Please join us for our

257th Stiftungsfest

Saturday, November 6, 2021 | 6:00pm
Champagne Reception, Dinner, Dancing, and Silent Auction
$135/person
Formal Attire Suggested

Please make your reservation by October 22.
50% of the price of each ticket is a tax-deductible contribution.

I hope this message today finds you well.

The pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on our organization to the extent that all in-person activities during the past 14 months had to be cancelled. We suffered significant limitations to our normal operation and did not achieve our goal of a balanced budget.

Our “normal” operation in 2019 seems a time long ago although not even 17 months have elapsed. But despite the disruptions to our anticipated calendar, there are many positive things that can be said about the German Society’s year 2020/2021. Before Covid arrived, we completed a successful year of continuing events including our Annual Stiftungsfest, the Christkindlmarkt, the BierFest and many other programs.

As a result of discussions and events in our immediate neighborhood and in the greater city of Philadelphia, we have begun to establish a broader level of outreach into the German American community and beyond, specifically into the neighborhoods surrounding the GSP.

Our first Dogadelphia event in 2019, created in cooperation with the National Park Service, the Philadelphia Police Department and a number of vendors, attracted hundreds of new visitors to the GSP and inspired many new members to join and our first full time presence at the Christmas Village Philadelphia. 2019 attracted a large audience interested in German culture and tradition.

When the City of Philadelphia made the decision to shut all non-essential businesses down, we, trusting the advice of scientists and other experts, put the necessary mechanisms in place to continue the operation of our organization and maintain many of our programs. We are lucky to have a dedicated full- and part-time staff of office employees, teachers, library workers, event chaperones, and maintenance personnel whose willingness to be flexible and creative during this trying time has been crucial. I thank them sincerely, but our volunteers cannot handle the entire load by themselves.

To meet current and future demands, the Board of Directors decided to establish the position of Executive Director at the German Society. The position was offered to our current office manager, Liesl Jandrey, who has been the voice and face of the organization to the public for the past several years. She will assume the position on July 1, 2021. We are delighted with her appointment and confident that she will be a vital force in implementing new and existing programs for the benefit of the GSP.

It is with regret that I must report that the process of dissolving the Women’s Auxiliary of the German Society was completed in 2020. The significant funds donated by the Women’s Auxiliary to the German Society will be used as they have designated. I am optimistic that the remaining active members will continue to dedicate themselves to their work for the German Society and other important causes. I thank them for their many significant contributions to the organization.

I would like to recognize the achievements of our Board of Directors and committee members, who have continued to participate enthusiastically as their own outside responsibilities allowed. The meetings were packed with important ideas and topics regarding the future of the German Society, and I thank them for their advice and support.

I would also like to thank our solicitor and long-time member, Joseph DeMaria, whose council has been invaluable.

I am particularly delighted that, in addition to continuing their service as in previous years, several
Horners Fellows Examine German and Austrian Relief Projects in Philadelphia

COVID-19 did not bring everything to a standstill. Our fellowship program with the German Historical Institute in Washington was impeded in 2020 but not interrupted, thanks to the flexibility of Bettina Hess, our Research Collection librarian, and a certain leniency of official restrictions last September. For Maximilian Klose in Berlin who was unable to visit Horners in person, Bettina produced scans of material he planned to study, while Michael Burri, a local resident, was able to examine the planned material in person at Horners. Charlotte Faucher, living in Cambridge, United Kingdom, had to postpone her stay in Philadelphia to 2021, but we hope she will be allowed to travel in September 2021.

Both Klose and Burri converge in the topics of their projects, though with a different focus. Both Horners fellows pursued research in an area that for a long time determined the mission of the German Society of Pennsylvania: charity. At the founding of the Society in 1764 as well as in the centuries afterward material and legal relief for German immigrants was at the center of its activities. Later reinvigorated by the widespread activities of the Women’s Auxiliary, for many it came to a halt and the devastations of World War I brought a new awareness of suffering in the countries in Central Europe. The emphasis shifted from German-speaking immigrants to the countries of their origin.

In the following reports both fellows provide short summaries of their research. Burri, who teaches German language and literature at Bryn Mawr College, provides insights into the sense of separateness that many immigrants from the Habsburg monarchy maintained towards the German empire during World War I. The official American policy towards German speakers after the declaration of war against the German empire intensified this differentiation. This provides relevant context for the course of action that the Austro-American Relief Society adopted after 1918. Klose, a dissertation student at the Freie Universität Berlin, concentrates on the collaboration of the GSP with the CARE organization after World War II.

We look forward to welcoming this years Horners fellows and hope that they can pursue their studies as planned at Horners: Timothy Greive-Carlos (Rice University) with “American Aurora: Environment and Apocalypsis in Early Pennsylvania” [with a focus on Kelpius]; Sebastian Wiltert (TU Berlin) with “Die ‘Peters-Hilbrect-Kontroverse’ an der Universität von Pennsylvania: Eine Geschichte transatlantischer Rivalität und ihre Auswirkungen auf die deutsch-amerikanische Öffentlichkeit zwischen 1889 und 1911”; Ariane Ficht (Lille/Augsburg) with “The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Its Reception within the Democratic-Republican Societies of Philadelphia (1790-1800).”

—Frank Trommler

The Austro-American Relief Society and Humanitarian Relief to Central Europe after 1918

My research concerned the Austro Hungarian American Relief Society (the “Relief Society”), a Philadelphia-based humanitarian relief organization, active roughly between 1917 to 1927. Many of its records are deposited at the Horners Library.

Research activities were devoted to two principal tasks: 1) understanding the broader local context for the Relief Society; 2) collecting as much archival material about the Relief Society as possible. With respect to the first task, two findings merit mention. First, it seems clear that an Austrian-Hungarian consciousness among German-language speakers in Philadelphia after 1900 has been underestimated. Indeed, associations ranging from the Banater Arbeiterverein to Wiener Gemütlichkeit and a local Tirolerbund held regular meetings and events in quarters dedicated to that purpose.
Second, the First World War greatly boosted the expression of Austrian-Hungarian identity. That is primarily because when the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, German-born individuals living in the U.S. became “enemy aliens.” They were henceforth subject to highly restrictive requirements, including registration at the local post office, an obligation to carry registration cards at all times, and specific prohibitions regarding their movement. These requirements did not apply to those born in Austria-Hungary, and thus, in April 1917, being Austrian-Hungarian acquired a very tangible value. Indeed, it was between April 1917 and December 7, 1917, when the U.S. finally declared war on Austria-Hungary, that not only the AARS, but other Pennsylvania Austrian groups such as the Copley Saengerbund (‘America’s oldest Austrian club,” in the Lehigh Valley) moved quickly to organize themselves.

Once claimed, this Austrian-Hungarian sense of autonomy was not quickly relinquished. After the Philadelphia consulate for Austria-Hungary closed in December 1917, for example, diplomatic activities were transferred to the consulate of neutral Sweden, where they remained into the 1920s. My research does show that the Relief Society accomplished much during the postwar humanitarian crisis in Austria. But its origins are not entirely grounded in that crisis.

Research has enabled me to place the Relief Society more skillfully in its local context. In fact, little has been written about German Society of Pennsylvania (GSP) postwar relief activities, in contrast to its wartime activities, and the standard GSP history, *Ethnicity Matters*, devotes only two paragraphs to this subject. To be sure, postwar fundraising activities often mimicked similar wartime efforts. Thus, when the United (German) Singers, performed a benefit concert for postwar relief on December 13, 1920, at the (Philadelphia) Metropolitan opera, that event mimicked the United Singers wartime performance at the Philadelphia Convention on October 30, 1915, a benefit concert not only attended by German-born Philadelphia mayor Rudolph Blankenburg, but which featured over 2100 male, female, and children singers. Still, if GSP wartime relief efforts underscored the common cause of German and Austrian-Hungarian suffering, postwar benefit events highlighted the centrality of “Germaness” (Deutschum). As the Philadelphia Tageblatt observed, “With this 1920 concert of the United Singers, Germaness once again appears for the first time since the war before our city.” Likewise, at the December 1920 GSP bazaar led by the provincial United Relief Fund, President Otto Hanzmann connected the urgency of the relief effort with an expression of “Germaness.”

My research suggests that the Relief Society positioned itself against this “German” approach and sought to mobilize a multinational constituency, or as it sometimes called them, our “Landsleute” for relief work. Indeed, among the records of the Relief Society, which purchased a building in 1917, is preserved an abbreviation sheet that indicates eleven languages in which correspondence should be conducted with its members — where D stood for Deutsch, E for English, P for Polish, I for Italian, and so forth, while some bank correspondence in Hungarian has been preserved in the files. Meanwhile, the fact that the group also used the Habsburg motif, *virtus unitis* on its stationery speaks to the Relief Society attempt to forge posts war emotional alliances with an imaginary Austria-Hungary.

Contributions to individual civilian organizations in both Austria and Hungary were numerous. What distinguishes these funds from GSP work, however, is the fact that the GSP worked almost exclusively through the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) — the GSP Foreign Relief Committee, for example, made expenditures in 1920 of $10,440, where $8,775.00 of that was passed through the AFSC. By contrast, the AARS more often directed its support to particular relief organizations in addition. GSP relief efforts continued intermittently through the 1920s, especially from 1922 to 1924, at a time when the AARS, and indeed American relief to Austria, more generally, had ceased.

-Michael Burri, Bryn Mawr College

Why They Gave: CARE, the American Public, and US-German Relations after World War II

The Horner Library holds several collections that were potentially relevant for a case study within my dissertation project. In the project tentatively titled Why They Gave: CARE, the American public, and US-German relations after World War II I investigate the massive humanitarian endeavor between the United States and both East and West Germany between 1946 and 1963. More specifically, the project focuses on the work of the humanitarian organization Cooperative for American Reimittances to Europe (CARE), and investigates individuals, interest groups, and social clubs that used CARE to send relief goods to Germany.

As Americans of German descent constituted one of CARE’s largest donor groups, one case study of the dissertation is dedicated to this ethnic community and to individuals and groups within it who used CARE to come to the rescue of their ancestral home. While this at first suggests an obvious motivation grounded in kinship, a closer look reveals far more nuanced debates on ethnic identity and public participation. German Americans resorted to humanitarian aid as a form of “symbolic ethnicity” in which they debated and confirmed their status as citizens with a dual allegiance, caught between loyalty to their American homeland and nationalist sentiment towards the country of their forefathers. Humanitarian aid, though outward and directed at those suffering overseas, thus became an act of self-affirmation to engage in internal and individual debates on identity.

In my application for the fellowship, I had identified three collections of potential interest.

1. The German Society of Pennsylvania institutional records
2. The records of the Women’s Auxiliary of the German Society of Pennsylvania (Frauen-Hilfsverein)
3. The Conrad J. and Marian Linke papers provide the only personal, non-organizational account of German-American giving. Conrad J. Linke was a Philadelphia-based painter and illustrator who engaged in political and charitable activities towards Germany between 1917 and the early 1950s. He and his wife Marian were active members of several social clubs and interest groups, including the GSP and the Steuben Society of America. Marian engaged in relief work for the Women’s International League and, most importantly, she was President of the GSP’s Women’s Auxiliary between 1951 and 1954, thus serving at the intersection between private and organizational relief work.

Unfortunately, the GSP institutional records and the Women’s Auxiliary records produced very few results as both organizations resorted to aid agencies other than CARE in their humanitarian endeavors to Germany.

However, every historian knows that finding nothing can be at least as useful as finding something, as the GSP and the Women’s Auxiliary had their reasons not to donate through CARE. This reason lay in CARE’s institutional profile. Unlike other organizations, CARE did not provide anonymized aid that they distributed on the basis of need, but through CARE donors could send relief packages directly to a specific recipient of their choice. This approach did not correspond with the self-understanding of German immigrant organizations whose heritage preservation aimed not at individual Germans but at a larger idea of Germanness and the German nation. However, the uncatalogued material that Bettina Hess was able to locate revealed that the GSP started donating through CARE in the mid-1950s, after the organization began offering mass relief that was not directed at specific recipients. The GSP now
had a justification to engage in CARE as it no longer violated their self-assigned purposes. This insight now forms a vital part of my analysis on German-American identity as it shows how diversely German immigrants used humanitarian aid to debate and express their ancestral self-understanding.

These findings also helped me to contextualize the material I gathered from the Conrad and Marian Linke papers. The Linke’s were both of German origin – Conrad was a first- and Marian a second-generation American – and both were active members of the GSP. During the Second World War, they frequently advocated for US neutrality after the German attack on Poland and drafted open statements for the impeachment of President Roosevelt, whose policies they perceived as increasingly pro-British. Conrad Linke also frequently voiced anti-British and also anti-Semitic opinions to justify the doings of the Nazi regime. After the war, both actively engaged in relief aid to Germany but deliberately chose other agencies over CARE. This echoed the preferences of the German-American organizations both Linkes served.

Privately, however, the Linkes donated via CARE to aid their direct relatives overseas. In the fall of 1946, they started sending CARE packages to Conrad’s cousin Anna Ullmann. Anna, like Conrad’s parents, was a Sudeten German and was therefore among the roughly three million expellees who had to leave their homes in Czechoslovakia after the defeat of the Third Reich. She now lived in the Soviet Zone of Germany. This form of engagement was not surprising as CARE offered a convenient way to direct aid specifically at Conrad’s overseas relative. What is surprising, however, is that the Linkes seem to have had no prior contact with Anna Ullmann. They only reached out to her after the war and the Nazi atrocities which they had relativized during the 1930s had put their understanding of Germany and thus their own heritage on trial. Aiding Anna Ullmann through CARE was therefore a form of romanticized ethnic reconnection, as Anna’s fate as an expellee confirmed the Linkes’ belief in the vic-

2021 Annual Meeting and Election Results

On Sunday, June 6, the German Society held its second virtual Annual Members Meeting and Elections of the Board of Directors via Zoom. This year, six candidates ran for six open Board positions: one in the class of 2022, and four in the class of 2024. The office positions of President, VP of Advancement, Secretary, VP of Project Oversight, VP of Operations, and VP of Strategic Planning were also up for election.

The following candidates were elected to the open office positions: President: Mark McGi-
gan; VP of Advancement: Ernest Weiler; Secretary: Bill Hardman; VP of Project Oversight: Hans Mueller; VP of Operations: Tony Michels; VP of Strategic Planning: Harold Glass.

Three of our current Directors were reelected to serve in the Class of 2024: Barbara Afanas-
siev, Edward Cattell, and Hardy von Auen-
mueller. They will be joined by new board members Monika Moyer and Stephanie Vogel. Hajo Oltmanns will fill the vacancy in the class of 2022.

Congratulations to our new board members, and thank you to the outgoing members of the Class of 2021 for your service to the German Society!

- Liesl Jandrey

Although the group was not terribly large, it was a very appreciative crowd in attendance for the March 21, 2021 concert by the Duo Pa-
risienne at the German Society. Nancy Bean played both violin and Pellegrina viola, together with Anne-Sullivan on harp. The dark and power-
ful sound of the Pellegrina viola was a great choice for the Marin Marais Suite, ‘L’agréable’ with the rich drone evoking bagpipes in La Musette. Ms. Sullivan’s version of Albert Heinrich Zabel’s Am Springbrunnen was impres-
sive, but the harp/violin version of Clair de Lune was irresistible.

- Maximilian Klose, Freie Universität Berlin

851. Preston and Petrina Steimel’s perform-
ance of the original piano duo version of Rhapsodie Espagnole was an absolute knockout.

The 2021/2022 Wister and More Concert Series will consist of eight concerts. On September 26, the Pyxis Piano Trio will perform Brahms and Beethoven. Elissa Lee Kolonjen and Natalie Zhu will return on October 17 to play Saint Saëns and Tartini/Kreisler. On November 14, the Wis-

ter Quartet will play Borodin and Farago and will also play a piece by German Society mem-
ber Chuck Holdeman — a quintet with the com-
poser playing the bassoon part. On December 12, Filament, a new chamber group, will give a trio concert with Evan Few, Elena Smith, and John Walthausen. Claire Huangci will return on January 2, 2022 with Beethoven/Liszt and Schubert. The Estrella Piano Duo will return on Febru-
ary 20 with Schu-
mann, Mendelssohn, Mozart and Beetho-
ven Trio Montage (Nancy Bean, violin/ viola, Anne Sullivan, harp, and Lloyd Smith, cello) will play R a c h a m n i n o f f, Squire, Dussek, and Ibert on March 20, 2022. The final con-
cert of the series will be by the Karlruher Konzert-Duo on April 24, performing pieces by Schumann, Strauss, Gershwin and Liszt.

- Margaret Darby
Development Report

Moving our Endowment Funds

After more than ten years with the Philadelphia Foundation (PF), at the recommendation of the Finance Committee and with the approval by the Board of Directors, we have chosen to withdraw our endowed funds and have elected the Haverford Trust Company as a management company. The primary reason is an ongoing and unresolved issue around the lack of timely financial reports.

Over the years, members have purchased annuities from the PF to benefit the German Society. These will continue uninterrupted and at a future date the residue will benefit the Society as indicated in the different contracts. In fact the PF continuous to offer annuities to anyone who might be interested in this giving opportunity.

The Haverford Trust Company manages accounts for over 200 not-for-profits with the majority located in the tri-state area. These organizations have more than $3,000 in assets with Haverford. The overall portfolio managed by Haverford tops $110B.

The historical returns achieved by Haverford during the past 10 years have been higher than those realized at the Philadelphia Foundation; there is also more flexibility in terms of investment options and withdrawals. In fact each account can be managed individually. They also offer hands-on guidance as well as some financial support to their not-for-profit clients.

As part of this change, we have tried very hard to document the wishes of donors for each of the named accounts by preparing a policy statement that will govern our investments with Haverford. It was approved at the May Board Meeting. It includes strong provisions that this policy document can’t be easily altered by future boards; this includes amending the fund purposes or the withdrawal specifications associated with the various accounts. We considered establishing trust accounts but concluded that this would become cost prohibitive and very complex to manage—especially for the relatively small amounts in some of the seven accounts. We have been assured that these arrangements are almost equivalent to trusts.

The summary balances of the funds are as follows:

**Category I: As of 12/31/2020 - $1,722,000**

1. The German Society of Pennsylvania General Endowment (GER I-1)
2. The German Society of Pennsylvania Irmgard Martino Endowment (GER I-2)

**Category II: As of 12/31/2020 - $951,000**

1. The German Society of Pennsylvania Horner Memorial Library Endowment (GER II-3)
2. The German Society of Pennsylvania WAUX Library Endowment (GER II-4)

**Category III: As of 12/31/2020 - $615,000**

1. The German Society of Pennsylvania Scholarship Fund (GER III-5)
2. The German Society of Pennsylvania Leon H. Volgenau Scholarship Fund (GER III-6)
3. The German Society of Pennsylvania Elsa Schweikart Scholarship Fund (GER III-7)

Our long term vision remains that 20% of our operation expenses, plus some funds dedicated to capital projects, will come from our endowments. Moreover, the Board decided not to withdraw any funds from the General Endowment until an account balance of $2.0MM is realized. We are getting closer to this interim goal and sure could use a few more donations. We are taking withdrawals to support the Library budget and fund yearly scholarships—these are offered through a competitive process.

Giving Opportunities

Over the years, we have repeatedly reported on giving opportunities that benefit the Society and/or help build our endowments. For example, several of our members, over 70 ½ years old, use a portion of the mandated yearly withdrawals from their IRAs to benefit the Society and thereby realize tax savings. Of course all cash donations are tax deductible for donors that itemize their donations. Appreciated assets such as stocks make an excellent gift because they may offer substantial tax savings.

Even shopping at AmazonSmile benefits the Society, as long as you first select the German Society as the not-for-profit of your choice; a small percentage of the eligible purchase costs will come to the Society.

We recently benefited from the generosity of a donor, not a member of the Society, who used his Thrivent Choice® dollars as an honorarium for services provided by the Library Transcription Group. This volunteer group helped transcribe a number of documents in the old German script and their work will benefit readers that typically would not be able to read these papers.

So what are Thrivent Choice® dollars? Thrivent is a Fortune 500 not-for-profit financial services organization founded in 1902 by Lutherans. As a member-owned fraternal benefit society, it operates under a chapter system, serving nearly 2.3 million members. We suspect that some members as well as friends of the German Society are also serviced by Thrivent. Each year, Thrivent distributes Choice® dollars that are allocated on the basis of account balances. These can be donated by any member of Thrivent to a not-for-profit registered with Thrivent. The amount distributed in fiscal year 2020 was $20.00MM. The good news is that we are now registered with Thrivent as an eligible not-for-profit and therefore are well positioned to receive future Choice® dollars. We are hoping that members and friends of the German Society, who are also members of Thrivent, will seriously consider this unique giving opportunity to support our need for annual funds or help us build the endowments.

Honor Walk

Tony Michels, as part of the Leidy Terrace project a few years ago, donated and installed the bricks on the Honor Walk that is a part of the terrace entrance. For a modest $150 a customized brick can be purchased in memory of a friend or family member. The proceeds have been used to recognize volunteers that have serviced the Society and may normally not be able to attend one of our special functions. The names that follow are currently or will soon be inscribed bricks on the Honor Walk:

- Heinz and Christina Bartling; George and Isabelia Beichl; Carl and Lottie Brod; ETHEL K. BROWN; Joan Detz; John William Dickey; E. Ermentrout; GUENTER FINKE; THE FRANGAKIS-REDEMANN Family; MINNIE HARTENSTINE; Robert P. Hartenstine; Lori Brod Haworth; THE KADEL Family; CLARA KLIMENT; KLOTZ; GUSTAV-IDA KLOTZ; George F. Koch, Jr. Bob and Paula Koerner; Eva Kollat; Daniel Lippard; Irmgard Martino; Randall Miller; Hans K. and Harriett Mueller; HENRY OCHSMAN; Patricia Raine and Anton Michels; Dr. TERESA C. AND JEFFREY N. RUPERT; Christiane Schmidt; Dr. FRAUKE SCHNELL; SIRI SÜCHTING; Elaine J. Volgenau; Leon H. Volgenau; Miriam Katarina Volgenau; Dr. Nicolaus H. and Marianne Volgenau; Dr. Robert H. and Rose M. Volgenau; Robert and Zoe Volgenau; Margarete Volkwein; AGNES M. WEILER; PAUL D. WEILDE; WILLIAM GEORGE Young; Sr. and Dorothy Thomas Young

New Lifetime Members

A vibrant and expanding membership base is essential to our long term growth and prosperity as the German Society. We are delighted to welcome ten new lifetime members since the prior listing in the spring 2021 issue of the Staatsbote.

Members’ names have been removed from online version for their privacy.

- E. D. WELTER
Walldarkergarten Gruppe bereichert das PhillyKinder Programm

Nach einem langen Jahr in reliver Isolation und mangelnden Kontakten bot der Frühling die ideale Chance Kindergartenträger (Pre-K & K) durch ein Pilot-Walldarkergartenprojekt in reliver Sicherheit wieder zusammenzuführen. Kristina Eaddy, die in der Vergangenheit sowohl als Lehrkraft bei den PhillyKindern tätig war als auch am Schuykill Center für Environmental Education die Walldarkenunterricht gruppe leitete, entwickelte ein 6-wöchiges PhillyKinder Walldarkergarten Programm für drei bis fünfjährige Kinder.


Programm:
1. Kenntnisspuren & Naturbingo
2. Frühblütler & Wildblumen
3. Bäume & Käfer
4. Teich & Kaulquappen
5. Steine & Steinbruch


Das Entdecken von Kaulquappen und Fröschen am Teich und das Beobachten von Rollhasen unter Baumstämmen waren zwei Höhepunkte unseres Programms im Frühjahr. Auf einer Wanderung konnte an einem Teich außerdem eine Schnappskildkröte beobachtet werden.

Wir hoffen dieses Programm im Spätsommer und Frühling 2022 erneut anzubieten. Es war sehr schön mitzuwachen wie die Kinde aner zuerst Freundschaften schlossen und ihr deut sches Vokabular und Verständnis für den Lebensraum Wald durch das praktische Erfahren in der Natur erweitert haben.

- Kristina Eaddy & Birgit Spillt

Fazit der Eltern


- Anne Spiller


Es war super, wie jeden Samstag H. es gar nicht erwartet konnte, in den Wald zu fahren. Kristina hat es auch ganz toll gemacht und sich jede Woche was anderes ausgedacht, was für die Kinder neu war. z.B. einen Stock zu dekorieren oder Köcher durch eine Lupe anzugehen.

- Antje Williams

Uns hat es im Walddarkergarten hervorragend gefallen und wir würden im Herbst auf jeden Fall wieder gerne dabei sein. Kristina hat sich sehr viel Mühe gegeben das ganze Programm interaktiv und positiv zu gestalten. Von den Wanderungen bis hin zum Frösche fangen war alles gut geplant und hat mit den ganzen Dingen, die am Anfang jeder Stunde ausgepackt wurden, z.B. Keschere, Eimer, Vogelfutter, etc. besonders gut gefallen.

- Vera Jahnle


- Mirko Heinle

Beiden Jungs hat der Walldarkergarten Spaß gemacht, und nicht nur, weil es danach entweder Schoko- oder Crêpes gab. Gerade für unseren Jüngeren, der seit Beginn der Pandemie nicht mehr in der KiTa war, kam das Programm gerade zur rechten Zeit. […] Wir waren schon seit dem Winter regelmäßig am Samstag zu dritt in den Wald gefahren und dort ge wandert. Für ihn war es so ein guter Weg, über die Gewohnheit wieder die Gemeinschaft mit anderen Kindern zu erleben, die über Zoom ge rade in seinem Alter (er ist gerade 3 geworden) so nicht zu erfahren ist. Er ist in den letzten Monaten wirklich gewachsen und während er am Anfang etwas zögerlich war, lief er die letzten Male begeistert mit, der sich mittlerweile mehr für die Natur als für Bagger interessiert, war auch mit großem Interesse dabei und hat auch im Morgenkreis auf der Wiese stets gut mitgemacht. Zu guter Letzt war auch der Ort super – der Wald ist schön, und es war schön nach dem Ende des offiziellen Programms noch mit einigen auf dem Waldspielplatz zu verweilen.

- Thorsten Drautburg

The Walldarkergarten was a great opportunity for the kids (and parents) to interact with each other in a safe setting after spending much of
the past year locked up. The kids were able to play outdoors and to explore nature together, all while practicing their German. Our son excitedly looked forward to our outing into the forest each week.

— Moritz Ritter

Scholarship Awards for German Language Students

As a long-time and currently most senior board member of the German Society, I have been greatly enjoying my participation in the annual selection process of our scholarship awards. We have been able to fund these awards through the generosity of several German Society members, past and present.

Our Scholarship Fund was established in the late 1990s thanks to a sizable bequest of Conrad J. Linke (1892-1995), which he dedicated in its entirety for this purpose. It should also be noted that his wife, Marian Linke, who passed away in 1995, had been president of our Women’s Auxiliary during the early 1950s. This was a time when both were heavily involved in WWII relief efforts.

In recent years, two additional scholarships were funded by current members of our Society to honor the lives of Leon H. Volgenau and Elsa Schweikert, respectively.

Our most prestigious George Beichl scholarship, which had been funded for many years by the Women’s Auxiliary prior to its dissolution in 2019, needed special support this year, because our annual Christkindlmarkt had to be cancelled in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. I am pleased to report that the following long-time members of our Society, who revered Dr. Beichl for his stalwart leadership of our organization over a period of 20 years, joined me in supporting this award: Frank and Renate Geisieser, Allen Krumm, Doris MacPherson, and Christiane Schmidt.

Irrespective thereof, the selection of this year’s scholarship recipients again presented quite a challenge, as we had nine highly qualified applicants — high school graduates as well as college students — and following the pattern of prior years, all of them female, but one! In spite of these odds, our choice for the George Beichl prize fell on Noah Fisher, a 17-year old high school chap from Lancaster, PA. He will be pursing a double major in German and Mechanical Engineering at Valparaiso University in Indiana.

Julia Oborna, a first-year student at Temple University, is the recipient of the Leon H. Volgenau award. Julia received our top award last year after graduating with honors from the Immanuel Sprachschule (passing Sprachdiplom level II) and receiving a full scholarship in the Congress-Bundstag Youth Exchange program. Hannah Appelhans, currently enrolled at Bryn Mawr College, has been awarded the Elsa Schweikert prize.

The other six award recipients are: Madison Chambers (West Chester University), Alysssa Danyi (Franklin & Marshall College), Clarice Helfand (University of Pennsylvania), Lauren Pash (Kutztown University), Abigail Pinch (Downingtown High School, heading for West Chester University), and Ali Robin- son (West Chester University).

Due to the prevailing coronavirus restrictions, the personal interviews were conducted via Zoom. Since all of the applicants were rather proficient in German — which could be discerned from their written essays — we conversed mostly in German, and thus were able to discern who had received third party help.

It is always a pleasure for members of our Scholarship Committee to observe the progress which some of the students make over the years, and we are consistently impressed by their talent and dedication. With this in mind, we would like to share Noah Fisher’s scholarship application essay, printed below.

— Dr. Hardy von Auemuller


Nach sechs Jahren des Lernens habe ich noch weiter zu machen und Deutsch zu einem Teil meiner lebenslangen Karriere zu machen. Ich plane ein internationales Ingenieurstudium mit einem Doppeldiplom in Deutsch und Maschinenbau. Ich hoffe, ein Jahr an einer deutschen Universität zu verbringen, um in Deutschland zu lernen und zu arbeiten, damit ich fließend und besser über die deutsche Geschichte und Kultur informiert bin, bevor ich nach Amerika zurückkehre, um dort zu leben und zu arbeiten. Ich habe größten Respekt vor dem deutschen Ingenieurwesen, aber für mich geht es beim Erlernen der Sprache nicht nur um den Job. Ich schätze die deutsche Kultur und hatte das Glück, kurze Reisen nach Deutschland und Österreich zu unternehmen. Einige meiner Lieblingserinnerungen waren der Besuch der deutschen Weihnachtsmärkte und des Schlosses Schönbrunn. Selbst nach meiner Rückkehr in die USA hatte ich das Glück, mich in Lancaster County niederzulassen, wo die deutschen Traditionen geschätzt werden, was bedeutet, dass ich sie nicht zurücklassen musste.

Wenn ich jetzt mein Leben betrachte, ist Deutsch genauso ein Teil von mir wie meine Gitarre, meine Zauberwürfel oder das Auto, das ich liebe. Es gehört zu meinem Alltag. Ich bin einen unerwarteten Weg gegangen, um hierher zu kommen, aber Deutsch ist meine Fremdsprache fürs Leben.

— Noah Fisher
State of the Library Report, Summer, 2021

As the summer months arrive, the Library Committee at the German Society of Pennsylvania continues to focus its efforts on pursuing projects and activities organized around its three core values of Sustainability, Discoverability, and Community.

In April, Society Librarian Bettina Hess, Project Cataloger Lorena Boylan, and I participated in a very enjoyable KA Extra hosted by GSP board member Helga Halbfass. We gave a brief presentation titled “Honoring the Past. Creating the Future,” which was followed by an engaging conversation with members of our community. The three of us were incredibly inspired by, and grateful for, the opportunity to learn from GSP members and our broader community about the importance of the Horner Memorial Library to the cultural fabric of the Society, the city of Philadelphia, and the scholarly world of German-American studies. We gleaned many useful ideas and insights from the discussion, which we have since carried back to the rest of the Library Committee.

Another exciting outcome of the virtual roundtable discussion was the adoption of four rare books by event attendees. We found it very gratifying to know that our focus on preservation and stewardship is so ardently supported by the community. Those of you who attended the program may recall that, at one point in her comments, Bettina mentioned that the Library was in need of a new laptop, to facilitate collections-processing work that will be undertaken by an intern over the summer. Just days after the presentation, a member of the audience contacted us and offered to purchase us a new laptop—for which we are so deeply grateful. This kind of support means so much to those of us who devote our time and energy to the work of the Library.

The Library’s virtual programs continue to find success in reaching wide audiences and delivering innovative content to participants from all over the nation and world. Library Committee member Jana Keck and Librarian Bettina Hess recently facilitated a transatlantic virtual scholar panel titled “Reflecting on German Heritage in the United States in the Twenty-First Century.” The Committee is already developing exciting virtual lectures for the autumn, along with our new onsite Library Treasure Tours. Please watch GSP communications for further information about these offerings as more details become available.

Many members of our community have expressed interest in the process by which our adopted rare books are restored, so I have included two photos in this report taken by The Book Restorer, Ruth Scott Blackson, in her workshop. These behind-the-scenes glimpses should give you a sense of how our deteriorated rare books are repaired for further use by Library patrons. For more information about the rare book adoption program, please visit https://www.germansociety.org/adopt-a-rare-book/.

- Dr. Alexander L. Ames

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