

Calendar of Events

Wed. Apr. 13	Konversationsabend: Language and Philosophy with Dr. John Hoffmeyer, 6.00pm
Fri. Apr. 15	Friday FilmFest: "Elser (13 Minuten)" (German with German subtitles), 6.30pm
Thur. Apr. 21	Library Lecture Series: Mark Loudon on Pennsylvania Dutch, 6.00pm
Sun. Apr. 24	"Wister and More!" and the Delius Society present the Conwell Woodwind Quintet, 3.00pm
Sat. May 7	Women's Auxiliary Anniversary Luncheon, 12.00pm
Sat. May 14	Buchclub: Christoph Ransmyer's "Die letzte Welt/The Last World ", 1.30pm
Sun. May 15	"Wister and More!" presents The Wister Quartet, 3.00pm
Fri. May 20	Friday FilmFest: "Die Mannschaft", 6.30pm
Sat. June 4	Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10.00am
Sun. June 5	Annual Members Meeting and Elections, 3.00pm
Sat. June 11	Frankfurter Tag
Sat. June 11	Konversationsabend: Wandertag, 12.00pm

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The German Society  
of Pennsylvania

Neuer Pennsylvanischer  
Staatsbote

CELEBRATING  
1764 **250** 2014  
YEARS OF  
GERMAN  
HERITAGE

Spring 2016

Building News

For the past seven years I have been reporting about our ongoing efforts to bring our building up to modern standards. I believe that everyone who has participated in the German Society's day-to day-operation and in our programs, events and activities recognizes the substantial improvements that have been made or are now close to completion. These improvements have not only strengthened our operational preparedness by modernizing parts of the building that are immediately visible (elevator, restrooms, etc.) but also those that are not so easily seen but which are vital to the preservation of our "home."

consequences. In some cases the problem was perhaps a lack of funding. In others, there may not have been a strong enough vision for the future needs and possibilities of the building and the organization.

We need to give future generations of German-Americans the opportunity for growth. This may require going the extra mile now in order to keep more options available for future development. The best solutions are often not the easiest or the least expensive, but the German people have always had a reputation for solid craftsmanship and we will continue to live up to those expectations.

We were proud that German President Joachim Gauck chose to make the German Society his first destination in the U.S. Of course, he was interested in our history and current mission - not our physical structure. But I feel that our efforts not just to maintain, but to improve the GSP building demonstrate a commitment to prepare the organization for the future. The list of things still to be tackled is not a short one; we will need four to five more years to overcome the biggest challenges. But the light at the end of the tunnel is becoming brighter and, thanks to ongoing support by members and friends of the German Society as well as generous grants by organizations that believe in our mission and in our future, we will get there.

I am sorry to inform you that our Office Manager, Caroline Martin-Tumasz, has decided to begin a new chapter in her professional career and will be leaving her position in the GSP Office as of April 15. We have enjoyed and appreciated her energy and her dedication to the organization and, as much as we will miss her, we wish her all the very best as she moves forward. During the past few weeks, the personnel committee has interviewed several candidates and I am pleased to announce that Ms. Liesl Jandrey has agreed to become our new Office Manager starting April 11, 2016.

I am looking forward to your continuing support and hope to see you at our events.

-Tony Michels

Over the past several years we sometimes discovered that the original construction and later additions or repairs did not meet adequate standards and created further problems down the road. I often asked myself why some corners were cut leaving us now to deal with the

Save the Date

# FRANKFURT IN JUNE

Celebrating Philadelphia's new Sister City

JUNE 11th, 3PM | REGIONAL FOOD, WINE, MUSIC & FUN

hosted by the  
*German Society of Pennsylvania*

Tickets available through [ticketleap](#) or call (215) 627-2332



## Vice President of Development Report

Why do we keep emphasizing the importance of our Endowment Funds? The answer is quite simple. We believe that a strong and vibrant giving program is all important to the long-term financial viability of the Society. There is no better way than to make a gift during your lifetime or through your estate plans and to leave a legacy gift, small or large, for an organization whose mission and programs are important to you.

Our Horner Memorial Library is without a doubt our most cherished treasure and we believe we have a unique opportunity to ensure that this collection of 60,000 books, pamphlets, manuscripts and other holdings assembled since 1817 is available to future generations of members, scholars and others interested in these materials. A meaningful endowment dedicated to the maintenance of this wonderful collection is our next goal. Once established we will have three separate accounts with the Philadelphia Foundation – the Scholarship Fund, the Society's Endowment Fund (to support operational expenses and capital projects) and the Horner Memorial Library Endowment Fund.

The Library Committee\* has supported this newest effort with a donation of \$10,100. We recorded this donation under *the Friends of the GSP Library category* in the Linden Society summary. In fact, we decided to aggregate all donations to any of the funds and recognize donors under the appropriate Linden Society category. Once we have collected \$50,000, we will establish the separate account with The Philadelphia Foundation. We invite members and friends of the Society to take this opportunity to help us grow the *Horner Memorial Library Endowment Fund*. Any donation will be most welcome.

\*Donations by Frank and Renate Genieser, Jean Godsall-Myers, Betina Hess, Reinhard and Sue Kruse, Violet and George Lutz, Jim Niessen, Lou Oschmann, Maria Sturm and Frank Trommler.

### *A significant gift:*

We have some additional good news about the Society's Endowment Fund. Early in January we received a most generous gift of \$75,000 from the Arcadia Foundation. Ms. Marilyn Steinbright, the President of this family foundation, made the contribution in memory of her good friend Dr. F. William Sunderman, past director and benefactor of the German Society. We are trying to leverage this donation by reaching out to past members of our Board or others that may have known and worked with Dr. Sunderman. Again, here is an opportunity for others to contribute to this special fund.

Dr. Sunderman was truly a remarkable individual. He was a medical doctor, a scientist, and a gifted musician, who lived to 104 and played his Stradivarius violin at Carnegie Hall at 99. He obtained his M.D. as well as his Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Pennsylvania. During his long and illustrious career he published more than 30 books and laboratory manuals and over 300 scientific articles. He was one of the first to treat a diabetic coma patient with insulin and invented a widely used instrument for testing glucose levels in blood. He was medical director for the Manhattan Project at Los Alamos, NM. Dr. Sunderman played violin in chamber music groups in Europe every summer, and the senior members of the Society recall that he often used his Stradivarius in our wonderful concert hall. He was an active and dedicated member of our Board of Directors. Additionally, he brought the Wister Quartet to the German Society more than 25 years ago and personally funded the early performances until our Sunday afternoon concerts were well established.



### *A new giving opportunity:*

The US Congress late in 2015 made a permanent change to our tax laws that should benefit

not-for-profit organizations, such as the German Society, and should be of special interest to all who are at least 70½ years old and who need to take yearly IRA required minimum distributions (RMDs), which can have unpleasant tax consequences. IRA accounts or company sponsored retirement plans are attractive since they delay paying higher income taxes while we work, with the assumption that we will be in lower tax brackets during our retirement years.

The newest revision allows portions or all of the yearly required minimum distributions to be directed to a charity of your choice without triggering any tax consequences; of course you may not claim a tax deduction for this donation. Most importantly, these donations count toward the required distribution. Is there a limit to the amount transferred directly to the charity? Yes, there is an upper limit of \$100,000 in any given year. But there is no lower limit and as such this is a nice vehicle by which to make a meaningful gift to our Annual Fund or to donate to our Endowment Fund(s). If you would like more information about this new feature, just contact the office and we will return your call.

–Ernie Weiler

## Meet our New Office Manager

It is with great excitement that I take up the position of the Office Manager. I am a recent graduate of Franklin & Marshall College, holding a degree in German and a minor in English. I am delighted at the opportunity to put my curiosity for German language and culture to work at such a historic and engaging organization. In my free time, I enjoy balancing and swinging at contra dance events up and down the East coast, as well as taking bike rides on the Schuylkill River Trail.



–Liesl Jandrey

## Women's Auxiliary Bus Trip to Connecticut

Join Us on an Autumn Trip to Connecticut  
September 14 and 15, 2016

Day 1 - Tour the Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk to learn about Long Island Sound aquatic life and its challenges. Lunch at the cafeteria or picnic on the grounds (on your own). In the afternoon visit the exceptional exhibits at the Yale Museum of Art on the campus in New Haven. Unwind in the evening on the waterfront at Lenny and Joe's. Overnight at the Best Western in North Haven, CT.

Day 2 - After breakfast at the hotel enjoy a journey back in time at the Old State House in Hartford. Then just down the street see the extensive collection of art and artifacts housed at the Wadsworth Athenaeum. After a relaxing lunch at the USS Chowder Pot, tour the Mark Twain House which has been deemed *one of the 10 best historic homes in the world*. On the drive home the coach will stop at a to-be-determined restaurant (on your own.)

Cost includes transportation, one night's lodging, 1 breakfast, 1 lunch, 1 dinner, all attractions, taxes and gratuities (Alcoholic beverages and Wednesday lunch and Thursday dinner **not included**.)

The bus will depart from the German Society at 7:30 AM and 8:15 from the Radisson in Trevose and return between 9 and 10 PM Thursday.

Costs are \$280 pp double; \$335 pp single; and \$260 pp triple. A deposit of \$50 is required with your reservation with the balance due by August 15, 2016.

The reservation form is available on the GSP website at [germansociety.org](http://germansociety.org). Please call Carol Olenschlager at 856-962-7316 with questions.

## Buchclub at the German Society

The discussion of *Die Blechtrommel* (*The tin drum*) by Günther Grass was my first opportunity to go to a book group meeting at the German Society. I was daunted by the ironic complexity of Grass' style, but after spending so much time battling with the book, it seemed silly not to go and hear the discussion. I was rewarded by a warm reception from the other readers and the coordinator, Maria Sturm. Not only are those who attend extremely well read, but they are all gracious and patient and no one seems to mind if you make comments in English.

The readers who attend the discussions are a diverse group, representing a wide range of ages and backgrounds. Almost everyone has a different point of view, which makes the discussions quite lively and enriching. The session on *Die Blechtrommel* not only expanded my knowledge of German history, language, and literature, but also made me more aware of the wealth of culture we have in our members. And they all seem happy to help you understand references or historical events you missed.

The next book, *Zonenkinder* (*After the wall: confessions from an East German childhood*) by Jana Hensel, was more of a journalistic narrative of a teenage girl who saw the reunification of Germany as the demise of her world, since a young person thinks not in terms of country and government, but sports teams, favorite foods, extracurricular activities at school and familiar haunts. Although I could not attend that discussion, discovering *Zonenkinder* led me to read Hensel's more mature prize-winning essays (e.g. "Vater Morgana" published in *Die Zeit*) and to discover many other e-magazines and blogs created by eastern Germans.

Eugen Ruge's *In Zeiten des Abnehmenden Lichts* (*In times of fading light*) is the story of a German family and how they and their East German world evolved from the post World

War era until the reunification. Ruge paints a beautiful picture of a fictional family resembling his own, with a Russian mother and grandmother. (Ruge was born in the Soviet Union to a Russian mother and German father, a disgraced historian like the Kurt Umnitzer of his novel). Ruge's writing has been well honed in his career as a translator and playwright and this novel garnered the Alfred Döblin and German book prizes.

For January, the group read *Radetzkymarsch* (*Radetzky March*), a novel written in 1932 by Austrian journalist Joseph Roth. He illustrated life in the Austro-Hungarian Empire in his novel by showing its political and social milieu from the viewpoint of the grandfather, father and son. During this discussion, which was held in the library, we took advantage of the large collection of maps to find the easternmost regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire where Joseph Roth was born and where he placed the grandson in his story.

In February, we turned the mirror and looked at Germany at the turn of the nineteenth century from today's perspective. *Imperium* is a work of historical fiction by Swiss author Christian Kracht. His protagonist, based on a real person, August Engelhardt, is one of many turn-of-the-century Europeans who sought spiritual enlightenment by escaping the constraints of formal Western society in the tropical paradise of the Bismarck Archipelago. Kracht is a master of the German language and has a wicked genius for portraying his characters in vivid, sometimes excruciating, detail.

-Margaret Darby

## Annual Members Meeting and Board Elections

On Sunday, June 5, 2016 at 3:00pm, the German Society will hold its 2016 Annual Meeting/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 3, 2016. 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 at 215-627-2332, or email [info@germansociety.org](mailto:info@germansociety.org). A slate of eight candidates was presented to and approved by the Board of Directors. Their vision statements and photos are found below.

This is a contested election, as there are seven openings on the Board, as several directors have decided not to run again, or are not eligible to run again.

### Candidates: Directors

#### Charlie Becker

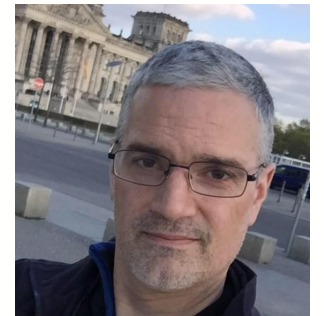
I have had the privilege of being a member of the German Society of Pennsylvania in excess of 20 years. I've seen many changes during that time, and as a Board Member, fortunately, I've had the privilege of being part of that change. We have come a long way and must work hard to sustain those accomplishments. We have many challenges in front of us and I feel that I can best contribute by continuing serving on the Board of Directors. As a member of the Board, I am able to be an active participant in meeting those opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. It is my ambition to continue active participation by serving on the Board of Directors, as part of that decision



making team that takes the German Society into the future and assist in achieving those future accomplishments that will best serve both the membership and our community.

#### Mark McGuigan

For the last 11 years, my working life has been dedicated to building enduring relationships between Germans and Americans. In addition to serving as Executive Director of the German Society in 2005, I launched a network of German-speakers (Netzwerk Philadelphia) and today am the US Program Director for a Berlin-based German non-profit organization Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste. In that capacity I oversee the placement and educational program for approximately 25 young German volunteers doing gap-year service with marginalized populations, human rights organizations, survivors of the Holocaust and with Jewish community groups in the US. Known in the United States as Action Reconciliation Service for Peace, my office also organizes events and summer camps centered on building understanding and promoting social justice.

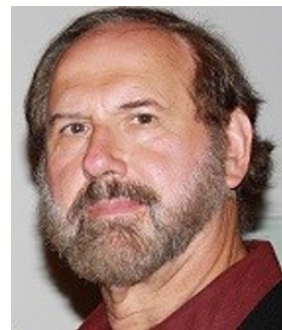


My personal ties to Germany go back 34 years to my year abroad in Berlin, and my family ties to Philadelphia reach back to the 1850s. Connecting these two things is a great passion of mine. I believe for Philadelphia to be a truly international city, it is necessary for us to support the institutions that build bridges to other nations. One of those is the German Society. After many years of working in this field, I believe I would bring a unique perspective and useful knowledge to my role on the board – and help to build on the successes of the last decade. I hope to have that opportunity in the coming years.



### Anthony Waskie

I have been a member of the German Society for 30+ years and during that time have been a firm supporter of the mission of the Society to promote teaching and learning of the German language and Culture. I began my career as a German teacher at Pennsbury High School in Bucks County. I spent 30 years as a German teacher and Foreign Language program director at Pennsbury. It was at this time, that I joined the German Society and encouraged my students to visit and join the Society and participate in its activities. After my career in public education, I took advantage of my graduate work in German at New York University, where I obtained an M.A. in German, and a Ph.D. in 'Germanic Philology' or 'Germanistik', and was offered a teaching position as a professor at Temple University in the German Department. I have been at Temple ever since, now in my 17<sup>th</sup> year. At Temple, I continued and strengthened my relationship to the German Society by teaching in the Society's German Language School, and joining the Scholarship Committee. I founded the Temple University German Society, as a branch of the Society to involve my students actively in the mission of the German Society. In 2003 I established a summer intensive German program at the University of Leipzig's Herder Institut where each year, Temple (and other schools') students study German intensively in Leipzig. I have served each summer as a 'Guest Professor' at Leipzig. I am also an author and historian specializing in the Civil War history of Philadelphia, and especially of the German-American volunteers who served gallantly and heroically in fighting for their adopted country. I have organized several history symposia that were held at the German Society, as well as bringing numerous history groups for tours over the years. If elected to serve on the Board, I will endeavor to serve the German Society and greater German-American community of



the Philadelphia area by my commitment to promote German Language and Culture and continued engagement by Temple students to benefit this great and historic institution.

### Marwan Kreidie

Although my name would indicate otherwise, I am a proud German-American. My Mother was born in Neu-Oderberg in what was then Czechoslovakia prior to the Second World War. As an minority ethnic German She experienced discrimination; was a refugee and lived through the dreadful bombing of Dresden during the Second World War, She emigrated to the US, married my Father, A Lebanese citizen, and moved to Lebanon in the early 1960's, when I was 4. In 1976 the Lebanese Civil War forced us to flee to Philadelphia. These experiences are the reasons for my life long support of immigrants, ethnic communities and refugees. I am involved in numerous immigrant and ethnic organizations including being a co-founder of the Philadelphia Immigrant and Citizenship Coalition, (PICC) and United Voices of Philadelphia, an organization dedicated to giving a voice in the electoral process to voiceless immigrants. United Voices held a mayoral forum at the German Society during the Spring of 2015.

I also founded the Arab-American Development Corps, which among other things is very involved with advocating and resettling Iraqi and Syrian Refugees. A month ago I helped organize a KA on the subject of Syrian refugees in Germany at the German Society. Additionally I have organized and coordinated summer study programs for students at Villanova University and West Chester University with the PfalzAkademie—in Lambrecht and Berlin and am currently organizing a summer study program at the Gustav Stresemann Institute in Bad



Bevesen on Xenophobia and Islamophobia in Germany and the United States.

### Harold Glass

I have been a member of the German Society of Pennsylvania for over ten years. I am active participant on the finance committee. If elected to the board my particular area of interest would be the recruitment and active involvement of new members.



Retiring recently as Professor of Health Policy at the University of the Sciences, I continue there as Dean's Professor with a number of Ph.D. students completing their dissertations. I also taught at King's College London, where I maintain a second home. I went to the London School of Economics for my master's degree in economics and received my Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina. Since my undergraduate days I have developed a strong interest in German history, politics and culture. During my academic career I also worked at the University of Zurich. Despite this, I speak German!

I also had a business career. I started and sold two database companies working in the design and cost of new drug global clinical trials, selling both companies to much larger, billion dollar plus companies. Travel, for fun and work, has always played a large role in my life. I have travelled though out Germany and Europe. I visited my last continent, Antarctica, a couple of years ago and am enrolled to go with Virgin Galactic into space.

I am a member of two other volunteer boards and appreciate the amount of time and particular skills necessary to be successful in such a setting. My other interests include playing the cello, skiing, and ballroom dancing.

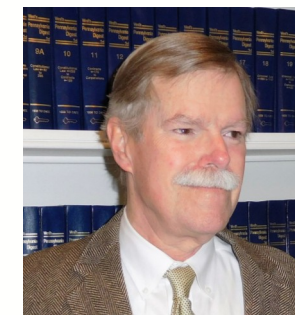
### Marnie Old

I am an award-winning wine and beer author and Philadelphia's leading expert in my field. I write, teach and consult independently on marketing, as well as organizing and speaking at events around the country. German Society members know me best as the mind behind Bierfest, but I have hosted many seminars and tastings since Hardy von Auenmueller first appealed for my help over 12 years ago. I may not be of German heritage (unless my father's line by way of the ancient Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex counts), but have long considered German wines and beers to rank among the world's finest and have partnered with the GSP to promote them. With the growing enthusiasm of Americans for cultural exploration through gastronomy, I see great potential within my field for the German Society to leverage Pennsylvania's uniquely German heritage in order to meet its future goals. I believe that further diversifying programming by mining the rich veins of German brewing, German winemaking and German cuisine can increase visibility, outreach and membership, especially among younger audiences.

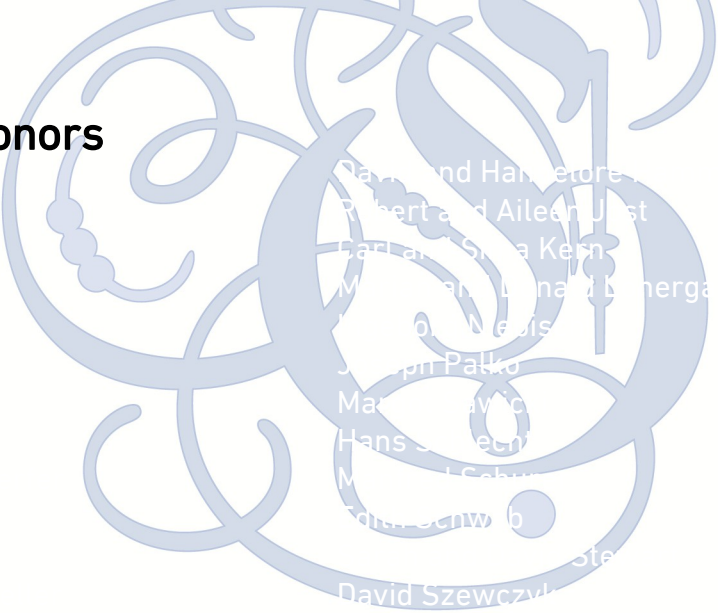


### Daniel Lippard

The most discernible overlap between America and German Europe is located at 7th and Spring Garden right here in Philadelphia. The conclusiveness of this lies in the 250 plus year existence of the Society. All the past and present efforts to sustain the Society are best honored by ensuring that Europeans and North Americans from out of the area know that the Society is an interesting, hospitable, and fun place for a visit or for decades of worthwhile membership activities.



Annual Fund Donors



I've been a Society member since 1991. Over the years I've served on boards for community nursing services, a condo, and church, taught estate law to paralegals at the PSU Delaware County Campus, and been a speaker for the Alzheimers Association.

My father's people were cotton farming Pennsylvania Germans in the Charlotte area; my mother's from a small town near Chemnitz. These connections were remote but revered in the household I grew up in.

Josh Helfand

I am German in heart, having moved to Germany in 1979 when I was 8 years old and living there for the next 15 years. From 2012-2015 I was able to move my family back to Germany for three years, where I worked with a creative agency in Frankfurt. Our children attended local German schools in Bensheim an der Bergstrasse as well as international schools. When we are amongst ourselves we try to only speak German, and bedtime stories are of course exclusively in German.



I am employed by a German software company headquartered in the Frankfurt area as the VP of Sales. I am excited about the mission of GSP and to serving wherever I will be most useful. I expect that will be primarily in various forms of outreach activities. For example, I see an opportunity to expand and strengthen GSP's ties with other Germany-focused organizations, with universities and high schools, and with businesses that have commercial ties to Germany. I am happy to make available my marketing, sales, and digital communications experience to help advance GSP's mission.

Welcome New Members!



## PhillyKinder Highlight: Student Aides

For the spring edition of *Der Staatsbote*, PhillyKinder would like to present the readership with a different perspective on our program. Now in its sixth year, PhillyKinder offers ten classes with about 10 to 12 students on average per class. It would be nearly impossible for our teachers to navigate through their ninety-minute after-school program without help - either a parent or a high school student is assisting in every classroom. Parent aides support our staff quite intuitively. They have a parent's eye and jump in when and where support is needed. Our student aides often have to grow into their role but they add something our parents cannot offer: Most of them were born and raised in the US and have at least one German-speaking parent at home - just like the children that come to PhillyKinder. The children in our program look up to them as role models. Without knowing it, our youth helpers are real assets to our program.

So for our contribution to this edition of *Der Staatsbote* we asked our student aides to tell us why they help out in our classes and how they have benefited from those classes. Generally, they had not attended a structured program like PhillyKinder when they were younger. Some of the questions we gave them to consider were the following: Why did you decide to volunteer on Thursday afternoons with PhillyKinder? What do/did you take from it? What do you think makes this a worthwhile program? Here are the responses of two of our helpers.

-Birgit Splitt

"I've been working with the PhillyKinder since September 2014, and since then I've met lots of



great parents and kids. On my bike, I live only ten minutes away from Overbrook, so I was quite surprised to hear how far some families travel each Thursday afternoon. I've often asked myself, "What brings the

kids to Overbrook week after week?" Obviously the parent's influence helps, but something else must also contribute. Hopefully it's the friendships and closeness that I've observed week in and week out. Within the classroom I play a couple different roles. Sometimes it's keeping the boys quiet, helping with worksheets, or reading with the kids. My favorite activity has been to help the kids brainstorm and create their posters for the different soccer teams, cities and Bundesländer in Germany. The most rewarding experience is to see everyone's, including my own, German improve after months of meeting together.

My motivation to take part in PhillyKinder is based on a few different reasons. Throughout High School, I became more and more interested in my cultural identity. There were no German classes offered at Lower Merion, so I began to practice my German at home and read about European history. During a summer block party, my neighbor, Frau Popp, invited me to join PhillyKinder. I knew that I enjoyed working with kids and was looking for another activity besides tennis. After sitting in at a few classes, I knew that PhillyKinder was the perfect fit!"

- Lucas K (18)

"Before I worked as a classroom helper at Phillykinder for two years, my mother brought my brothers and me to a German "playgroup" which later became what is now Phillykinder. The most important part of this playgroup for me was being able to celebrate German holidays together like *Martinstag*, *Nikolaus* and *Karneval*. Back then it was of course because building lanterns, baking cookies and dressing up are fun activities. However my participation in these traditions kept me in touch with my German heritage and has allowed me to con-



nect with other Germans like my family and friends who have lived in Germany for most of their lives.

Phillykinder provides much of the same to its students, while also attending to more academic needs: teaching kids the language and even German history. While I was there, I continued to learn things about German grammar, spelling, and life in the DDR alongside the kids I was working with. However I think that what helps them most of all is the consistent practice in communicating in a second language. At their age, some kids don't fully appreciate what an advantage they have in being bilingual, and sometimes don't want to speak German with their German parent or read German books. At Phillykinder I've noticed that many enjoy the social experience of meeting other half-German kids and as I did in my playgroup, switch over to German when talking with their friends and teachers there.

I had an amazing time working at Phillykinder. It provided me with a connection to the German-American community and it provides the kids with a chance to develop their German and also have friends who share their dual culture. After they leave Phillykinder, they will have an understanding of where they come from and will be able to feel just as much at home in Germany as they do at home in Philadelphia."

- Elena I. (19)

The PhillyKinder teachers and team are truly grateful for the support they receive from their volunteer student aides. A big 'Thank you' to all current und past helpers. Our program would not be the same without your help.

If you are a high school student fluent in German, and you have an interest in working with bilingual children or know someone who would like to work with us, contact us at [phillykinder@gmail.com](mailto:phillykinder@gmail.com). We are always on the lookout for new volunteers.

## Library News

On January 22, GSP library representatives Bettina Hess and Maria Sturm attended a conference on digital library collections held by the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries (PACSCL). The meeting was held at the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania. The conference was a great opportunity for us to hear what other area libraries are doing with regard to digitizing items in their collections. This is an important way in which libraries are increasing visibility and creating access to their holdings.

While we do not have the staff or financial means to undertake large-scale digitization projects on our own, there was much discussion of ways in which larger institutions can help smaller ones through collaboration. During the meeting, tours were offered of Penn's digitization lab and by coincidence we happened to see our own German-language newspapers in the process of being digitized.

At the beginning of 2015, the German Society gave several nineteenth century German-American newspapers to the University of Pennsylvania so that they could be digitized and made available to researchers through its website. In the lab, we were able to see for ourselves how these enormous volumes are carefully propped onto scanners and photographed page by page, in all probably tens of thousands of pages! After they are scanned, the images will be made searchable through a specialized OCR (optical character recognition) software that can read the Fraktur typeface. These digitized volumes will become a great resource for genealogists and other researchers looking for individuals or events in the history of German-speaking Philadelphia.

-Bettina Hess