



## Newsletter

Volume 42 Number 1

Winter 2026

### Frohe Weihnachten!

As we look forward to 2026—marking the Indiana German Heritage Society’s 42nd year—the organization again reflects on its accomplishments of 2025.

The 41st annual meeting and symposium took place in Indianapolis at the Athenaeum/Das Deutsche Haus. The symposium’s topic was **German-American Women**, with featured presentations:

**“Women as Emigrants and as Immigrants before the American Revolution”**, Marianne Wokeck PhD, Professor emerita, Indiana University Indianapolis

**“The German Backstory of the Conner Family”** Rachel Wheeler PhD, Professor, Religious Studies, Indiana University Indianapolis

**“Turnerinnen Thrive in the American Turnverein Movement”**, Holly Hamilton PhD, Indiana University, Retired

**“Katharina Schuette Pfeil: Wife, Mother, Businesswoman”**, Dolores J. Hoyt PhD, Librarian emerita, Indiana University Indianapolis

In the spring, the IGHS again awarded \$6,000 in scholarship funds to six Indiana high school students participating in approved educational programs such as the IU Honors Program in Foreign Languages in Graz. This year’s recipients were Aiden Glass, Eli Jackson, Gra-

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Indianapolis German Language School News

#### St Martin’s Day at German School

The children at the German Saturday School celebrated St. Martin’s Day recently. The younger children made their own lanterns in class and led



a small parade through the school building. This traditional holiday is still one of the favorite events for children in German-speaking countries during the cold winter months. It commemorates Saint Martin of Tours and is celebrated in the liturgical year on 11 November. St. Martin was a Roman soldier who was baptized as an adult and became

a bishop. He is best known for the legend whereby he cut his cloak in half with his sword to give one half to a beggar dressed in rags on a freezing

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### APPLY FOR AN IGHS CULTURAL ENHANCEMENT FUND GRANT

The Indiana German Heritage Society supports cultural events and exhibits in Indiana as a key part of our cultural enhancement mission to support and preserve German culture, heritage, and traditions. The IGHS cultural enhancement fund accepts applications for limited funding in line with those goals. See application form below. Next deadline is April 1, 2026. [FUND GRANT](#)

## GermanFest draws large crowds in downtown Indy By Jeff Swiatek

Thousands of visitors enjoyed traditional German music, food and other cultural offerings at the annual GermanFest in downtown Indianapolis on Oct. 4.



The IGHS took part in the festival with a vendor tent selling German-themed books, clothing and other items, while promoting Indiana's deep German heritage

with its popular exhibit Wegweiser: German Place Names in Indiana. Visitors at the IGHS booth came from several U.S. states and even from Germany and included teachers of German Robin Geisinger (Fishers High School) and Robert Kouril (Cathedral High School). This year's GermanFest featured sausage-eating and stein-holding competitions, dachshund races and live music, including by the Indianapolis Liederkrantz German band. Streets on two sides of the Athenaeum were closed to accommodate the large crowds on a sunny and warm Fall afternoon. The festival is the main fundraiser to benefit the Athenaeum, the city's landmark German cultural center.

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ham Kappock, Noah Kiang, John Loesch, and Katherine Rogers.

In May, the IGHS participated with the Nationalities Council of Indiana (NCI) in the 2025 Indianapolis 500 Parade. The International Festival, hosted by NCI, was held at the Johnson County Fairgrounds in Franklin, Indiana, where the IGHS was again a participant. This year's theme was Architecture, and the judges were impressed with the IGHS booth—earning us a first-place award! Thank you, Marcia, et al.

The IGHS became the new owner of the **Wappen von Hamburg** model ship, donated by Bruce Bollenbach of Eads, TN, which is now on display at the Athenaeum. For more information on the *Wappen von Hamburg*, please see our Summer 2025 newsletter for more information.

The Indianapolis German Language School for adults and children resumed classes at the International School of Indiana. This year, IGHS members were successful in establishing a separate 501(c)(3) organization to support and strengthen the school's long-term mission.

The German-American essay contest for high school and college students saw its highest ever number of high school participants. This year's topic was German-American media and a total of \$1,400 was awarded to several students, along with free IGHS memberships for all participants.

Our recipient of the Hoosier German-American of the Year Award was [Angelika Becker](#). She joins past winners: Kurt Vonnegut, Senator Richard Lugar, Dr. Giles Hoyt, among others. Congratulations Angelika!

The IGHS was also a sponsor of the very successful Carmel and Athenaeum Christkindlmarkts while remaining very active at the Kartoffel Puffer and Das Pretzel Haus booths.

The "Sankt Marienkirche" inscription celebration was held at St. Mary's Catholic Church in August with the Archbishop Thompson presiding over Mass. Thanks to Marjorie Kienle, Helen Small, Inge Davies, the IGHS Preservation Committee, and many others for a very special event.

Ich wünsche allen frohe Weihnachten und ein gutes neues Jahr! Thank you for being part of the Indiana German Heritage Society.

**Beste Grüße,**

**Brian Griesemer**  
**IGHS President**



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winter night. The day also celebrates the end of the harvest season. Many German cities have bonfires or a lantern parade in the evening, sometimes led

by St. Martin on horseback. The children sing songs like “St. Martin war ein guter Mann“ (St. Martin was a good man) and „Ich geh mit meiner Laterne und meine Laterne mit mir“ (I walk with my lantern and my lantern walks with me.)

Here is the text from one of these songs, illustrating the spirit of caring and helping in times of need:

1. Sankt Martin war ein guter Mann,  
der uns als Beispiel gelten kann,  
zeigte, dass Teilen Freude macht  
in jener dunklen kalten Nacht.
2. Dem Bettler half er in der Not,  
als Martin ihm den Mantel bot,  
zeigt, dass Teilen Freude macht  
in jener dunklen kalten Nacht.
3. Drum lasst uns helfen wo es geht,  
wann immer ihr die Not mal seht.  
Ihr wisst, dass Teilen Freude macht  
in jener dunklen kalten Nacht.

The following website explains these and other traditions in German-speaking countries during the winter months: [LINK](#)

See short video on WDR— [YOUTUBE](#)

## St. Nikolaus Day at German School

Following St Martin in his footsteps is another saint,

St. Nikolaus, who officially appears in person on December 6, bringing treats and small gifts to ‘good’ children and reminding the ‘naughty’ ones that his companion, Knecht Ruprecht, might be pulling out his switch if they don’t behave (or so



he pretends). Of course, the children in *Samstagsschule* have all been good so there is no need to worry. Here in Indianapolis, St. Nikolaus Day is also observed at the Carmel

Christkindlmarkt and the Athenaeum Christkindlmarkt. Polish your boots or shoes and leave them out the night of December 5, or put out a plate for Sankt Nikolaus. They will be filled the next morning with goodies such as chocolates, nuts, and citrus fruits. If you are lucky, “Nikolaus” might even drop by in person at German School.

[Jolly Old St. Nicholas: December 6th - A Whimsical Journey into Germany's St. Nicholas Day Traditions](#)

The Indianapolis German Language School (IGLS) is currently finishing up its first semester as a new 501c3. We have a board of nine, including several individuals who are also board members



of the Indiana German Heritage Society which financially and otherwise supports the school, pursuant to its mission. Al Hirt, treasurer of IGHS, also functions as treasurer of IGLS. Lucy Wright functions as president and one of the instructors, Claudia Grossmann (who has been involved with the Samstagsschule for many years through IUPUI) is a member-at-large.

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## 2025 International Festival By Marcia Gascho

The 2025 International Festival was held at the Johnson County Fairgrounds in Franklin, Indiana, November 13-15. This was the 49<sup>th</sup> International Festival sponsored by the Nationalities Council of Indiana.



For many years the Festival was held at the State Fairgrounds in Indianapolis. It was a large and well-attended event with many vendors and cultural exhibits from different organizations. Ethnic groups performed dances, instrumental music, martial

arts and other entertainment on the big stage. Large school groups visited on certain days. Kids had passports that were stamped at various countries.

The Festival was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the Pandemic. In 2022 it was held for the last time at the State Fairgrounds. By this time, I was active in the Indiana German Heritage Society and volunteered at their booth.

Since 2024, the Festival moves each year and is held at different county fairgrounds in Central Indiana. Last



year it was held at the Hancock county fairgrounds in Greenfield. It was a smaller event with fewer cultural groups participating.

This year the theme was Architecture, and our booth displayed examples of German buildings. My husband Bruce made 3D puzzles of Cologne Cathedral and Neuschwanstein. The judges were impressed, and our German booth won first place!

For me, the big highlight of the International Festival is the Parade of Nations. Representatives from each country carry a flag and everyone parades around the Festival area. The Chinese Dragon leads the parade and weaves its way around.

I love the International Festival. It represents an ideal world where people from many countries come together and coexist in harmony. Kids and adults can learn something about different cultures. I enjoy talking to many people, learning about their countries and telling them about German culture.

Next year the 50th International Festival will be held at the Hamilton County Fairgrounds in Noblesville, October 1-3. I'm really looking forward to this event.

Many thanks to IGHS members Inge, Worth, Janet and Claudia who volunteered this year!

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### Sankt Nikolaus and His Travel Companions

If you are confused about who delivers the Christmas gifts, **Karen Yoder, the German Girl in America**, sheds light on the subject.

Sometimes things get a little confusing. In the United States, kids only hear about Santa Claus. In England, it's Father Christmas. But in Germany, there are three different figures who give gifts during the Christmas Season. Let's try to clear things up.



The first holiday gift giver was St. Nicholas. My last email was devoted to him and his companions (Knecht Ruprecht, Krampus, Belsnickel, und,

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## Walter Lienert By Marcia Gascho

There is a plaque in the hallway at the Athenaeum near the gym for the Indiana Gymnastics Hall of Fame. Walter Lienert is the first name listed. He was a graduate-turned-teacher at Indiana University's Normal College who went on to become an innovator of competitive gymnastics.

Walter Lienert was born in Chicago. At the age of 6, his German-born mother took him to the Lincoln



Turners to learn gymnastics. He attended the Lincoln Turners throughout grade school and high school. After graduating from high school, he enrolled at the Normal College of the American Gymnastics Union. He dropped out of school when the U.S. entered World War II. After serving in the

war, Walter returned to the Normal College. Indiana University had taken ownership of the school located in the Athenaeum. After receiving his B.S., Walter stayed on as a physical education instructor at the Normal College. He got permission to use the gym when regular classes weren't in session to coach the Athenaeum Turners. He followed the philosophical traditions of the Turnverein of developing character through gymnastics. He started an invitational gymnastics competition that lasted many years, bringing a lot of top-ranked gymnasts to Indianapolis.

After coaching and instructing athletes to the Olympics and NCAA competitions, Lienert wrote *The Modern Girl Gymnast on the Uneven Parallel Bars* because he felt better instruction of the event needed to be available. His wife Mary illustrated the book. Lienert's key contribution to the state came when he helped to establish the Indiana State Gymnastics Championships. Following many successful years under Lienert, the state took over the competition and granted funding.

Gymnast Muriel Davis Grossfeld was coached by Lienert when she was a teenager. She qualified for and

competed at the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, Australia. He served as a gymnastics coach and judge at these Olympics.

Walter and his wife Mary purchased a 26-acre farm at 1040 West 64th Street, between Hoover Road and Grandview Drive, where they operated Lienert's Gym Camp for several decades. Many schoolchildren attended classes there. One of his students wrote: "I too have many wonderful memories of Mr. Lienert (and his wife) at Lienert's Gym Camp in my youth. We were like a family there. He was so patient with us, especially since he had coached Olympians! I also learned how to ride a horse and shoot an arrow at that camp".

Walter Lienert passed away in 2012 at the age of 87.



### Oh what a (first) night! Jasper Deutscher Verein

Sunday, November 2, saw hundreds of visitors descend upon Ferdinand for First Night — when the town's brand new Christmas Pyramid was lit for the very first time, following a blessing by Christ the King Catholic Church pastor Father Riji George. Members of the Jasper Deutsche Verein paraded in prior to the dedication with flags representing all 16 German states. St. Ferdinand Church Choir performed songs and welcomes were issued by Ferdinand Tourism members Lauren Blume and Lori Klem, with a heart-felt speech by commission member Diane

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**Celebrate Your  
German Heritage!  
Join the Indiana German  
Heritage Society and  
Belong Today!**



SPRING 2026

# DEUTSCHE SAMSTAGSSCHULE

German Language and Culture School  
Native / Fluent Instructors  
Welcoming Community



Registration closes January 10

## PRE-K - 8TH SCHEDULE

Saturdays 9:30-12  
January 24 - May 16  
(No school 2/14, 3/28 & 4/4)  
\$250 Per Student

### Family Discount

2 Students \$375 | 3 Students \$450

## ADULT CLASSES FEB-MAY

Saturdays 10-11:30, Dates TBD  
Beginner II - 6 Lessons - \$120  
Mini Course - 4 Lessons - \$100



Classes are held at:  
International School of  
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4330 N Michigan Rd  
Indianapolis, IN 46208

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[indianapolisgerlangschool@gmail.com](mailto:indianapolisgerlangschool@gmail.com) | [IGHS.ORG](http://IGHS.ORG)

**Weihnachtsstollen –  
German Fruited Sweet Bread  
By Inge Davies**

**High School Essay**

**German Influence on Milwaukee  
By Ryan Sharp  
Carmel High School**

Ingredients for setting yeast batter:

- ½ cup milk
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 package active dry yeast
- ¼ cup warm water
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten

Remaining ingredients:

- ½ cup soft butter
- ¼ cup seedless raisins
- ¼ cup currants
- ¼ cup finely cut candied cherries
- ¼ cup finely cut candid citron
- grated rind of 1 lemon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon rum extract
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- ½ cup finely chopped almonds
- 1 – 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- melted butter (about ¼ cup)
- confectioner's sugar for dusting

How to make:

- Set yeast batter with first 7 ingredients.
- Add the next 11 ingredients (butter, fruits, nuts, seasoning, and flour), mixing with spoon or hand until sides of bowl are clean. This is a soft dough.
- Knead dough lightly on floured surface or board, 20-30 strokes, or until smooth and elastic.
- Place dough in greased bowl. Cover and let rise until double in size, about 1 hour.
- Punch down dough and shape into ball.
- Place on greased cookie sheet and roll or pat into oval, ¾ inch thick.
- Brush with melted butter.
- Make lengthwise crease down center of dough, fold over.
- Brush with melted butter.
- Cover with waxed paper and dry cloth.
- Let rise in warm place for about 45 minutes.
- Bake Stollen in moderate oven at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes, or until golden brown.
- While still warm, brush with melted butter and dust with confectioner's sugar.



By 1851 much of the revolutionary fervor which spread across the German confederation the previous years had been quelled. While initially seeing success in their goals to increase suffrage, fight for a unified Germany, and end the political censorship that had plagued Europe during the conservative rule following the Napoleonic war, much of the changes the liberals introduced had been reversed. The division between the middle class liberals and the socialist lower class allowed for the aristocracy to regain nearly all of their power, leading to the political persecution of nearly all of those

involved within the German revolutions in 1848. However, 4,348 miles away from Berlin, across the Atlantic and into the heartland of America, a new opportunity emerged, an opportunity for German liberals to flee persecution and reside in a country which had already embraced many of the exact reforms they had been fighting for. Many of these Germans would pick up their families and whatever money they had left and move to Milwaukee, Wisc., on the shores of Lake Michigan, whose city government in 1846 had just elected its first mayor. Here, German immigrants would shape the small town and turn it into a metropolis with over half a million people aptly named “*das Deutscher Athen.*” Namely, German immigrants and their descendants would shape the city through their influence in politics and culture, all while remaining true to their heritage as German-Americans.

German-Americans, despite being diverse in their religion and socioeconomic status, would help define politics in Milwaukee. Many German immigrants during

*(Continued on page 11)*

# Visit the Legendary “Christmas Toy Village” of Seiffen, Germany & So Much More!

- Carmel, Indiana’s Sister City -

Prague - Gornitz - Dresden - Seiffen  
Leipzig - Bamberg - Nuremberg - Munich



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**Seiffen & The Christmas  
Markets Origins Tour!**  
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- Visit Toy Workshops & Demos.
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- 10-Day Guided Motorcoach Tour.
- Details at [www.BEERMBA.com!](http://www.BEERMBA.com)

## IGHS ANNUAL MEETING AND SYMPOSIUM

**JASPER, INDIANA**

**DATE: MARCH 14 & 15  
2026**



See [ighs.org](http://ighs.org)



Last month, The International Center and the Indiana Germanic Business Council organized and led a 32-person delegation to foster government and business connections between central Indiana and Berlin. The Delegation represented a variety of Indiana-based organizations, including the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Indy Chamber, Indy Partnership, BNutty Gourmet Peanut Butter, Sports Tech HQ, City of Westfield, Madison County Economic Development, Indy Economic Development Inc., Indiana University, Indiana University Alumni Association, RSM, Indiana Soybean Alliance, Cox Farms, City of Shelbyville, and RATIO. During the trip, delegates met with governmental, business, academic, and innovation leaders to advance transatlantic cooperation in sports, economic development, technology, and international engagement.

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Hoppenjans who was seeing her vision turned into a reality with the Christkind Angel welcoming all with song and the pyramid lit in all its glory. Be sure to visit and see this newest addition to the season, located between 11th and 12th Streets, adjacent to the Wollenmann House/Bistro. On Friday evening Nov. 14 the Christkindl welcomed all to the markt in a ceremony on the west-facing hill of Monastery Immaculate Conception.

**32 Ft. tall German-made Christmas Pyramid  
a new addition to the holiday season**

Ferdinand’s new holiday feature, a German-made Christmas Pyramid, is the fourth U.S. outdoor pyramid to be built by Ergzebergische Holzkunst Gahlenz of Germany. Showcasing the town’s rich German heritage throughout the Christmas

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## Indianapolis parish with German roots marks 150 years of faith

By Sean Gallagher

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Indianapolis has its roots in the large number of German Catholic immigrants who settled in a neighborhood on the near southside of the city in the second half of the 19th century.

To serve their pastoral needs, Bishop Maurice de Saint Palais founded the parish in 1875 and arranged to have Franciscan friars based in St. Louis—themselves German immigrants—to minister there.

The parish grew quickly. Within three years of its founding, the parish had built a school, which soon had to be enlarged multiple times.



An archive photo dating from 1928 shows the campus of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Indianapolis. The 165-foot tall twin steeples continue today to dominate the skyline of the near southside of the city. (Submitted archive photo from The Indiana Album)

But what symbolized the rapid growth and strength of the parish was its large Late Gothic Revival church, completed in 1891, with its twin 165-foot steeples,

which continue to dominate the skyline of Indianapolis' near southside 150 years after the parish's founding.

During the second half of the 20th century, the parish and neighborhood around it declined from their earlier glories as many families moved away from the near southside.

But Sacred Heart Parish remained through it all, even in the face of a destructive electrical fire in 2001 that gutted much of the interior of the parish church.

The church and its glorious sacred art featuring stained-glass windows, paintings and wood-carved altars, all emblematic of German old-world craftsmanship, were able to be restored. Similarly, throughout the past decade or so, the neighborhood around the parish and the parish community have seen their own revival.

People are moving back into the neighborhood. Old homes are being restored. And Sacred Heart Parish is being filled with new life and new parishioners, including a number of young families who come to it from near and far.

Both new and longtime parishioners came together on the weekend of Sept. 20-21 to celebrate Sacred Heart's first 150 years, a celebration which was also an expression of their hopes for the future of the parish.

Remaining article can be found at the following [link](#).



IGHS board representatives enjoying the Carmel Christkindlmarkt Wundernacht!



**Today is a good time  
to renew your  
IGHS membership**

# IGHS Study Abroad Scholarships 2026 for Indiana High School Students

The Indiana German Heritage Society (IGHS) provides scholarships for Indiana high school students participating in an official and approved educational program in a German-speaking country. Applications are accepted from students participating in programs such as I.U. Honors Program in Graz, or the German American Partnership Program (GAPP).

Scholarship levels are up to \$ 1,000 for programs lasting 5 weeks or longer and up to \$ 500 for short-term programs, such as a GAPP exchange.

Eligibility criteria and application information are listed on the IGHS website and include the following: program description, statement of purpose, letter of recommendation, and a short biography.

Sponsored students agree to either make a presentation to IGHS at a “Stammtisch” program or similar event in Indianapolis (whenever feasible) or write a short article for the IGHS Newsletter.

**Deadline: February 17, 2026**

For questions please contact Dr. Claudia Grossmann, Co-Chair, IGHS Education Committee, at [cgrossma@iu.edu](mailto:cgrossma@iu.edu). Applications must be submitted to [ighsmembership@gmail.com](mailto:ighsmembership@gmail.com). Please put “IGHS Scholarship Application” in the subject line and address your application to: Mr. Brian Griesemer, Indiana German Heritage Society— President.



★  
*Kulturecke*

**Presented by the Indiana  
German Heritage Society**

*Indiana German Heritage Society Newsletter*

## High School Essay

Logan Bailey  
Terre Haute North Vigo High School

### Snowflakes & Heartaches - Jasper Indiana & Loving Heritage

It was like a snowstorm. Thousands of beautiful tiny snowflakes, blowing through the wind. While they fell to the ground, they found themselves happy to be *snow*— however, Summer rolled in— and all the snow melted. The Summer was rough, it was hot, and the snowflakes couldn't handle the heat. But as their bodies faded, their memory wouldn't, and come next Winter... the snowflakes had arrived once again. This story relates heavily to the story of Jasper Indiana, a wonderful town where German culture flourishes today, but it wasn't always that way.

Circa ~1830, a small group in Germany began to trust in a new future together and decided to all emigrate to America. This emigration was due to the conditions of Germany at the time, suffering due to the after effects of the Thirty Years' War that left the country stained in blood over religious woes, many farmers living in poverty, and having massive land shortages, they had plenty of reasons to find a new home. As they settled into their new homes, Father Joseph Kundek of the St. Joseph's Parish in Jasper prompted a wave of immigration by advertising hot spots of the German Triangle like Cincinnati and Louisville. The floodgates were opened, and as the Jasper locals say, the Germans *flew in like Snowflakes*. The Germans kept with them their religious values, customs, and every other facet of life. They built schools, libraries, and churches which fueled the community in Jasper. While their contributions to their community were extraordinary, that wouldn't change the wave of German hatred that spread across the United States as World War 1 struck the world. They were forced to take German out of school curriculums, even though they were the ones who *built* the

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the first wave of immigration were staunch Democrats, as the Democrats were more sympathetic to the struggles of white immigrants than the anti-immigrant Whigs and Know-Nothing parties. Despite falling neatly into American party lines, however, future immigrants to the city would more drastically shape American politics. Early German immigrants were particularly interested in increasing suffrage for all. Franz Hübschmann, physicist and early influential German democrat, became a champion for suffrage for all immigrant men, which would be codified into the Wisconsin state constitution in 1848. German immigrants from the first wave of immigration following the revolutions of 1848 also played a role in the early fight for women's suffrage. This was best seen with the work of Mathilde Franziska Anneke, who published the first feminist newspaper in the United States, the *Deutsche-Frauen Zeitung*, and, as the name suggests, all of the newspaper's publications were in German. Later German immigrants to the city would help found new political movements while also fighting against prejudiced, Anglo-American state laws. German immigrants successfully lobbied to repeal the Bennett Law, which required all schools to use English as the only language of instruction, allowing for German students to learn in their mother tongue. Austrian immigrant Victor Berger founded the Social Democratic Party of Milwaukee, primarily marketing it to other immigrants of German heritage. One of the party's members, Emil Seidel, the son of two German immigrants, would later become the first socialist mayor of an American city. Throughout the history of Milwaukee, German immigrants influenced both the politics of the city and the country at large, highlighting the shifts in political views over time.

German immigrants to Milwaukee embodied a unique entrepreneurial spirit that would shape the culture of the city even to this modern day. One of the greatest examples of German-American's cultural impact is with the brewing industry. By 1860- thirty-five breweries were established, a majority of which were established by German immigrants. Many of

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The *Samstagsschule* strives to involve children ages four – middle school in an educational setting that combines language instruction with hands-on experience of German cultural traditions such as *Oktoberfest*, German-American Day, St. Martin's Day and St. Nikolaus Day in the fall and *Karneval* and *Maifest* in the spring.

The Spring semester of 2026 will begin on **January 24** and consist of 14 Saturdays for children and 6-8 Saturdays for adult learners. Please refer to our website for detailed information on dates, fees, and how to register. Classes are held on the campus of the International School of Indiana, at 4330 N. Michigan Rd., Indianapolis. Children's classes meet from 9.30 am to noon, adults meet from 10-11.30 am. IGHS members receive a **10% discount** on tuition.

Donations are welcomed and can be submitted by check to **IGLS**, 401 E. Michigan St., Indianapolis, IN 46204, to the attention of **Al Hirt**, Treasurer.

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## Danke Sehr to All of Our 2025 Donors!!!

**Kaiser \$2500+** - None

**Adler Level** (\$1000 - \$2500): Rev. Arthur Schwenk and Gerhard Klemm

**Eiche Level** (\$501 - \$999): William Waldschmidt

**Dirndl Level** (\$251 - \$500): Eli Lilly and Company Foundation, Claudia Grossmann

**Lederhosen Level** (\$1 - \$250): Theodore Blumenberg, Rocio Carrasco, James Crouse, Ingeburg Davies, Myrna DeAgostino, Keith Ecker, Roger Franke, Marcia Gascho, Patricia Goepfrich, Brian Griesemer and Heather Hansson, Worth Hartman, Al and Dee Hirt, Travis and Amy Jerde, Sharon Kennedy, Marjorie Kienle, Solomon Rust, Ed Schoenfelt, Robert Schweitzer, Ken Selking, Bill and Laura Selm, Mary Leah Siegel, Jeff Swiatek, and Randy Studt.

Corporate  
Donors:



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und, und...). He comes on the night of December 5 and fills shoes with treats, so that on the morning of December 6, children find them. For a refresher, you can learn more about him here-> [St Nicholas](#)

Then, when the Protestant Reformation came, Martin Luther felt that having a Saint deliver presents wasn't really in line with the new thinking. (However, and this isn't a historical fact, it's just based on my experiences as a parent, taking a celebration away from kids could be hazardous to family harmony.) Luther suggested that the Christkind, or Christ Child, should deliver the gifts. And! They would come on December 24, the eve of Christ's birthday. Over the years, the Christkind changed from an infant to a girl in white and then in golden robes. Learn more about the Christkind here - [Christkind](#)

In the 19th century, the "trendsetting Bourgeoisie" of Germany was stepping away from the formal church. They adopted the Weihnachtsmann as a non-secular gift-giver. (Again, you can change your beliefs, but it's not a great idea to take away a gift-giving celebration from children if you want peace in the house.) The Weihnachtsmann is closest to the American Santa Claus, who appeared around the same time. Thomas Nast, a German immigrant, drew Santa based on childhood memories of Belsnickel. He just twisted things around a bit by incorporating the Clemens Clark Moore "Visit from St Nicholas" poem with a twist of Washington Irving's story called "Knickerbocker's History of New York," which featured a jolly St Nicholas figure called Sankte Claus, who dropped gifts down the church's chimney. Find out more about the Weihnachtsmann and the history of Santa Claus here- [Weihnachtsmann](#)

I realize things can get tangled up, especially if you come from a German tradition and marry someone with an American Santa Claus tradition. I don't have all the answers, but I do have some examples on how to combine the traditions to make them work for your family.-> [Combining Christmas Traditions](#)

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schools in the first place! Their last names were essentially forced to be anglicized—lest they wanted to invite anymore bullying and hate to be put on them daily by other members of their community. They did not want to be suspected of being anything even remotely related to *German*, it was taboo to even discuss the subject in a slightly positive light in that day. Jasper Weekly Courier itself reported on a terrible set of incidents from Cincinnati after propaganda appeared depicting dachshunds as a symbol of German ideology being chased by a British bulldog, which led to boys siccing their own dogs on the poor defenseless dachshunds. The dog breed went from being in the top 10 of the country, to only being survived by *12 dogs* in 1919. This period in history essentially erased the German heritage that had long since built not only Jasper, but many other cities in and around the German Triangle.

Fast forward to a better time in history, we see today that German culture is celebrated all around Jasper. What changed in between the years of harsh treatment and the resurgence? Well a lot of the work can be credited to the Jasper German Club or Deutscher Verein. They helped the preservation of German heritage throughout the years, and were a major player in reclaiming the lost meaning of their ancestors' culture. This club was a very important part of getting closer with Pfaffenweiler, the Sister City of Jasper. Pfaffenweiler was very historically significant to Jasper, as in 1846 a certain set of Pfaffenweiler residents would end up immigrating to America and end up in the Jasper area. While they weren't all of them, they were seemingly a major set of the residents, many were even able to trace their own origins back to families from Pfaffenweiler. They've been able to make sure the heritage is kept alive through various festivals and events. They called America "Das Land Der Unbegrenzten Möglichkeiten" or the "Land of Unlimited Opportunities." 138 years after they first got there, they were finally able to rejoin Jasper and Pfaffenweiler, be-

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season, it will stand on a raised knoll of land north of the Historic Wollenmann Home on Main Street in Ferdinand throughout the Christmas season, enhancing the holiday spirit displayed at Ferdinand's annual Ferdinand Christkindlmarkt and beyond. Known in Germany as Weihnachtspyramiden, these traditional decorations have roots in the Ergzgebirge region of Germany and feature rotating scenes of Christmas and everyday life.

Ferdinand's Christmas pyramid features 4 tiers on top of a gazebo. Displaying traditional figures carved in Germany such as the Nativity scene and angels trumpeting, historical figures will also be showcased



and will serve as a festive celebration of the town's history, its German heritage, and the holiday season. An audio presentation, available by way of a QR code, will share the story of how a missionary priest from Croatia came to found the town in 1840 hoping to establish a German Catholic community in the

primeval forest of southern Indiana.

With loads of Christmas spirit, local shops offering unique gifts and personalized shopping, warm and inviting dining experiences, custom kraft breweries, and historic sites to visit, discover Ferdinand and Dubois County in Southern Indiana for a special holiday experience.

The Christmas Pyramid will stand from [November 2 – January 2](#) for all to enjoy!



Indiana Chapter of Palatines to America  
German Genealogy Society



Winter Collaborative Learning Series

### Using Artificial Intelligence in Genealogy

Saturday, February 7, 2026  
10 am-12 pm (Eastern Time) on Zoom only

Free to All

10 am - 11 am General Introduction to AI and Genealogical Uses  
by Patty Wiseman with time for sharing

11 am -12 pm Putting it All Together: Research Planning and Projects  
Using AI by Andrea Ackermann with time for sharing



Curious about AI in Genealogy?

No experience necessary, let's learn together!



Email [Indianapalam@gmail.com](mailto:Indianapalam@gmail.com) with CLS in the subject line to register.  
Please include any useful AI resources in your email to be shared.

(Continued from page 12)

Finally, because I know how hearing familiar German words can bring the holidays home, here is a list of Churches that offer a Christmas Worship Service in German. The list gets shorter every year. Note that some take place earlier in December! A number of the churches will say TBD beside them, which means they've had one in the past, but there is nothing currently on their website. It might help to call and give them a nudge if you are a local and would like them to continue the tradition. Please let me know if I've missed your church, and I will add it. -> [German Christmas Services](#)



(Continued from page 12)

coming Sister Cities.

Another part of the culture of Jasper involves the various German attractions and events that celebrate the culture. The Schnitzelbank is a very nice restaurant that is very themed after German culture and has meals that reflect that. Having been there myself as the author, I can confirm that the food is up to snuff. The staff even informed us that the recipes have been passed down throughout generations of Germans living there, and while it may just be a tall-tale, I would rather believe that Jasper's infamous preservation of what they love prevails. On the other side of the spectrum, you can see the Jasper Strassenfest which incorporates the Schnitzelbank as a sponsor and it goes like a classic German *festtag* should, with lederhosen, dirndls, and a lot of beer! Looking at history, you can go to the Dubois County Museum, which hosts tours and showcases German history in Jasper and they actually popularized the Snowflake analogy used at the start of this Essay. They showcase olden machines, uniforms, paintings, and even a whole recreation of town underneath the museum! This all shows how dedicated and loving the town is of their roots.

After all of the hardship and struggle Germans had to face, being one of the biggest minority groups in America— they can finally thrive across the US, not just even in Jasper. While Jasper today is proud of who they are, we must remember the history that brought them here, and make sure that we never forget our roots. While summer will roll in, and you will sweat, you will feel the heat on your skin— but then there *will* be Winter. Winter will come eventually. Then once the Winter arrives... the snowflakes will fall once again.

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these breweries, such as the ones owned by Frederick Pabst, specialized in traditional German lagers and ales. The tradition of brewing would define Milwaukee in later years. Nowadays, Milwaukee has the nickname of “Brew city” and the baseball team there is called “the Milwaukee Brewers.” In addition to brew-

ing, Milwaukee's German population made incredible contributions to the city's architecture. Architect Henry Koch, originally from Hanover, is the best example of this. Koch designed the Milwaukee City Hall in 1895 based on the Hamburg Rathaus. He also designed Turner Hall (also known as the *Tullverein*) and Pfister Hotel, both of which were common meeting grounds for the city's German population. Milwaukee also gained the moniker “the city of festivals” due to the frequent festivals the German population would put on, filled with traditional singing and dancing, along with sports matches and heavy drinking. Some of the most notable of these festivals include the Volksfest of 1852 and the 1886 Sangerfest. Members of the German community also put on plays in their mother tongue, most notably being plays of William Tell in Pabst Theater. Overall, German Americans decorated Milwaukee with their entrepreneurial spirit and lively and unabashed celebrations of their culture, which was seen through their commitment to traditional festivals, architecture and literature.

German-Americans were able to transform the city of Milwaukee from a small town on the shores of Lake Michigan into one of the country's largest cities with a thriving arts and business scene, showcased through the brewing culture, festivals, and German-influenced architecture which resonated throughout the city. While transforming the culture of Milwaukee, German Americans were able to stand up for their beliefs and advocated for drastic and progressive reforms, using the freedom of speech many lacked in their homeland to make their lives in the new world better for them and generations to come. Milwaukee, while thousands of miles away from Germany, is a unique blend of American and German culture, and perhaps that is why many current residents of the city are proud to call it their home.





## Auf Deutsch By Ingeburg Davies

### Morgen kommt der Weihnachtsmann

With Christmas fast approaching, this Newsletter's **Auf Deutsch** submission introduces a popular children's song with an interesting text and history and a very easy, well-known, familiar melody: It is sung with the tune of **Twinkle, twinkle, little star**.

The original text is by Hoffmann von Fallersleben (1798-1874) who composed the song in 1835 and gave it the title "Der Weihnachtsmann." Here is a child, likely a boy, eagerly anticipating the gifts which he hopes Santa Claus will bring. Those wished-for-gifts are a curious mix of toy weapons and animals, reminiscent of the Nutcracker, but not so much of celebrating the birth of Christ, unless we accept that Ross und Esel, Schaf und Stier represent the animals of a traditional manger.

## Auf Deutsch

- Morgen kommt der Weihnachtsmann,  
Komm mit seinen Gaben.  
Trommel, Pfeife und Gewehr,  
Fahn' und Säbel und noch mehr,  
Ja, ein ganzes Kriegesheer  
Möcht' ich gerne haben..
- Bring uns, lieber Weihnachtsmann,  
Bring auch morgen, bringe  
Musketier und Grenadier,  
Zottelbär und Pantertier,  
Ross und Esel, Schaf und Stier,  
Lauter schöne Dinge.
- Doch du weißt ja unsern Wunsch,  
Kennest unsere Herzen.  
Alle, alle sind wir da
- Doch du weißt ja unsern Wunsch,  
Kennest unsere Herzen.  
Kinder, Vater und Mama,  
Auch sogar der Großpapa,  
Alle, alle sind wir da,  
Warten dein mit Schmerzen.

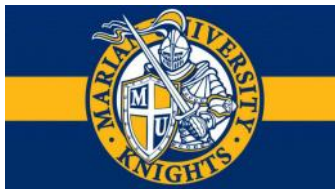
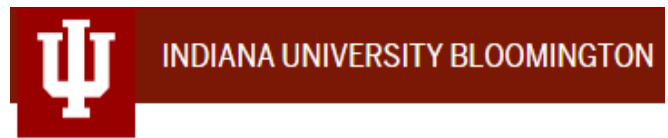
## In English

- Tomorrow Santa comes  
Comes with his gifts  
Drum, pipe and gun  
Flag and saber and a lot more  
Yes a whole war's army  
I'd like to have
- Bring us, dear Santa,  
Bring us tomorrow too, bring  
Musketeer and grenadier,  
Shaggy bear and panther  
Horse and donky, sheep and bull  
Lots of beautiful things
- After all you know our wish  
Know all of our hearts  
All, all of us are there
- After all you know our wish  
Know all of our hearts  
Child, father and mother  
And even the grandfather  
All, all of us are there  
Awaiting you with pain

## After WWII

- Morgen kommt der Weihnachtsmann,  
kommt mit seinen Gaben
- Bunte Lichter, Silberzier,
- Kind und Krippe, Schaf und Stier,  
Zottelbär und Pantherier möcht' ich gerne haben.
- Bring uns lieber Weihnachtsmann,  
bring auch morgen, bringe
- eine schöne Eisenbahn,
- Bauernhof mit Huhn und Hahn,
- einen Pfefferkuchenmann,  
lauter schöne Dinge.
- Doch du weißt ja unsern Wunsch,  
kennst ja unsre Herzen.
- Kinder Vater und Mama, auch sogar der Großpapa, voller  
Freude stehn wir da, zünden an die Kerzen.
- Tomorrow comes Santa Claus  
coming with his gifts:
- Colorful lights, silverly stuff
- Child and manger, sheep and oxen
- Shaggy bear and panther animal,  
That's what I would like to have.
- Bring to us, dear Santa Claus
- Bring tomorrow bring to us
- A beautiful train,
- A farm with chicken and rooster,
- A gingerbread man,  
All those beautiful things.
- But, you well know what we are wishing for you know  
our hearts.
- Children, father and mother and even the grandfather,  
full of joy we are standing here, lighting all the candles.

# Indiana Universities and Colleges offering majors or minors in German!



## NCSA Literatur

The publishing arm of the Indiana German Heritage Society, the Max Kade Center for German-American Studies at IUPUI, and the Irvington Historical Society

### Learn More About Your German History & Heritage



### Search Amazon BOOKS for “NCSA Literatur”

#### Indiana German Heritage Society Mission:

The mission of the IGHS is to understand, promote, and celebrate the contributions of German-speaking immigrants and their descendants to the multi-cultural heritage of the state and the nation.

We are guided by a commitment to learn and an obligation to share our knowledge with accuracy, integrity, and respect for all heritages.

#### Indiana German Heritage Society Vision:

The vision of the Indiana German Heritage Society is to be the catalyst for the preservation and celebration of the state’s German-American heritage, and to support groups and communities in activities that coincide with our mission.





# Indiana German Heritage Society

## Hoosier German - American Of The Year

### Nominations Sought for 2026 Hoosier German-American of the Year

Each fall, the IGHS recognizes an individual or group who has made a significant contribution to the cultural and historical heritage of the Hoosier German-American community. This individual or group must have been active in the German-American Community of their area for a minimum of 10 years.

Nominations are now being accepted from the entire IGHS membership for The Hoosier German-American of the Year for 2026.

Please send us the name of the individual or group you would like to nominate for this prestigious award. Be sure to include an explanation of why you believe that this individual or group should be chosen to receive this award. Please send your name, address, telephone number, and email address along with your nomination to:

IGHS Awards Committee  
401 E. Michigan Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
or email to: [ighsmembership@gmail.com](mailto:ighsmembership@gmail.com)  
**Nominations are due by August 1**

The award will be presented at the German-American Day presentation held in October at the Athenaeum German Fest, with proclamations by the Governor and the Mayor. The recipient will receive a plaque and the recipient's name will be permanently displayed at the Deutsche Haus/Athenaeum.

For information pertaining to the requirements for Annual Hoosier-German American Award please go to [LINK](#)



### PAST RECIPIENTS OF THE IGHS HOOSIER GERMAN-AMERICAN AWARD:

- 2007 Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.
- 2008 Dr. Carl Sputh
- 2009 Dr. Eberhard Reichmann
- 2010 Reverend Arthur Schwenk
- 2011 Professor Ron Warner
- 2012 Hon. Senator Richard Lugar
- 2013 Dr. Ruth Reichmann
- 2014 Jürgen Jungbauer
- 2015 Othmar Grueninger
- 2016 Dr. Giles Hoyt
- 2017 Matthias Hilger
- 2018 Sven Schumacher
- 2019 William Selm
- 2020 Friends of Wyneken, Inc.
- 2021 Dr. Claudia Grossmann
- 2022 Indianapolis Liederkrantz
- 2023 Gerhard Klemm
- 2024 Patricia Goepfrich and  
Jasper Deutscher Verein
- 2025 Angelika Becker





# Indiana German Heritage Society

## Membership Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please enter / renew my membership:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20.00                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Business \$100.00     | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25.00   | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit \$50.00    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time Student \$5.00<br>(with teacher's signature) | <input type="checkbox"/> Library Rate \$15.00  |  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> German Teacher \$5.00 |  |

Second person for family membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive the IGHS Newsletter:  E-Mail  US Mail

Specific Interests:

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Family                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Community       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Genealogy                | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Exchanges /<br>Sister Cities | <input type="checkbox"/> General                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious             |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> German Language Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Materials    |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> History                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Traditions & Folklore |

Knowledge of German Language:  None  Some  Fluent

Knowledge of Old German Script (Sütterlin):  None  Some  Good

I am willing to help with activities (Circle one): Yes No

I wish to make an additional tax-deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

This is a gift membership. Name of person providing gift membership:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: **Indiana German Heritage Society**. Send your membership form and payment to Indiana German Heritage Society, Membership Chair, 401 East Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204.

To join or renew online, go to [IGHS.org](http://IGHS.org)!





# INDIANA GERMAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE CALENDAR



## STAMMTISCH AND PROGRAMS

Future STAMMTISCH and PROGRAMMING will be posted on [ighs.org](http://ighs.org) and in next newsletter

All Stammtisch programs are presented in English, are free of charge, and are open to everyone. The programs begin at 7:30 PM. Most programs are offered both in person or via Zoom. (see [ighs.org](http://ighs.org))

Registration is required for all Zoom events. Use the links in sent emails to register in advance for each program. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.



### Karneval Returns February 7, 2026 at the Athenaeum



### IGHS Annual Meeting and Symposium in Jasper, IN—March 14 & 15, 2026



### IGLS Spring Semester for Children and Adults begins January 24, 2026



*Did You Miss One of Our  
Stammtisch  
Presentations?  
Or Do You Just Want to  
Hear One Again?  
Now you can!  
[CLICK HERE](#)*

**Estate Planning?**  
**Please consider IGHS**  
**[CLICK HERE](#)**  
**Dankeschön**

**Indiana German Heritage Society**  
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Indianapolis, IN 46204

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