

## 2020 Annual Members Meeting and Elections of the Board of Directors

As we announced earlier this year, the Annual Meeting will take place on **Sunday, September 13 at 3:00pm**. All GSP members are invited to our 2020 Annual Members Meeting and Elections for Officers and Directors. This year, rather than an in-person meeting, our Board of Directors has decided that we will meet on Zoom.

To receive the Zoom invitation, please contact the office via phone or email. The office staff will verify that your membership is current before sending you the access information (link and/or dial-in number). This gives you a chance to renew if your membership has expired. The access information will be sent **ONLY** to members in good standing i.e. current on dues no later than close of business on **Friday, September 11, 2020**.

After the meeting, ballots and voting instructions will be mailed to the members who attended and are eligible to vote. Members wishing to vote must be present at the Zoom meeting.

Associate level members (\$30/year) may attend the meeting, but are not eligible to vote in our elections; if you an Associate member and would like to vote, please contact the Society's office to upgrade your membership to a higher level.

There are five openings for Directors on the Board in the class of 2023. There are six candidates competing for these positions. There are also three Officer positions up for election: Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and VP of Finance. Vision statements of the slate of approved candidates can be found on the following pages.

### CANDIDATES FOR OFFICERS

#### **Treasurer: Lew Volgenau**



For the past nine years, I have been your Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer and have also served as the Vice President of Finance.

It is our vision to be recognized as the premier German ethnic Society in the United States. In these uncertain times, it is vital that we manage our finances. I will continue to work with the Executive and Finance Committees to provide balanced budgets and prudent investments. We also need to continue our capital improvement projects to maintain our library and building. We are grateful for the support of our members for their donations and continued membership. I look forward to serving the financial needs of the Society for another 2 year

term.

#### **Assistant Treasurer: Tim Rausch**



Tim is an attorney and Certified Public Accountant who has previously served as the German Society's Treasurer for two years. Tim is presently 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 whomever he believes may have an interest. Tim is a candidate for the office of Assistant Treasurer so as to lend his legal, business and accounting expertise in support of the Treasurer in guiding the Society's future operational and financial success.

## VP of Finance: Brian Norton



I would like to present myself to the Membership and ask that you support me in my desire to serve you, the Members and the Society as I have for the past two years in my role as VP of Finance.

During the four years that I have served the Society and its Members as a member of the Finance Committee, Board Member and most recently, officer, I continue to unravel the mysteries and mystique of the German Society as I serve it and the Philadelphia Community.

In fact, that is my desire; to serve both masters, if you will. As someone who came to the Society looking for a hobby and finding a community, I feel committed to serving as an officer representing Philadelphia and the very long relationship that the community has had with the Society. I feel that as an organization founded to serve an immigrant community, we offer a path and an example to America and that this represents a unique opportunity for us to continue to forge a path of diversity and the proverbial melting pot that has made Philadelphia and the German community so strong.

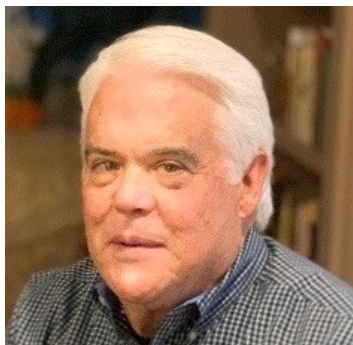
Professionally, as many of you now know, my experience as a finance professional for a number of years in the non-profit sector for a variety of organizations of both mission and resources and I can offer the back office skills as needed to continue to support the German Society.

While I had expected to have to miss the Annual Meeting for an intensive German language course in Schwäbisch Hall, recent developments mean that I will be in attendance.

Should anyone have any questions for me, I would be happy to address them at the Annual Meeting.

## CANDIDATES FOR DIRECTORS

### Del Hausman



I am currently the principal of the Immanuel German School/Deutsche Sprachschule Philadelphia. I have taught German, Russian, and English in a suburban high school, English in a German Gymnasium, German at Villanova University, and graduate courses in educational administration at Penn State. For 15 summers I accompanied AATG prize winners on their 4-week study/homestay trips to Nürnberg and Berlin. Additionally, I started a school exchange with a Gymnasium in Hamburg.

I have served as a national Vice President of the American Association of Teachers of German and as a member of the Accreditation Committee of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). For over two decades, I was a Consultant to the College Board for AP German. Following my teaching career, I became the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Lower Moreland Township School District. I am presently a member of the Board of Trustees of the German Language School Conference (GLSC).

I believe that the German Society is uniquely positioned to serve as a hub for all things German throughout the greater Philadelphia area. The Delaware Valley remains home to a rich, but dwindling array of German clubs and organizations, and it is my firm belief that we would all benefit from much closer cooperation. The German Society should strive to promote its programs to members of all the other organizations, schools, churches, clubs, etc., and at the same time should endeavor to share information regarding programs of other institutions. I'd like to help infuse new meaning into the slogan *Wunderbar* together!

### **Maria Sturm**



In all likelihood, the members of the German Society will be receiving these candidate statements while the effects of COVID-19 are still ongoing, and amidst widespread uncertainty about the long-term repercussions of the pandemic. As a historian, I am well aware of the fact that the German Society has weathered many difficult situations in its long history, and I would like to run for the Board again this year hoping to be able to contribute in whatever meaningful way towards the goal of seeing the German Society deal successfully with the current crisis as well. Right now, nobody can predict the exact form of what will be necessary, so I will refrain from mentioning too many concrete plans – aside from the obvious task of re-organizing as many as possible of the events that had to be cancelled, finding space for new initiatives, and continuing to help the Horner Library flourish – as I have done for so many years – as well as the German Society as a whole. After the influenza pandemic of 1918, many good changes came to the city of Philadelphia, and I hope going forward, we will all work together to make the same happen again once COVID-19 is behind us.

### **Jim Niessen**



It was my privilege to serve already two terms on the GSP board. My parents were born in Philly of German and Lithuanian immigrants. In researching their roots I stumbled upon the GSP and have treasured its library and archives, fun and informative programs, and many new acquaintances. I've traced my German roots in the Rhineland and Baden, and organized two GSP programs on German genealogy. My home neighborhood in Woodside, Queens in NYC was one of the oldest German settlements on Long Island before Irish immigrants made St. Patrick a rival to St. Boniface. Professionally I'm an historian of Eastern Europe and a humanities librarian at Rutgers, where I am collections coordinator for the

New Brunswick Libraries and liaison to six academic programs including the German Department. In the GSP, I'm a member of the Library Committee. God willing, we will all survive the coronavirus until the elections in June when I would welcome your vote for another year on the GSP board.

### **Daniel Lippard**



This is being written March 18th, and I sense that the epidemic upon us now will not have resolved itself by the time of the Annual Meeting and Board Elections. That, I feel, requires rearrangement of our priorities.

Some Society members are going to be in diminished health and resources. Our focus right now, and for the foreseeable future, should be on helping them as we can.

The next task should be restoration of normal functions by the Society. It's certainly not quite that simple, since the students that are taught here, the guests who attend our functions, and the groups we contract with will also probably be struggling to achieve normalcy. This, though, constitutes an opportunity to a stalwart to those people, and let them see what sort of neighbors our members are.

After those phases, hopefully we are able to enthusiastically pursue new activities which enrich our lives and those of our neighbors.



### **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.

### **Helga Halbfass**



The eleven years of my first and second Board membership have reinforced my wish to further contribute to the future direction of the German Society. In the past years, I have seen numerous positive developments. The Society has become much more visible to the general public. The partnership of Philadelphia with Frankfurt has allowed the Society to extend its own international outreach, and the list of its program accomplishments is impressive. This would not be possible without the untiring volunteer engagement of the Executive Board and the Board of Directors. I am proud of having been a member of this team. I participated in various volunteer activities, and for more than nine years I have organized the Konversationsabend or KA as my special contribution.

We extended the KA program by adding the KA Extra Series which allows us flexibility and diversity in welcoming speakers and presenters at short notice, including guests from the Gustav Stresemann Institute, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, and others. The support of fellow Board members and Committees has been productive, and I hope to be able to work for even more co-operation and transparency between committees and projects. If re-elected, I would continue the KA program and engage actively in the ongoing process of defining and re-defining the objectives of the Society (membership questions, publicity, hospitality, outreach activities) as my part in making the German Society significant for friends and members, and for the life of the City.