



DEUTSCHER CHORVERBAND

SÄNGER ZEITUNG

Issue Number 33

Fall, 2016



Greetings from the President... Gary Luther

Dear Singers (Liebe Sänger und Sängerinnen),

Our 62. Sängerfest was most enjoyable. Pittsburgh did itself proud. Thank you everyone in the Pittsburgh Sängerkreis for all your efforts. We now look forward to our 63rd Sängerfest in Peoria, IL, which is being professionally Chaired by Mary Dempster and Debbie Heddemann. The Hauptkonzert music has been selected by the Music Committee, which met in Peoria during August. The committee hopes to have the 2019 songbooks published and shipped in late 2017. Don't miss reading Mary and Debbie's letter in this issue.

We, the Vorstand, all agreed the Menhart-Pescayne Achievement Award should recognize a worthy individual on an annual basis. As a result, we are sending out the process and nomination form with this Sängerzeitung. The award will be presented during the year to the deserving person at a significant event of their District. On years of the National Sängerfest, it will be

presented at the Fest. Please consider members of your Choir, who are deserving of the award and make the nomination.

Ron Kabitzke, our Sängerzeitung Editor, is not getting much getting information from our Districts. Please make an effort to keep your fellow singers up to date by providing information for the Sängerzeitung.

The NASB relies on member dues and the tri-annual Sängerfest to meet its operational financial needs. Although we all had a wonderful experience visiting and singing in Pittsburgh, the event was probably not a financial success. We continue to make efforts to ascertain what the financial impact is on the NASB. We also are awaiting order information to purchase concert CDs and group picture. A number of participants, as is normal, had to cancel out of the event for medical or personal reasons. We are continuing to request reimbursements for those individuals. Rest assured, we will continue to keep you up to date and remain transparent relative to the outcome of the Pittsburgh Sängerfest.

On the same financial item note, please look at Page 2. You can be of great assistance to the NASB if you opt to get an electronic copy of the Sängerzeitung. To receive the Zeitung electronically, send an email to: gary.luther@sbcglobal.net. The Zeitung is also available on our website.

www.nasaengerbund.org

Many singers have asked how we can make our Fests more financially reasonable. The Vorstand has been working with this issue for several years. One option is to hold the Sängerfest at locations with lower cost venues. Peoria is an example of a city which provides all the amenities of a large city, while keeping individual costs down. A second item of contention is the distances we travel to get to the Fests. We could find more centrally located venues (not necessarily in a choir's city) for most, which also would aid making the Fest economically justifiable for singers. The third item, and possibly, easiest to absorb, would be for the NASB Vorstand to form a national committee to take over planning for Sängerfests. This change would simplify matters by having the same committee using the same format Fest to Fest and not having to reinvent the preparation procedures every three years.

The NASB is a democratic society. Please take advantage of being an active member and provide your comments and input to the NASB Vorstand.

Wishing everyone a blessed, joyous holiday season filled with "weihnachtliches Singen" and sharing of glad tidings with your families and singers.

Gary Luther
President, NASB

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North American Singer's Association
Nord-Amerikanischer Sängerbund

A history of the Teutonia Männerchor

This is the second of a series of articles about the choirs that make up the North American Singers Association.

The Early 1800's – Around the early and the mid-1800's through the end of the century, there was a mass immigration from all across Europe to the United States. Many of the immigrants from Germany and other German-speaking countries came to Pennsylvania to what was then "Allegheny City" (now the North Side – just across the river from the City of Pittsburgh). So many German speakers arrived, the area became known as "Deutschtown."

IN 1851, a group was founded known as the "Liedertafel" by a group of German-American men and Reverend Karl R. Weitershausen and met at the Weitershausen Church on Canal Street.

BY 1854, the immigrants who were gathering to sing the songs of the "Heimat" and share the old experiences at the "Liedertafel" decided to form a chorus called the "Teutonia Männerchor." This was just nineteen years after the founding of the first German singing society in America – in Philadelphia.

Around 1882, the Männerchor met in Dahlingers Hall at 121 Madison Avenue and the growing membership decided that they needed a larger place to meet and sing.

IN 1888, after selling 300 "Building Shares" for \$25 each. Our present hall was completed. A "Damengesellschaft" was formed and the ladies held a dinner to help with the purchase of furnishings.

1904 — The 50th anniversary of the founding of the club was celebrated with dinners and special events and an imposing parade through the business district of *East Ohio Street*.

The World War I Years – The club participated in the *National Sängerfest* in 1914 but it was the last such event to be held until after the war. All outside events were suspended during the war, but internal functions continued. In 1918 a patriotic rally was held and a flag ceremony held to honor the members who had served in the United States Army.

Post WWI — National Sängerfest resumed, along with other club activities. The national gatherings attracted several thousand singers and were held every 3 or 4 years. The 1934 gathering was held in St. Louis. That same year, the basement was converted into an authentic German Ratskeller, look-

ing much as it does today. The last Sängerfest before the start of the war was held in Chicago in 1938. The ladies had formed the Damenchor in 1935 and made their first appearance.

The WWII Years — were difficult for the club and was a period when the club was looked upon with some suspicion, including surveillance by the FBI. The clubs tax-exempt status was not granted until after the war in 1947.

The Early Post WWII Years — saw a new influx of German immigrants to the club. Some were "war brides" of American GI's who had served in post WWII Germany. Others were individuals who came for the traditional reasons of immigrants to the U.S. They added a valuable resource that has helped the club continue and refresh its' heritage.

1954 was our 100th anniversary and was again celebrated in grand style.

In 1967, Pittsburgh hosted the National Sängerfest and opened the roof of the then new Civic Arena. Over 2,000 singers attended!

The post WWII German immigrants provided many new members anxious to revive the memories of their childhood. Many had extensive family in Germany and the club enjoyed visits from these relatives and continued contacts with the many similar singing societies still functioning in Germany. This led to visits and joint programs with these societies and bands.

The first tour of Germany by our Männerchor and Damenchor in the early 1990's resulted from these relationships and was a resounding success and led to two more such tours.

2004 was the club's 150th anniversary and was celebrated in grand style. The club received significant publicity and reached out to the public. It began with a massive cocktail party – "The Jubiläum Anfang" in January. There was entertainment continually in the Ratskeller and the Hall, with regional delicacies offered throughout the club – over 400 members attended. A formal Dinner and dance was celebrated in Pittsburgh's *Grand Hall* at the *Priory* (the converted St. Mary's German church which shared its founding date with the club – 1854). Late summer was the outdoor celebration that was the centerpiece of the year and included the

public. An enormous, steel frame tent was installed, German vendor booths and food booths were set up. And, of course, a Beer booth included German and domestic beers. Several German singing, dancing and band groups attended – as well as local area clubs. There was a full program of music, singing, dancing and eating. More than 3000 people attended and enjoyed the club.

Looking ahead to 2054 (our 200th Anniversary) and beyond, the club enjoys good membership, financial strength and growth. It's a very bright future for the Teutonia. We preserve the old German (Deutsch) traditions, staying "current" with cutting edge communications and efforts that fit today's modern lifestyle. As one member put it – "for our great grandparents and our great grandchildren." We intend to be around for many years in the future.

NASB Sängertag

Germania Männerchor will host the NASB Sängertag to be held on June 15 and 16, 2018, in Evansville, Indiana. This will be the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Sängertag; the first one was held in Evansville. We look forward to hosting the Sängertag again.

Plans are underway, but for now, we are planning to house our guests at the Tropicana Casino and Hotel along Evansville's beautiful Riverfront. The Casino may be on land by our Sängertag, but if not, the Riverboat will be available to those who feel lucky. Germania will offer a dinner on Friday night at our club with one of our two German bands.

Saturday morning, Danish, donuts, fruit, juice and coffee from 8:30am to 9:00am in the conference hall at the hotel. The NASB meeting will start at 9:00am with breaks, lunch and the afternoon session. All meetings should be completed by 3:00pm to allow you relax, try your luck at the games or stroll along the Riverfront. Dinner will be served at Germania Maennerchor. Our Maennerchor and Damenchor will perform for your pleasure on Saturday.

I hope you look forward to coming to Evansville for the Sängertag in 2018. Please make plans to visit Germania Männerchor.

Glenn Boberg
Sängertag Chair

The Milwaukee Liedertafel

1958 – 2016

The Milwaukee Liedertafel, after 158 years has gone dormant for the next months. Our longtime director, Wolfgang Calnin, relocated to Baraboo, WI and we were without a director. Our remaining 12 singers, after long consideration and many meetings, opted to sing along with other choral groups until we reorganize. The Liedertafel however, is not disbanding. Our plan is to meet in an informal manner and sing shanties and beloved folksongs, both English and German. Concerts for us are, for the time being, out of the question. We will sing at fests, senior citizen homes, and beer gardens in the future. We are seeking a director to guide us in a relaxed environment of singing and Gemütlichkeit.

We continue to make our presence known in the community!



We marched in the Germanfest parade in July and serenaded the public as we marched and sang “So ein Tag” along with other tunes. Here is a picture of the lustigen Sängers.

On September 13th, we invited the Liedertafel Ladies Auxiliary and Carl Schurz Park Ladies Auxiliary to travel with our families on a Familien Ausflug. 59 of us traveled by bus to Plain, Wisconsin and the Cedar Grove Cheese factory for a tour and cheese sampling. After a singing serenade and much cheese tasting, we journeyed to Baraboo, WI. We met up with Wolfgang and Susan Calnin, had a wonderful picnic in Ochsner Park, before going by bus to the Circus World Museum, former winter headquarters for the Ringling Brothers (Wisconsinites) and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Virgil, our tour guide, held a great discussion on the history of the Greatest Show on Earth while showing us the grounds and circus wagons. Virgil even let us ride the 1926 merry go round.

Following the Circus tour, we traveled homeward but not before stopping at Donny’s Girl Supper Club in Piepersville for a fish and chicken family style dinner.

Great fun was had by all.



Fred Helmut Buehmann

*Nord-Amerikanischer Sängerbund
Mitglied Extraordinaire*



Fred Helmut Buehmann, 93, passed away on Thursday, September 29, 2016. He was born in Dortmund, Germany. Fred served in the Calvary with the German Army in WWII; He was married in Germany on December 10, 1947 to Ursula Orligk. In 1953 they moved to Sheboygan, then Milwaukee for two before

settling in Racine in 1956. He was proud of his German heritage and spent many hours with his friends at the German Singing Society – Wisconsin Sangerbezirk. He was a member of the First Reformed Church of Racine.

Fred is survived by wife Ursula, four children, six grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. He is also survived by relatives in Germany.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, October 4th, 2016 in Racine, WI with Pastor Carey Wynn officiating. Members from Wisconsin Sängerbund sang at Helmut’s Funeral.

While Helmut was a member of Concordia, he wrote to Dr. Weidmann, then President of the Deutsche Sängerbund asking that the Zelter Plaket be awarded to American German Singing Societies and not just in Germany. This is the highest award given to singing societies by the Deutsche Sängerbund. They then awarded that honor to Gesangverein Concordia – Sheboygan. Concordia was the first singing society to receive that award in the USA. The second was awarded to the Milwaukee Liedertafel.

Helmut was recognized for his dedication promoting German song by the Deutsche Chorverband. He received the highest award that Chorverband gave to an individual for his dedication. He was the first to receive this award in the US.

Helmut was president of the Wisconsin Sängerbund for 23 years. His greatest accomplishment was starting the singing competition called Kommers. The first Kommers was held at the Croatian Hall in Sheboygan. Each society sang two songs. It was a friendly get together. Not all choral groups participated. However, after the Madison Männerchor donated a trophy for Kommers to give to the best chorus, all groups participated.

Helmut ultimately sang many years with the Männergesangverein Harmonia Kenosha prior to retiring as a passive member. In 2008, The Wisconsin Sängerbund instituted an Achievement Award bestowed annually on a worthy member of the Bezirk. Helmut was the recipient of this first award, which was given the name Helmut Buehmann Achievement Award in his honor.

We members of the Wisconsin Sängerbund will fondly remember the devotion Helmut committed to serving and singing with us.

Gary Luther
President, WSB

Greetings from Peoria ... and the 2019 Sangerfest

We know it is early but wanted to make sure you have marked your calendar for the 2019 National Sangerfest to be held on May 17, 18 and 19th, 2019. We are excited to have the opportunity to host our second National Sangerfest and thank all the delegates for selecting our fair city once again. Nothing official but I like to call this "Come Play in Peoria Part II". We already have great support from our Peoria Area Convention and Visitor's Bureau and they have offered to help us with our planning and marketing!!!

We have booked the venues for the concerts and dance and are currently working on finalizing hotel contracts. The headquarters hotel contract has been signed but there are several others available in downtown Peoria and surrounding area that need to be taken care of. In that regard it is important that we don't overbook since the contracts always include an attrition clause that requires us to pay for rooms booked and not used. I know some of the host cities have run into problems with this in prior years. So, I would like to get a contact person from each of the choruses in order to put together a group e-mail list for communicating with all of you. Nick has indicated he would send me his shortly but it

would be helpful if each chorus could send me their contact person's name, e-mail address and phone number...of course it may change over the next couple of years but it would help for initial communications. My e-mail address is dempster40@comcast.net. Thank you!!!

Members of the National Music Committee met in Peoria recently and selected all of the music for 2019. They have also graciously offered to help with any copyright permission we need and I will be following up with them in the next couple of weeks. As soon as we can get all of that done, we will be ready to go to print and hopefully have the books to you in a very timely manner.

Thanks go to Nick and all who helped with the Pittsburgh Sangerfest. We had an AWESOME time and brought back many, many fond memories. We hope everyone feels free to contact us with suggestions on making our Sangerfest an enjoyable time for all.

There is a lot more to do and please be reassured that, as soon as I have a group e-mail list put together, you will be getting regular updates from us. Thanks to everyone for your support and enthusiasm. We are very much looking forward to seeing all

of you in Peoria in 2019!!!

Mary Dempster
Debbie Hedeman
Sangerfest Co-chairs

Menhart-Pescanye Award

Willi Banzhaf is the first recipient of the of the new Menhart-Pescayne Award of Merit, presented at the 2016 Sangerfest.



Willi Banzhaf (l) and Gary Luther



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