

Calendar of Events

Sat. Apr. 7	Hamburger Abend, 7:00pm
Wed. Apr. 11	Konversationsabend: Reconstruction of the Imperial Palace, 6:00pm
Sat. Apr. 14	Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10:00am
Sat. Apr. 14	Buchclub: <i>Flugasche</i> by Monika Maron, 1:30pm
Wed. Apr. 18	Genealogy and House History Seminar at the Delaware County Bar Building, 12:00pm
Fri. Apr. 10	Friday Film Fest: <i>Winnetou: Eine Neue Welt</i> , 6:30pm
Sun. Apr. 22	"Wister and More!" and the Delius Society present Choral Arts Philadelphia, 3:00pm
Mon. Apr. 23	Lecture by Prof. Juergen Overhoff: <i>William Penn—Früchte der Einsamkeit</i> , 7:00pm
Wed. May 2	Lecture by beer historian Rich Wagner: Breweries of the Northern Liberties, 7:00pm
Sat. May 5	Women's Auxiliary Anniversary Luncheon, 12:00pm
Wed. May 9	Konversationsabend: Music and Poetry, 6:00pm
Sat. May 12	Buchclub: <i>Unterleuten</i> by Juli Zeh, 1:30pm
Fri. May 18	Friday Film Fest: <i>Das Salz der Erde</i> , 6:30pm
Sat. May 19	Frankfurt in May, 3:00pm
Sun. May 20	"Wister and More!" presents the Academy of Vocal Arts, 3:00pm
Sat. June 2	Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10:00am
Sun. June 3	Annual Members Meeting and Elections of the Board of Directors, 3:00pm

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The German Society  
of Pennsylvania

Neuer Pennsylvanischer  
Staatsbote

CELEBRATING

1764 250 2014

YEARS OF

GERMAN  
HERITAGE

Spring 2018

President's Message

The snowy weather seems, fortunately, to be coming to an end and we are completing our first winter season of heating the entire building using our new geothermal well field. The system is meeting our expectations and we are looking forward to summer and the opportunities that will open up for GSP events as well as for our rental business. In addition to having the building waterproofed since 2014, which allowed other upgrades and opportunities including the Leidy Terrace, the geothermal system allows us to approach the summer season confidently, knowing we will not have to adjust our schedule and/or operations due to the unpredictable humidity and temperature conditions in Philadelphia.

We have currently reviewed our building project list in preparation for 2019 – 2025 strategic planning and have recognized quite a few accomplishments in building upgrades and operational improvements. A well functioning building is an important part of the basis for developing the German Society in the years to come. Thanks to your continued support (by the way the annual fund drive is still going on!), the trust that supporting organizations have placed in us and the commitment of our volunteers, we are certainly stronger on every level of presentation, programming and operation today than we were five years ago.

In the past year, we began important discussions about our organizational structure as well as about risk management for parts of our programming, our membership level structure and membership fees. We believe that our current membership fees, compared to other German American organizations, are very reason-

able and, as of now, we are not raising any membership fees.

However, the Board of Directors has decided to institute an adjustment to our membership level structure by eliminating the levels "Student = \$25 annually" and "Language Student = \$30 annually." These discounted memberships will be replaced with an Associate Membership for students and language program participants for an annual membership fee of \$30. Participants at this Associate Membership level will enjoy all rights and benefits of Society membership except the right to vote and to hold office. This alteration became effective immediately. Any existing memberships in the old categories will continue, but any renewals will fall into the Associate, Individual, Household/Family, Sponsor, Corporate or Benefactor (Lifetime) levels.

I hope to see you at our upcoming events like the Hamburger Abend, where you can enjoy a night of music, dancing, food and fun using the recently renovated Ratskeller entrance. This renovation is a part of the overall waterproofing construction project.

Despite unfortunate weather conditions, we hosted about 200 guests (part of the approximately 1000+ participants) on the Leidy Terrace during the 7<sup>th</sup> annual BierFest on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Our second outdoor event this year, the third year of the Frankfurt in May celebration, will take place on May 19<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. We are looking forward to enjoying regional food and beverages from the Frankfurt area as well as music and entertainment.

- Tony Michels

Please Join Us

FRANKFURT IN MAY

Celebrating Philadelphia's new Sister City

MAY 19, 3PM | REGIONAL FOOD, WINE, MUSIC & FUN



## Annual Fund Donors

Donors names have been removed from online version for their privacy.

When our daughter Zoë was born, there was no question that we would raise her to be bilingual. My husband Marc was from Dortmund, and we already spoke primarily German at home with one another. When Zoë was a baby, I read articles and books about simultaneous bilingualism. I fielded questions from both sides of our families, and I assured everyone that Zoë would do fine with both languages. I also took note of challenges that my husband and I would most likely encounter, while Zoë's speech abilities developed.

In the beginning, I felt an enormous sense of responsibility to make sure that Zoë spoke German well. I wanted Zoë to be able to communicate in German with Marc's family, and I wanted her to feel "at home" in Germany. As a former foreign language teacher, I knew that Zoë's language skills would blossom as long as Marc and I proactively spoke German at home. Once my concerns regarding the language acquisition subsided, a new topic came to the forefront. We didn't just want our daughter to SPEAK German; we wanted her to BE German.

As a Greek-American, I know all too well the difference between being bilingual and bicultural. When I was growing up, I considered myself to be Greek. My best friends were Greek, we ate Greek food, and we patronized primarily Greek businesses. The only problem was, I did not speak much Greek. Unfortunately, those in my family who could have passed Greek onto me as a mother tongue did not. Not speaking much Greek was not a problem until I was an adult. At that point I realized that not being fluent in Greek made me somewhat of an outsider in my own culture.

I was bicultural, but I was not bilingual as a child. My daughter would be bilingual, but what could I do as a Greek-American to make sure that she would be bicultural (German and Greek-American) also?

Fortunately we discovered PhillyKinder when my daughter was about 17 months old. We enrolled in the "mommy and me" class, and all of

## Beyond Bilingual

a sudden, I had a whole new support system to help ensure that my daughter would be bilingual and bicultural. The PhillyKinder community nurtured the lingual and the cultural aspects of being German not only for my daughter but also for me! I am so grateful that my family has had the support of PhillyKinder over the past four years.

We were just in Germany this Christmas for a few weeks, and two occasions during our trip confirmed to me that Zoë is bilingual and bicultural. The first occasion was at the local Weihnachtsmarkt. When it came time for the Kasperltheater, my daughter was up in the front yelling responses to Kasperl in German just like all the other German children. Then a few days later, Zoë attended a Turnen/Spielgruppe class with her younger cousin. My father-in-law reported back that Zoë knew all of the songs that they sang and games that they played during the class. I mean, without PhillyKinder, Zoë and I wouldn't be able to sing Aramsamsam! It is nice knowing that a whole community is here in Philadelphia to support us, even when we are living so far away from Germany.

- Adrienne Frangakis



## Notes from the KA

We had a fabulous Hot Punch in Flames night on February 13th. It was *Fastnachtsdienstag*, or Mardi Gras, as New Orleans calls it. We had a marvelous buffet (thanks to Renate Ruthberg, Rosemarie Gaeffke and many others). Herta von der Gruen concocted a terrific Feuerzangenbowle with the most wonderful blue and orange flames, creating an inspiring backdrop for all the poems, jokes, anecdotes, and little stories contributed by participants. There was even a charming first hand history of the KA as seen and "erlebt" by Ed Maciocha (see next column for the full story). Majed Subh was our photographer. And Inge Niebisch passed around a bottle of sweet "Liqueur" so we could drink (and sing) to celebrate her birthday. Well, we thought we should share this with you, and thanks to Majed we have pictures to prove it.



Renate, Oliver, Rosemarie and Herta waiting for the flames.



Herta in full action!

## Zur Geschichte des Konversationsabends

Im November 1977 gründete Dr. George Beichl, damals Präsident der German Society of Pennsylvania, den Konversationsabend. Es gab anfangs Tische für verschiedene Gruppen, von Anfängern bis zu Fortgeschrittenen. Es waren meist Amerikaner dort. Die Muttersprachler kamen erst später.

Irgendwann in den 80er Jahren wollte Dr. Beichl den Konversationsabend aufgeben. Ich bat ihn, nicht aufzuhören. Er sagte mir, "Sie haben ihr Kurzwellenradio und die Deutsche Welle Köln, Sie brauchen den Konversationsabend nicht".

Ich sagte, in den 60er Jahren studierte ich bei einer Abendschule Russisch. Aber ich fand keine Gesprächspartner und nach ein paar Jahren hatte ich Russisch völlig verlernt. Schnell erlernt und schnell verlernt. Ich wollte nicht mein Deutsch verlernen.

Später hat Dr. Beichl im Staatsboten die Fortsetzung des Konversationsabends bekanntgemacht. Er schrieb, die Deutsche Gesellschaft habe die Aufgabe, die deutsche Sprache zu pflegen.

In den Jahren nach Dr. Beichl besuchte nur eine Handvoll Teilnehmer den Konversationsabend. Irgendwann kamen hochgebildete Wissenschaftler mit Doktorwürde dazu. Sie haben den Konversationsabend anders gestaltet. Sie planten grössere Veranstaltungen, wobei eine Person einen Vortrag gab. Ich bevorzugte die Konversation in kleinen Gruppen.

Im Nebenraum innerhalb des Ratskellers war an Freitagabenden die Schlaraffia. Die Tür zum Ratskeller war immer offen für Konversationsabend-Teilnehmer ohne Rücksicht auf ihre Zahl. Die Schlaraffia sorgte auch für eine lustige Atmosphäre im ganzen Ratskeller.

Bei einem Konversationsabend machte ich den Vorschlag, über Architekturbilogie zu sprechen. Die Wissenschaftler hatten kein Interesse dafür. Einer von ihnen sagte: "Wir machen das Licht aus und schalten das Gas ab und Sie können dort sitzen und über die Ökologie sprechen".

Mein Eindruck war, die Wissenschaftler hatten Tunnelblick. Aber in ihren Fachgebieten haben sie sehr interessante Konversationsabende veranstaltet.

Dr. Guenter Kuehl hielt erst einen Vortrag über verschiedene Weinsorten, später einen über den Alkohol in Bier und Schnaps.

Ein Arbeitskollege von Dr. Guenter Kuehl namens Dr. John L. Schlenker gab einige sehr interessante Vorträge. Einmal sprach er über Mineralien.

Dr. Schlenker gab auch einen persönlichen Vortrag über die Geschichte der Familie Schlenker und ihre Migration zum Mittleren Westen der USA. Die Familie erwarb dort einen Bauernhof von 3,000 Acres.

Am Freitagabend, 4. April 1997, gab ich einen Vortrag über Dr. Timothy Leary, der Hermann Hesse in den USA berühmt gemacht hat. Er war es, der in den 60er Jahren während seiner College Lecture Circuits, die Werke von Hermann Hesse in Bezug auf die psychedelische Erfahrung zitierte. Ein Neffe von Hermann Hesse schenkte Dr. Timothy Leary ein Aquarell-Bild als Anerkennung für die Bekanntmachung von Hermann Hesses' Büchern in den U.S.A. Das Aquarell war von Hermann Hesse selbst gemalt.

Meine Lieblingsbücher von Hermann Hesse waren das Glasperlenspiel und der Steppenwolf. Ich zeigte auch einen Abschnitt von dem Film STEPPENWOLF auf Video auf dem Ratskeller TV. Dies war ein erfolgreicher Konversationsabend mit 23 Teilnehmern.

Um 2000 kam eine Wende in der Leitung des Konversationsabends. Eine kurze Zeit war ein ehemaliger Deutschlehrer Mike Maslow von St. Joseph's Prep der Leiter. Dann übernahm Hardy von Auenmueller das Ruder.

Im Herbst 2002 gab ich einen Vortrag über Umwelt/Naturschutz. Dieser Konversationsabend hatte sehr viele Besucher. Am Ende sagte Dr. Guenter Kuehl, "Sie haben 90 Minuten nicht über den Umweltschutz, sondern über die Natur gesprochen."

Auch hielt ich im Frühjahr 2003 einen Vortrag über die europäische Gegenkultur von 1900-1920.

Die Leitung der Konversationsabende von Hardy von Auenmueller brachte eine neue Art von Unterhaltung mit Weihnachtsparties in seinem Haus im Stadtzentrum von Philadelphia. Hardy gab auch eine sehr informative Diavorführung vom Schicksal des Auenmueller-Herrenhauses unter den Kommunisten in Ostdeutschland.

Dr. Helga Halbfass begann ihre Konversationsabend-Leitung in Januar 2011. Ich würde in der Zukunft gern darüber sprechen, wie Dr. Timothy Leary deutschen Graduate Studenten an Harvard von 1959 bis 1963 geholfen hat.

- Ed Maciocha

## Genealogy and House History Seminar

The Society will be sponsoring a seminar on genealogy and house histories using local records on April 18th, led by Society member Chip Lippard. The presentation will take place from noon til 3:00pm starting at the Delaware County Bar Building and concluding with a tour of the Register and Recorder's Offices at the Media Courthouse.

You will learn what information is available, the sometimes "tricky" art of accessing it, and what you can find out about the history of your house. You can bring a lunch if you'd like. The site is a 10-minute walk from the Media Train Station, and five minutes from the last trolley stop in Media.

Seating is limited, so if you wish to attend, please make your check, in the amount of \$6.00, payable to the German Society of Pennsylvania, 611 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123 (\$10.00 for non-members).

- Chip Lippard



## Library Committee Set to Unveil New “Adopt a Book” Program

Fundraising initiative will preserve holdings while celebrating library’s treasures

The German Society of Pennsylvania’s Library Committee will soon unveil a new program designed to raise money for the preservation of the Society’s historic collection of books, while celebrating some of the Library’s little-known treasures.

The “Adopt a Book” program will enable German Society members and other interested parties to support the conservation of Library books that have become damaged over the years. Common repairs needed on the books include front and back cover reattachment, fixing bindings, building small enclosures for volumes to keep the books safe, and other basic repairs that will help preserve the books for future generations.

Founded in 1817, the German Society’s Library is home to remarkable treasures that document the literary culture of German readers in Philadelphia and beyond for over two centuries. After so many years, some of the Library’s books are in need of conservation treatment in order to preserve them for future study and use. As books age, their pages tend to become brittle, and bindings begin to deteriorate. This is especially true for nineteenth-century volumes, meaning that many of the Library’s books require attention from professional conservators.

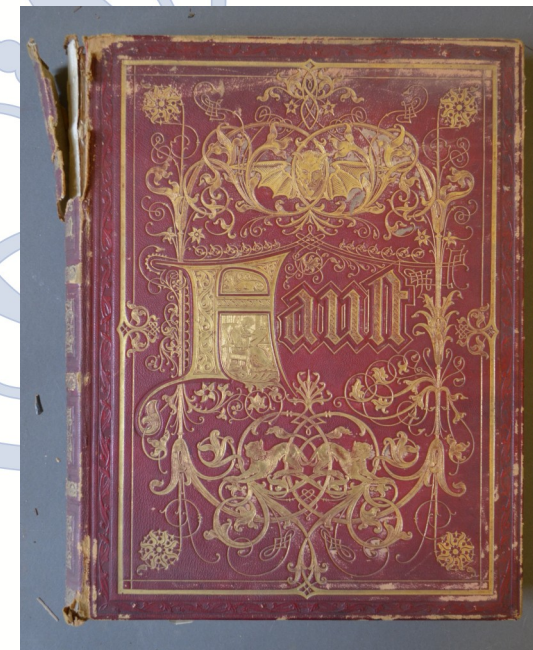
The Library Committee has been working for months to select volumes in need of care that are also likely to be of interest to prospective adoptive “parents,” who will pay for the conservation treatments. This in-depth effort has involved searching the library’s shelves for items in need of repair and conferring with respected Philadelphia book conservator Ruth Scott Blackson, who will perform the treatments. Items slated for adoption include a pamphlet about beer published in 1894, a guide to fireworks published in 1823, an 1865 copy of a eulogy to Abraham Lincoln that was preached after his assassination, as well as some of the library’s oldest volumes, including works published in the 1600s and 1700s.

An exhibition sampling the initial forty books to be put up for adoption will soon open in the reading room of the German Society’s Library, and the Library Committee is preparing a catalogue of adoptable books, which will be distributed shortly. Books will be available at multiple price points. Adoptive parents will receive an official Certificate of Book Adoption from the Committee, listing the name of the book they selected, as well as what treatments their donations will support. If they so wish, the parents’ names will be listed in the books’ online Library catalogue records, so that future researchers will know who sponsored repairs on the books in question. This program is designed so that donors may adopt books on their own behalf, or do so in honor of a friend or loved one.

The Library Committee is planning an exclusive event to be held later this year for the books’ adoptive parents, to focus on methods of book conservation and exploration of the Library’s holdings. The Committee is finalizing its plans for its initial roster of adoptable books, and German Society members should look for further communications on this project in the near future. In the meantime, any questions can be forwarded to the Library Committee’s Adoption Coordinator, Dr. Alex L. Ames, at [alames@udel.edu](mailto:alames@udel.edu).



This music book, published in Philadelphia by Schäfer und Koradi in 1883, will also be made available for adoption.



This large edition of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Faust*, published in Stuttgart and Tübingen in 1854, will be one of the books put up for adoption by the German Society of Pennsylvania’s Library Committee.



Published in Nuremberg in 1678, this book by Georg Andream Böckler titled *Nützliche Haus- und Feld-Schule* is one of the oldest up for adoption.

- Dr. Alex L. Ames

## Strategic Planning at the GSP

Effective short- and long-term planning is the hallmark of all successful institutions, including nonprofits like the German Society. Our short-term planning centers around the annual Business Plan that we produce every year in the late summer. This plan has two main parts: the first section gives the big picture - our Mission, history, governance, highlights of the past year, key challenges etc.; and a second section contains all the one-page detailed action plans contributed by the committee and program leaders (11 to 13 of these).

Long-term planning focuses on the Strategic Plan, which was last updated in the 2012-13 time period. This plan looks ahead at least five years and provides the framework for the annual plan and all other key decisions. In addition, it continues to be a part of our funding requests to governments, foundations, and other granting organizations.

We have assembled a Core Team consisting of Bill Hardham, Tony Michels, Hajo Oltmanns, and Ernie Weiler that has created sub-teams to address different areas of our focus. The teams and their leaders are:

- Membership, finances, building maintenance/renovation, capital plan – Core Team
- Library – Maria Sturm
- Cultural Programs — Hans Mueller
- Student-oriented Programs — Marwan Kreidie
- Related Businesses & Programs – Lew Volgenau

**Your help is also needed** – the team has created a survey to capture your ideas. Please either go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G6PPY7B> and complete the survey online, or return the survey enclosed with this issue. Your input is vital to planning for a viable and exciting future for our beloved institution; please complete the survey one way or another by May 1.

- Bill Hardham



## Development Report

### Gifts-in-Kind

As reported in the last issue of the Staatsbote, we started a letter campaign to secure two 50 inch and one 75 or 80 inch high definition TVs and this was partially successful. We approached 13 manufacturers or major retailers of TVs and the Sam's Club organization came through for us with two high definition and WIFI enabled TVs and the corresponding wall mounting racks. We also took out a 'corporate' membership in Sam's Club and will do some of our shopping for supplies at the Philadelphia based store.

One of the TVs will be used in the reception area to welcome guests to the Society. The second set will enhance learning experiences in our F. Otto Haas Language School. Moreover, we will have the opportunity to acknowledge the four organizations (the German Society of New York City, the Cannstatter Foundation Inc., the Max Kade Foundation and the William Penn Foundation) that have contributed the bulk the funds – \$568,500 – for the new HVAC system by running a short slide show listing their respective names on the new TV in the entrance area. We believe this is a more fitting way to acknowledge these generous gifts rather than to design another donation plaque.

We are still seeking a 75 or 80 inch high definition TV to be used for our film showings, or other venues in the Ratskeller or the new Media Room, which is still in the planning stage. With the new townhouse door, to be installed by the end of March, we will require a third 50 inch set to be used in the office area to verify who is at the door and is requesting permission to enter the building. This set will also allow us to use a split screen feature, once additional security cameras are installed along Spring Garden Street and will cover the Leidy Terrace. Here is a gift-in-kind donation opportunity as described below.

Over the past 10 years we have solicited and benefited from a number of gift-in-kind donations from various companies. However, sev-

eral members elected to make a gift-in-kind donation rather than or, in some cases, in addition to also making a donation to the Annual Fund. However we certainly encourage everyone to participate in the Annual Fund drive, as these gifts provide an important source of funding to keep our yearly budget in the black. Gift-in-kind examples used by members include: donations toward the purchase of new toilets and replacement of several broken windows in the auditorium, funds to be used for landscaping the new Leidy Terrace, cost associated with fixing broken chairs or furniture, the purchase of new eating utensils, paying for selected repairs around the building, purchasing paints need in our maintenance efforts and there many other examples. Clearly these gifts are very much appreciated and are welcome as they help us keep maintenance cost under control and directly help us financially. In summary, we are always in need of free contributions and if any member would rather help us through a gift-in-kind donation, please give the office a call and we will contact you as quickly as we can.

### Endowment Funds

We have written about our efforts to grow the *General Endowment and the Horner Memorial Library Endowment* accounts in almost every issue of the Staatsbote for the past five years. It is important to remember that it is our long-range goal to secure a predictable funding source that will cover possibly 20% of our yearly operating costs. *The Scholarship Fund* is our third endowment with the *Philadelphia Foundation* and our yearly awards to college students are funded from this account.

With the strong market in 2018 the balance in the *General Endowment Fund* now stands at \$1.25MM and our interim goal remains \$2.00MM.

The balance of the *Horner Memorial Library Endowment Fund* by end of March should be slightly over \$290,000, pending two generous donations – a \$20,000 gift in memory of the do-

nor's father, and a \$150,000 award by the Max Kade Foundation. We are approaching the half-way point toward our interim goal of \$600,000, which is absolutely wonderful.

In 2017 we received a \$30,000 challenge grant, for all members of the Society, from the Barthelmes Foundation, payable in 2020. At this point, we have collected \$17,435 toward the unique opportunity and are hopeful that in the next twenty months we will be able to raise the remaining funds – \$12,565 for the *Horner Memorial Library Endowment Fund*.

During our Annual Fund drive, several members included an additional donation to benefit our scholarship program. We thank them for these gifts and the funds are added to our *Scholarship Fund*, also with the Philadelphia Foundation. The current balance is \$340,000 and following the restrictions associated with gifts made by the major donors many years ago we use only a portion of the yearly growth in the fund for scholarships.

### Hands-On Opportunity

We suspect that some members of the Society are very skilled with their hands and we would like to call your attention to a truly hands-on opportunity. We have twelve wall-mounted candelabra – each has two candles or arms – in our auditorium and on the balcony which require some attention. The wiring needs to be replaced and the fixture should to be cleaned and polished. They are somewhat delicate and date back to 1888. In fact, they might have been



gas lights as originally designed. We have instructions on how to best rewire the fixtures and what solvents to use to remove an earlier paint coating to restore the brass to their original brilliance. The work could be done at home and we would suggest that a qualified and interested volunteer might work at his or her leisure with one or two of them at a time. If anyone is interested in this project, please give us a call at the office.

- E.D. Weiler

## Coming up at Friday Film Fest...



Join us on April 20 at 6:30pm for a movie adaptation of a literary classic. This movie is based on Karl May's 1893 novel "Winnetou 1" and was made in 2016 by director Philip Stölzl for television. It is the first part of the new Winnetou-Trilogy (Part2: Das Geheimnis vom Silbersee. Part 3: Der letzte Kampf). The movie tells the story of the expansion of the railroad by Central Pacific Railroad in the American West through Indian Territory. Winnetou and Old Shatterhand meet here for the first time and start a great friendship. Together they defend the "Land der Apachen" against the ever expanding and invading railroad and white settlers. The film will be shown in German with German subtitles.

## Give the Gift of Community!

German Society memberships are the perfect gift for the Germanophile in your life!

Whether it's for Christmas, a birthday, or just because, please consider purchasing a German Society membership for a friend or loved one. From movie nights to concerts to wine and beer tastings to lectures, our events appeal to people from all walks of life. Contact the office to purchase a membership.



## Annual Members Meeting and Board Elections

On **Sunday, June 3, 2018 at 3:00pm**, the German Society will hold its 2018 Annual Meeting and Elections for Directors at 611 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123. Members must be in good standing to be eligible to vote, i.e. current on dues no later than end of business **Friday, June 1, 2018**. Members wishing to vote must be present at the meeting—there is no provision for absentee ballots or proxy voting under the Society's By-laws.

If you have any questions about your current membership status, please contact the Society's office. Vision statements and photos of the slate of approved candidates can be found below.

There are two Officer positions up for election: Treasurer and VP of Finance. There are also six openings for Directors on the Board—five in the class of 2021 and one in the class of 2020—and eight candidates competing for those positions.

### Candidates for Officers



**Lew Volgenau: Treasurer**

For the past year, I have been your Vice President of Administration and Assistant Treasurer. Prior to that, I was your Treasurer for six years, served as Vice President of Finance, and participated in several committees. I now seek your support to be your Treasurer for another term.

Over those past years, we have had excellent growth in our investment portfolio and endowment funds with balanced budgets most years despite large expenditures for much needed capital projects. Kudos to Ernie Weiler for obtaining funds for these with special thanks to the Women's Auxiliary and several individuals whose donations made these improvements possible. We are on strong path to preserve our finances and infrastructure into the future. To achieve our vision to be recognized as the premier German ethnic Society in the United States, we must all do our part by renewing memberships, attending events and volunteering our time and money to support the Society. I look forward to continue to

serve the administrative and financial needs of the Society as your Treasurer.



**Brian Norton: VP of Finance**

It is with great honor and humility that I ask for your support to serve as the VP of Finance of the German Society of Pennsylvania.

Not quite five years ago I came to the German Society for language classes, looking for a new hobby, something complicated and challenging. What I found was a language well-known for its reputation for complications, but I also found cultural activities, an amazing library, and a group of people intermeshed between Philadelphia and Germany, from the recently arrived to the multi-generational German-American.

Having served just one year of my first term on the Board of Directors and slightly more than that as an ad hoc member of the Finance Committee, I've been pleased to see so many committed members of the Society contribute their efforts to build up the Society's base of members and ensure the long-term future of it for generations to come.

I feel that my professional experience provides me with a strong background for the role of VP of Finance. I worked for fifteen years as a financial professional for a variety of non-profit organizations, as well as a multi-billion dollar insurance company and small cultural organizations with narrow missions. I worked for one organization that relied on the support of a sole individual with tremendous means and also for an organization with so many resources that the funds and the real estate it controlled became an actual impediment to the success of the organization. Lastly, I worked for a venerable 125 year old non-profit organization whose mission was becoming obsolete, necessitating a reinvention of the organization to ensure its survival. Throughout my involvement with these diverse organizations, I performed my duties as chief financial officer or controller with dedication to the accurate and impartial reporting of the financial activities, so that the Board could make the best decisions for the

future of the organization. Now that I have been presented with the opportunity to reverse the direction of my telescope and view the GSP financials from that angle, I feel confident that I provide the German Society with the same level of service I have provided these other organizations in the past.

Should you have any questions I welcome them at the annual meeting to elect Directors.

### Candidates for Directors



**Edward Cattell**

I think I can make a contribution to the Society in several areas:

1. Investment Returns – By working with the Society Committees and officers charged with responsibility for management of the Society's investments and fund raising, I think I can offer insights and suggestions which may be able to enhance the performance of the Society's invested funds and cash flow from these investments.

2. Relationships with other Colonial Societies – I was introduced to the German Society when I attended the Stiftungsfest representing St Andrew's Society of Philadelphia. I have joined the German Society to learn more of my German Heritage, and have since found a good many members of St. Andrew's Society who are also members of the German Society. There are members of St. Andrew's who could also join the German Society, but have not yet done so. While I encourage them to join, and would do so even if not elected as a Director, I think a more formal outreach, as a Director, could be effective. Members of St. Andrew's are also members of the St. George Society, the Welsh Society, and St. Patrick. Cross-pollination between and among the Societies could produce some excellent results, from increased membership to increased attendance at our events, and opportunities to attend the events of the other Societies.

3. Beer – The Society has discontinued its Heritage Festival (aka Oktoberfest) given the rise of

the huge celebration at the 23rd St. Armory held by Brauhaus Schmitz and other similar events. This past fall the Brauhaus Schmitz event had five sessions, each of which was as crowded and as fun as Munich. Although I am sure that many Society members attended, we had no formal presence. As part of Membership Outreach, I would like to see if we can organize a formal presence at this and other similar events which we could then use to encourage more interest in membership in our Society.



**Allen Krumm**

I would like to continue to support the German Society in its various programs aimed at preserving German heritage and culture. The progress made over the past few years in terms of building improvements and establishing a sound financial basis should serve as both an encouragement and a source of motivation for all the members of the Society.



**Frank Klare**

Having been a member of the German Society since 2003, I served on the board for several years. Currently I am the chairman of the Stiftungsfest committee, organizing the annual gala. It has been exciting to see the German Society

overcome many challenges and continue to grow over the years. To serve its members and to further the German Language and culture are the most important aspects of the Society.

Born in Radeburg near Dresden, I grew up in Munich, where I met my wife Elizabeth. We emigrated to the US in 1965. Our two daughters live in Manhattan and upstate New York and have given us five grandchildren.

In my professional career in the hotel industry I worked for several international companies, managing hotels around the world. Upon returning to the US, I managed the Philadelphia Radisson Warwick Hotel in Center City. After retiring in 2002 I formed my own hotel consulting business.



I look forward to the privilege of being part of the Board again and the opportunity to contribute to the Society to reach its goals and objective for the future.



#### **Hardy von Auenmueller**

I enjoyed an idyllic childhood “to the manor born”. After WWII, our landholdings were confiscated by the Soviet occupation government. We were headed for a one-way ride to Siberia – which we declined by defecting to the West – where we re-settled in a bombed-out building on an abandoned airfield. During those formative years, I learned to live frugally.

When I came to this country as a young adult – with a business degree and a treaty trader visa in hand – I was privileged to work for a multinational firm called Hoechst on the 82nd floor of the Empire State Building. That was the physical zenith of my life. After 20 years of faithful service to that company, I ventured out on my own. Restructuring faltering enterprises became my specialty, in the US and – following the fall of the Berlin Wall – in Eastern Germany.

Fifteen years ago, after having moved to Philadelphia for my retirement, and becoming a German Society member, I recognized an opportunity to apply my trade as turn-around specialist at this venerable cultural institution. My first attempt to join the Board failed, but on the next try, I was successful..., and soon thereafter I was elected President, then Chairman, Senior Vice President, and most recently Treasurer.

Due to other professional commitments – for a Rostock based shipbuilding company, and as recently elected President of the German-American Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC – I thought it prudent to resign as an officer of the German Society, but wish to continue my service at the Board level, after having supported the operations to the fullest, for the past twelve years.

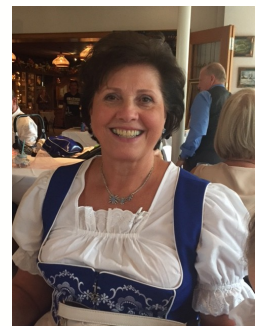
#### **Timothy Rausch**

Tim is an attorney and Certified Public Accountant who has previously served as the German Society’s Treasurer for two years. Tim is pres-



ently employed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Department of Human Resources as an auditor and he also has a private accounting, tax and legal practice. He is a life-long resident of Philadelphia.

Tim has served as waiter for the Women’s Auxiliary Annual Luncheon for several years, volunteers at various functions and promotes the Society’s reputation and unique historical circumstances whenever and to whom ever he believes may have an interest. Tim seeks a Board position to lend his business, legal and financial expertise to assist the Board in guiding the Society’s future operational success.



#### **Barbara Afanassiev**

As a past Board Member of The German Society of Pennsylvania, I have continuously been interested in the progress of the organization and have seen with great pleasure the various programs and events offered; thereby, serv-

ing the GSP membership and the surrounding community. In recent times, I have joined the Frankfurt in May Committee, as well as the Stiftungsfest Committee, in order to help support the activities of the Society.

As a native of Munich, I have always been active in promoting German heritage, culture and language. Throughout my career, I have held positions with bilingual/bicultural corporations and/or conglomerates. As co-founder and President of the German-American Chamber of Commerce – Philadelphia, as well as the Honorary Consul of Germany, I have served the German-American community in the Tri-State area for many years. Since my retirement, I am once again teaching German at the Immanuel German Language School.

It would be my pleasure and honor to again serve on the Board of the German Society and to utilize the experiences I have gained.



#### **Hajo Oltmanns**

The German Society of Pennsylvania has a long, proud history of achievements and impact. Our mission and vision have served us well and support important activities. We need to continue to adjust to a changing environment

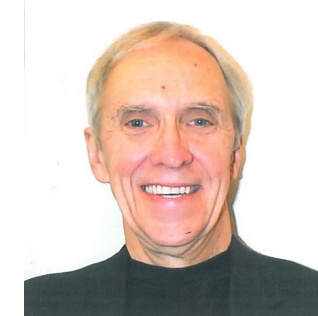
just as the Society has during its over 250-year history. We have the opportunity to attract new members, refine our areas of focus and activity, strengthen our mission and vision, and collaborate even more with other organizations. This will reinforce the foundation for the next 250 years.

I joined the Society shortly after relocating to Philadelphia in 2009 for professional reasons. I grew up in Germany where I still have family. My spouse, Anne, is from Cincinnati and our three young boys were each born in a different city (Chicago, Amsterdam, and Philadelphia). We speak German and English at home. In our family, it is very important to be multi-lingual and to be aware of our cultural heritage. We celebrate both our German and American background. I strongly believe the Society has an important role in the life of families like ours and helps us connect our children with their background. Professionally, I work as a senior executive for Elsevier in Philadelphia. Prior, I was a management consultant.

I am very honored to be part of the slate of candidates for the election. During the last several months, I have had the opportunity to help some members of the executive committee in preparing the updating of the strategy plan. As part of this I have learnt much more about the Society and our opportunities. As Board member, I would be committed to and focused on evolving the Society to capture the opportunities we have in our changing environment. I would bring to the board strong business acumen, a successful track record in strategy, business development, partnerships and collaborations, as well as experience in bi-lingual education. I would like to ask you for your support in the election.

#### **Lou Oschmann**

As a candidate for the German Society Board of Directors in 2018, I am honored and humbled to



have been a member of the Society for 45 years (since 1972). I was on the board about half that time (24 years), starting in 1990 under George Beichl. I have served on all the various committees, and currently serve

on the Finance, Library, Membership, and Arts committees, and also am Parliamentarian for the Board of Directors meetings.

As a third generation German-American (my grandfather immigrated to Philadelphia in 1873), I am very fortunate to associate with many native-born Germans at the German Society. Being a member here has been like having an extended family that I treasure, whose members and employees have sustained me through many difficult times in my life. My surrogate mother, Frau Friedl Sonnenberg, lived here in the building for 30 years, from 1967 to 1997, as the Hausfrau. My life has certainly been enriched by the many people here that I have met over the years.

One of my main goals for the German Society is to integrate it into the broader regional German American culture of the Philadelphia area. I think this would have enormous benefits to the German Society, educating the approximately 30 other German organizations about the historic richness of our Society, especially our beautiful library and building.

As current President of the German American Committee of Philadelphia and Vicinity and Vice Chairman of the Pastorius Unit of the Steuben Society of America, I have interacted with all the other German groups here over the last nine years. I think this broader exposure will help the German Society grow and make our heritage thrive.

My congratulations and admiration to all those volunteers who spend countless hours coordinating the activities and events here at the German Society, especially the members of the Women’s Auxiliary, the Music, FilmFest, and Konversation-sabend committees, and all others who help make the German Society thrive.



## GSP Member Jean Godsall-Myers Receives Award for Service in Germany

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by Corinna Nitz

Translation by Jean Godsall-Myers



Stephen and Jean Godsall-Myers have received the Honorary Medal from Reiner Haseloff in the Castle Church.

Wittenberg/MZ - For Reiner Haseloff, the Catholic and Minister President (Governor) of the state of Saxony-Anhalt, the Castle Church in Wittenberg is "with St. Peter's Cathedral the most important church in Christianity". Whoever as a Christian hasn't been here, well ... that person... "Will not get into heaven". If Haseloff (CDU) is right, then two people don't have to worry: Jean and Stephen Godsall-Myers. Alone in 2017, the two Americans spent almost 100 days in the town, serving in the Castle Church under the auspices of the Federal Volunteer Service. "With heartfelt warmth and hospitality" (Haseloff) and don't forget bilingualism, they helped people to get oriented in the midst of the whirlwind of the Reformation Jubilee. And for this, the professor and the pastor received the honorary medal of the state, bestowed by Haseloff on Saturday morning.

The award ceremony in the Castle Church was attended by a range of people, who had, or still have, diverse connections to the couple from Harleysville, be it as professionals or as friends. Jean Godsall-Myers shared several

phases of their history, noting that early on, she and her husband had traveled in Eastern Germany. The first time was at a point when scarcely anyone thought of Unification, let alone believed in it. Later they directed the ELCA Wittenberg Center until its close. Finally, as retirees, they returned in 2017 to Wittenberg "and have worked with thousands in the vineyard of the Lord", as Jean Godsall-Myers formulated it and emphasized: "We understand now even better, how the heart beats here."

There were many other things that were discussed, such as when Haseloff undertook an excursion through history noting the significance of Heinrich Melchior Mühlentberg, who taught at the Franke Foundations in Halle and worked as a missionary in the USA with the spread of Lutheranism. And, what else was there on this Saturday morning? Music - offered by the in-house Gospel Choir. Among others, they sang a song from the Pop-Oratorio "Luther", which was performed in the Reformation Summer 2017. Jean and Stephen Godsall-Myers were part of that performance. They still know the text and melody of "We are God's Children".

## Strengthening our Transatlantic Ties

Two years ago, Dr. Ingrid Countess zu Solms-Wildenfels, President of the **Steuben-Schurz-Gesellschaft** (SSG), came to visit us with a delegation from Germany - as part of the new sister city agreement between Philadelphia and Frankfurt. At that time, we signed a cooperation agreement with the SSG.



Since then I have acted as liaison to that organization, which is the oldest German-American cultural institution based in Ger-

many. It was founded in 1930, on the 200th anniversary of Baron von Steuben's birthday. During the Hitler years, it was silenced. In 1948, while Germany was still under Allied control, it was re-established by foresighted people, who recognized the importance of maintaining a good transatlantic relationship with the United States. That is no less important now.

While we are preparing ourselves for a third "Frankfurt Day" on our terrace on May 19, 2018, I will be traveling to Frankfurt on March 23 to take part in their 70th anniversary celebration in the Kaisersaal of The Römer, one of Frankfurt's oldest buildings going back to the Middle Ages. It has also been Frankfurt's City Hall for centuries, and is located not far from the Paulskirche. The latter is the equivalent to our Independence Hall, i.e. the symbol of German democracy after the revolution of 1848.

As you may remember from your history classes, the first pillars of German-American relations were erected by Germans who emigrated to America after that failed revolution of 1848. Among those "Forty-Eighter" were **Carl Schurz**, the US Secretary of the Interior in the Rutherford B. Hayes administration, who was the first to organize the U.S. National Park Service, and **Friedrich Hecker**, a legend in the Heidelberg region. Both were friends and wartime supporters of Abraham Lincoln.

During the second half of the 19th Century, many international guests visited Heidelberg, which was known as the "Inn of Germany". Among the American visitors of that time was Mark Twain, the American writer, who loved the German language and poked fun at it. His impression and memories can be read in his book - *A Tramp Abroad*.

The City of Heidelberg plans to recognize the legacy of the American presence in Germany with a project in tribute to the US Army, which had its headquarters there, for close to 70 years. After all, Germany owes its democracy and freedom to the United States during the Cold War. The combination of a steadfast for-

eign policy, generous economic aid in the form of the Marshall Plan, and massive military engagement led to a vibrant West Germany within NATO, and finally to German reunification.

With the announced closing of the US Army headquarters in Heidelberg, Dr. Eckart Würzner, Lord Mayor of Heidelberg and Prof. Frieder Hepp, Director of the Kurpfälzisches Museum, came to visit the German-American Heritage Museum (GAHM) in Washington, to see how its activities could complement their plans for a similar institution, called **Mark Twain Center for Transatlantic Relations** (MTC) - a site of remembrance, a research institution, and a future-oriented meeting place.

The MTC will preserve an essential historical site. Established as officer's quarters for the German Army in the 1930's, the building became the commandant's headquarters for the US Armed Forces in Europe after World War II. The period-authentic, original rooms and furnishings at these impressive premises, their convenient proximity to the city center, and the spacious park surrounding them portend the great potential of this site.

Based upon the proposal submitted to the City Council, a site plan - with cost estimates for the scope of work - was drawn up, and appropriate funding from the German federal government has since been secured. While it envisions a two-step approach for the realization of the MTC project, the initial phase aims to make the central part of the existing building usable for special exhibits, video projects and literary events (see sketch of Entrance Hall below).

While GAHM will be a cooperative partner of MTC in the future, I took it upon myself to introduce the leadership of SSG to this new project. On two occasions, we jointly traveled to Heidelberg, and I am now pleased to report that SSG will be given a prominent space in the MTC building where they can showcase their organization with a permanent exhibit and presence.

- Hardy von Auenmueller