



U.G.A.S.F.



DER BOTSCHAFTER



Issue 6/2019



A NOTE OF THANKS.....

TO Marty Grum, who has been the “official” editor of the UGASF newsletter, DER BOTSCHAFTER for many years. After all of this time, Marty has decided to “retire” and to collect his pension checks!! Marty, on behalf of the Board and all member clubs, THANK YOU for all your hard work and many dedicated hours which you spent on behalf of UGASF.

Now about UGASF: We believe that there are many new members in German American Clubs who have absolutely no idea what U.G.A.S.F. stands for, who and when this organization was founded, some of its past history and some of the future aims. Here is very short history and pertinent information:

During the early years of the 1980s, *Gerda Des Jardin* of the Pinellas Park proposed the idea of founding an *umbrella organization* encompassing all of the German-American Clubs of Florida. Due to lack of support, the idea died.

In November 1990 *John Lange*, president of the Palm Beaches American German Club, invited the presidents of Casselberry (*Heinz Ölker*), Cape Coral (*Klaus Kohl*), Daytona Beach (*Fritz Eggerts*) and Miami (*Hannelore Crothers*) to the Palm Beaches with the thought of founding an ‘umbrella’ organization which hopefully would eventually include all the German-American Clubs of Florida.

Several Meetings followed. During which time the ground rules were worked out for a set of By-Laws and a State Charter. On April 13, 1991, ten clubs attended the first General Membership Meeting in Miami; officers were elected and *John Lange* became the first official president. On September 24, 1991, the Articles of Incorporation and the Charter were submitted, approved and sealed by the State.

At the September 1991 meeting Chris Schwärzle of Port St Lucie made a motion, that the United German-American Society of Florida (UGASF) celebrate its first Florida German-American Heritage Day on April 11, 1992. The Miami club was selected to host this first-ever event in Florida. Annual Heritage Day events followed at the Palm Beaches, Central Florida, and Cape Coral and in 1996 amid heavy rain storms in the Osceola Agricultural Center. By this time there were twenty-seven member clubs and *Inge Denys*, president of Central Florida rose to the occasion (as usual) and offered to cook for a packed house. By 1997 a larger facility was needed, and the organization was financially able to host this event in the St. Petersburg Coliseum.

UGASF is a not-for-profit organization. The Corporation is organized and shall be operated for the purposes of:

- promoting German customs and traditions by unifying member German-American clubs in the State of Florida;
- by furthering communications and cooperation among member organizations;
- by representing member organizations on a State and National level.

The purposes shall include but not be limited to the collection and dissemination or presentation of educational materials and programs to its members and the general public about German music, dance, folklore, art, language and other customs and traditions.

In 1992 officers and members of UGASF took part in the 35th annual New York German-American Steuben Parade held on the famous Fifth Avenue at the request of the Honorary Chairman, *Willie Schoeps*. Our UGASF banner had been completed shortly prior to the parade and was dedicated at this event.

In an effort to promote and preserve the German language and culture, in the past UGASF awarded \$1000 scholarships to FL High School students who had excelled in the study of the German language and were registered to continue their studies of the German language at an accredited college or university.

During the years we had performances by *Bekannte Künstler von der alten Heimat* as well as a guest performance by the *Rheinischer Gesangverein from Chicago*. Also featured were combined choruses, folk and Schuhplattler dancers from various Florida German American clubs.

The year 2009 marked the 60th Anniversary of the Berlin Air Lift. Local veterans and their spouses were invited to attend; however, due to various reasons, only fifteen veterans were able to attend. Norma Henning, Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany, made the presentations.

In 2014, at the 65th Anniversary of the Berlin Air Lift, the veterans and spouses were again invited to come to the event which was held in Cape Coral. Unfortunately, the group had gotten smaller and only about eight were able to attend.

Since its founding, the past presidents are: *Fritz Eggerts, John Lange, Klaus Kohl, Hannelore Crothers, Bud Schmitt, Uwe Kellner and Kurt Nolden*.

NOW it is time to move on to the future...YOUR Board is presently working diligently on locating a facility where we will hold our 2020 HERITAGE DAY EVENT. We wish to reach out to all the member clubs for suggestions.

Do you have young members in your club? We realize that not all clubs have younger members, but if you are one of the lucky ones, reach out to these members for some concrete ideas for: Facility – Entertainment – Bands – Meals

In 2020 we will be hosting our twenty-seventh Heritage Day event. Let's all work together by submitting some good suggestions to make this a successful event.

PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUR MEMBERS TO CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: UGASFLORIDA.ORG

If you find a error, please notify us.

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