MARYLAND

Reading of Lincoln's actions against Marylanders invites quiet comparison of his tactics to those of George W. Bush in the current Iraq war. Politics were much tougher in the 1860's. Lincoln garnered only 5% of the votes in Baltimore City and less than 3% in Maryland. Lincoln had no love for Maryland. The mayor and city council of Baltimore were imprisoned in Fort McHenry along with 31 members of the General Assembly. All told, Lincoln held more than 2,000 Maryland civilians as political prisoners during the civil war. Lincoln suspended habeas corpus. In a test case, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, a Marylander, issued a writ of habeas corpus directing the commandant of Fort McHenry to bring Merryman, a Baltimore Countian and a political prisoner, before him at the courthouse in Baltimore. When he signed the writ, Taney said: "I will probably be in jail before this day is out." Lincoln asked: "Shall I obey the law and lose the Union or break the law and save the Union?" Lincoln refused to obey the writ. Lincoln closed down the Maryland Club and the Germania Club for their disloyalty.

Our State anthem, "Maryland, My Maryland" (sung to the German Christmas tune "Tannenbaum") reflects the hatred of Lincoln's tactics with the first stanza of the song: "The despot's heel is on thy shore; his torch is at thy temple door; Avenge the Patriotic gore, That flecked the streets of Baltimore". It became a crime to possess a copy of the song. The song was written in 1861 after federal troops marched through Baltimore; yet it was not until 1933 that the legislature made it the official state song.

The climate of Lincoln's day produced far more violent conflicts between political parties than we see today. An article in the Winter, 2004 issue of the Maryland Historical Journal described politics in the 1850's. The potato famine of the late 1840's and the Revolution of 1848 brought large migrations of Irish and Germans to Baltimore. "With the ascendancy of organized gangs and the depression of 1857, violence broke out regularly between free black workers, Germans, Irish and nativism groups." In one election, over 200 men were killed as factions attacked polls in the strongholds of their opponents with guns and cannons.

Today's history buffs can look back to those days and conclude that the dislike of Maryland voters to President Bush in last month's election was quite mild compared to the Marylanders' hatred of the now-beloved President Lincoln. So far no Marylander has taken a shot at President Bush. (Lincoln's assassin John Wilkes Booth, was born in a log cabin near Bel Air, MD and made his acting debut in Baltimore.)

DECEMBER, 2006 VEREINSNACHRICHTEN The German Society of Maryland

Page 7

## LEBKUCHEN RECIPE

Thanks to Maria Springer for these instructions on making Lebkuchen.

1/2 cup unsalted butter

1 1/2 cups honey

2/3 cup water

2 tsp freshly grated ginger

Heat the above ingredients in a saucepan, do not boil. Remove from heat and let it steep for 10-15 minutes. Strain it before adding the flour mixture. Into a large bowl, place the following:

7 cups of all-purpose flour

1 cup sugar

2 tsp baking soda

1 tsp ground allspice

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp ground cardamom

1 tsp ground cloves

**Mix all ingredients in a bowl and add the butter/honey mixture. Mix well with a wooden spoon**

Transfer the dough into a smaller bowl and cool in a refrigerator for about 2 hours or overnight.

Before rolling the dough out, bring it to room temperature. The dough is a hard dough - much like play-dough. Roll it out to be about 1/4 inch in thickness and then cut out any shapes you like.

Bake at 375° F for about 10 minutes or until the gingerbread men are slightly brown.

Habt ein frohes Weihnachtsfest!

## "LEAVE IT WITH US OR YOUR CHILDREN WILL THROW IT AWAY"

That is the rallying cry of the new Gallitzen Center at St. Patrick's Church, Cumberland. It is a museum of documents and artifacts from the early days of the Appalachians in western Maryland. It is named after the church's second pastor, Prince Demetrius Augustine Gallitzen, son of a Russian prince and a German baroness. His father sent him to America to toughen him up for a military life. Instead he entered St. Mary's seminary in Baltimore, became a priest and volunteered as a missionary and was sent to the Appalachians. German was his native language.

The Gallitzen Center already has an extensive collection of early papers and artifacts and is encouraging the local population to place their own collections with the center as a safe haven. Too often the future generations fail to recognize the historical value of papers and artifacts, which then end up in the trash pile in the clean-up process after the death of a parent, grandparent or maiden aunt.

The German Society is in the process of arranging for the indexing and preservation of some of our historical records dating back into the 1800's. When that task is completed, we will look into the prospect of creating a repository for genealogical and similar records of our members.

## VOLUNTEER FOR THE SONG BOOK PROJECT: MEETING SET JAN. 13

Our Society has decided on a music project: publishing a booklet of German songs, principally folk songs, childrens' songs, patriotic songs and other types of songs which have been popular among German Americans. Anyone interested in helping on this project should let us know of your interest by calling Baerbel Otto (319-372-0630), Bob Fritsche (410-665-4135), Ted Potthast (410-828-8137) or president Brigitte Fessenden (419-532-7581). We are planning to meet on Saturday morning, January 13, the location to be determined. If you have some German sheet music, records or tapes of folk songs, bring them with you. If you can't come to the meeting, mail them to our office.

THANKS to our president, BRIGITTE FESSENDEN, for her work setting up our Christmas social meeting of the directors at our Mt. Vernon office. She decorated the office with holiday greens, Christmas cookie trays and seasonal desserts, with the help of her committee. Dr. Nicholas Fessenden and Christel Van der Berg.

THANKS to the Society's official photographer, DENIS SMITH and to Governor Ehrlich's staff photographer for the photos taken at our awards banquet, some of which are shown on page 6. Mr. Smith prepared an album which will be displayed at our annual meeting.

## MD. MARINE KILLED IN IRAQ

LANCE CPL. ERIC W. HERZBERG, 20. of Severna Park was killed in combat in Iraq in early November. He was a graduate of Severna Park High School in Anne Arundel County. He was the 50th Marylander to die in Iraq since the war began.

GIFTS RECEIVED BY OUR SOCIETY BY DEC. 31 WILL QUALIFY FOR A DEDUCTION ON YOUR 2006 INCOME TAX RETURN. WE NEED FUNDS FOR OUR PROGRAMS. PLEASE HELP.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

CARLETON, NINA

CARLETON, THURSTON

LORD, HENRY R.

STOEVER, BERVERLY

STOEVER, DONALD

UNVERZAGT, AMY

=====

BILLS FOR DUES WILL BE MAILED TO YOU SOON. THE SOCIETY NEEDS THE FUNDS TO COVER OUR EXPENSES.  
=====

INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO JOIN THE GERMAN SOCIETY

=====

REMEMBER OUR EDUCATION FUND =====

THANKS TO HELEN PETRICH FOR HER GIFT IN MEMOROY OF HER HUSBAND, DR. GERD PETRICH, D.D.S

=====THANKS TO LOUISE GAERTNER FOR HER GENEROUS GIFT