

From The Desk of The President

This letter has been a little long in coming to you our member clubs of UGASF. I am hoping that all of your club members are well, and your clubs are enjoying our German Culture and Heritage

The past three years after the COVID pandemic have been very difficult years for our many member clubs which then has had a rather great impact on your UGASF Organization. Over the past three years we have had several clubs retire their charters and dissolve their respective clubs. Other clubs have been struggling to “Hang In There” as one would say and I am happy to report that all clubs at this time are surviving and enjoying their German Heritage and Culture.

*After the COVID crisis your Boards commitment to you the Member Clubs remained the same: **“to provide the necessary support to you the member clubs.”** Your Board has worked very hard over the last three years to **“keep the UGASF Organization alive and moving forward”** although your Boards choices were limited. It is in this aspect that your Board undertook the following:*

- i) review and reevaluate the fundamental principles of why UGASF was originally founded*
- ii) undertook and upgraded the new UGASF Website which I am somewhat saddened to see not many of our clubs are posting their events to*
- iii) undertook a review of how to make our Annual Heritage Day better and to bring it back online.*

In this time frame your UGASF Board was meeting to try to determine what would be the best plan for your UGASF Organization. After serious deliberation your Board decided to carry forward with the Organization and due to the fact that we did not have a Heritage Day Event “we did not make any money, and we did not spend any monies except for necessary required payments”. Therefore, the financial status of UGASF is good.

At the end of our discussions, it was decided that we would go back to “First Principles” of UGASF and therefore hold and support events in conjunction with “Events Being Held at Individual Clubs. We as a Board then decided to pick up the “Ball” again and hold our annual Heritage Day event. in 2022 in conjunction with the Mai Fest at the German American Friendship Club - Pinellas Park. on Sunday May 1st. In 2023 we held our annual Heritage Day Event in conjunction with the “Spring Garden Festival” at the German American Social Club in Cape Coral. In 2024 we took the Heritage Road Show to the German American Social Club of Miami - where we joined and supported the Club’s 75th Anniversary Celebration in March. In all cases the combined efforts of both the Clubs participating and the UGASF organization met with “Moderate Success” as to attendance level expectations. The events were maybe not Financially successful but the spirit of “Gemütlichkeit” and getting together to celebrate our German Heritage was tremendous.

So here we are now in November of 2024 and our annual meeting is scheduled to be held at the German American Society of Central Florida in Casselbury on November 23, 2024 at 1 pm. This annual meeting, as required by our Bylaws is to do three things. Firstly, to hold an Election for new Board Members interested in joining the Board or Reelecting the Board members now serving. I am very appreciative of the Board Members we have had over the last 3 difficult years and thank them for their contributions and their ongoing support.

Therefore, I am hereby requesting that Club Presidents of their respective clubs reach out to their members to see if there are any members inclusive of themselves within their clubs that might want to consider running for a Directors position. The term of office is for a 2-year period. Respectfully I am hoping that there are interested individuals that might consider stepping up to continue to keep your UGASF organization alive and continuing to be a vibrant part of presenting your clubs within your respective communities.

. The second item is to introduce and discuss Heritage Day 2025 which is to be held at the German American Society of Central Florida in Casselbury in conjunction with their Annual Spring Festival.

The Third item on the agenda is to discuss how to broaden the UGASF Organization by expanding our UGASF membership base to other European Cultural Groups - by example the Swiss, the Dutch etc. A UGASF European Union of sorts.

In closing I would like to highlight the fact that we have three (3) clubs celebrating 60-year anniversaries – German American Society of Hollywood – November 9th, German American Friendship Club – Pinellas – November 9th, and the German American Social Club of Cape Coral November 22nd.

I would like to encourage all clubs to plan to attend our annual meeting and I am looking forward to seeing many of you there and again reacquainting with you all. Thanking you in advance.

*Kurt Freiter
President
United German American Society of Florida*