



GERMAN-AMERICAN CLUB GESANGVEREIN, INC.

The German American Club of Louisville, KY

February 2025 Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 2

Message from the President

Monat der Liebe (Month of Love)

February is the month of love. Love of a special someone, love of family and love of the German American Club family.

Please welcome Mark Schroeder as our new Arrangement Committee Chair. Tim Redmon is going to work with Mark to help him with different parts of being Arrangement Committee Chair. I hope all the members offer Mark help with this tremendous job that he is taking on.

Attendance at January 18th's Bierhalle was low, but those who came enjoyed themselves with laughter and beer. There were many children that attended with their parents. I love seeing all the small ones have fun as well. I am sure these same children will enjoy our new playground when we have it done this spring.

Our choir is getting back to practice, they are starting to get their music picks this week for the Spring Concert in May. If you are interested in singing with the choir, they will be meeting on Thursdays at 7:30 PM. Come out and give it a try. You do not need to know German; they will teach you the words. Come and enjoy the fun of singing with great members of the choir.

The new website for our German American Club is up and running. Meghann Marks has worked very hard on this. There are a few things that she is trekking on the page. Please check it out, it has more information than the old one that will shut off soon. Here is the new address for the page at <https://www.gaclouisville.org>. If you find information that is now right or needs more information, please let Meghann know.

If you have any news or pictures for the newsletter, please send them to Kelly Feulner at gac.lou.news@gmail.com.

Cathy Reynolds
GAC President

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GAC Mission Statement:

The purpose of the German-American Club, Gesangverein, Inc. (GAC) is to perpetuate German culture and German style of sociability, to promote the art of music through group singing of German songs, and to preserve the German heritage in Louisville.

From the Board

1840 Lincoln Ave
Louisville, KY 40213



Hallöchen!

The elected officers of the 2025 Board of Directors are:

Board Chair - Ashlyn Ackerman

Board Vice Chair - Steve Riggs

Board Secretary - Joe Parsons

We are happy to report that the Spielplatz (playground) project is moving right along. The play equipment has been ordered and will be delivered in the spring to be installed before Maifest. Our fundraising efforts have also been picking up lately – thank you to all the members and groups who have donated so far! If you would like to make a donation, you can do so via the QR code flyer posted around the club, or request a sponsorship packet by emailing gac.louisville.board@gmail.com. Every donation helps reduce the cost to the club for the playground project. Donors will also be recognized on playground signage.



The Board met in January to establish our goals for 2025, which are divided into several different categories and shared below. If you have any feedback or requests for the Board, please reach out to Ashlyn Ackerman or the board email at: gac.louisville.board@gmail.com.

Let's continue the success into 2025 and make the GAC even better!

2025 BOARD GOALS:

Promote German Culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GHA and Ladies Aux incorporating more German traditions into regular events 2. Choir to perform at more GAC events and public outreach (soccer games, Churchill Downs, etc.) 3. Start planning for Taste of Germany
Increase Volunteering / Reduce Burnout	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize and thank volunteers regularly 2. Track and report volunteer hours at general meetings 3. 50% of members to volunteer at least once
Member Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make Fifth Fridays an opportunity for new members to get to know people 2. Host trainings for bartenders and cashiers to train members on these jobs
Events Success	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce number of summer biergartens in favor of longer, themed festivals 2. Appoint a chair for every festival to reduce the load on arrangements
Public Outreach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Launch new website – gacloouisville.org 2. Tell our story through member videos on website and social media
Governance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constitution update needed; form committee and present first draft by July 2. Ensure members have better access to constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures
Documentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take more photos of GAC fun! 2. Write down processes and procedures for events and activities to empower new leaders
Capital Improvements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Main hall murals restoration 2. Complete playground project 3. Upgrades to picnic tables and barrel tables 4. Main hall speaker system upgrades 5. Additional brat grill to handle large Oktoberfest crowds
Finances	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build on the success of 2024, continue to grow our reserves 2. Explore ways to maximize our investments while minimizing our risk

GAC CONSTITUTION UPDATE:

It's time to update the GAC constitution! The previous constitution was adopted in 2016, and the membership has approved several amendments since then as well. A committee has been established to review the current constitution, incorporate amendments already adopted, and propose new changes to the document. All members are encouraged to read the constitution and suggest changes to the committee. Copies of the constitution are available in the office – talk to Cathy to request one. Committee members are listed below, please get your suggestions to them in the coming months so a draft can be presented to the Board and GAC members this summer.

Committee members: Karin Naumowicz (chair), Bruce Zimmerman, Kelly Feulner, Tim Redmon, Kristina Carney, Bill Willinger

Check out our “Meet the Board” series on Page 8

Membership News

1840 Lincoln Ave
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Membership Dues Deadline - the deadline to submit membership dues is **January 31, 2024**. *Members who have not paid by February 28 will be removed from the GAC membership roster, resulting in a loss of membership continuity.*

The dues schedule remains unchanged from the previous year:

- **Family:** \$80
- **Single:** \$50
- **Student:** \$25

Please note that invoices will not be sent out. It is your responsibility to ensure dues are submitted accurately and on time.

Thank You to Our Members - as of **January 20, 2024**, GAC membership stands at **835 members**. Historically, membership drops by approximately 30% after the renewal period. Don't let that happen to you—renew today to maintain your membership!

Member Updates - please help us keep member information up to date:

- Notify **Bill Willinger** of updates such as health concerns, prayer list additions/removals, address changes, marriages, and births.
 - **Phone:** 502-931-9336 (leave a message)
 - **Email:** gac.lou.membership@gmail.com
- Notify **Meghann Marks** of member-related deaths at gac.louisville@gmail.com.

Clarification on Dues Waiver - at the December meeting, I mentioned waiving dues for individuals with 30 years of club membership. I have since been reminded that I do not have the authority to make this decision without board approval, as per the club's constitution. This matter will require further discussion with the Board of Directors. Should dues be waived, refunds will be issued, or members may choose to donate those funds. More information will follow. My sincere apologies for the oversight—while my intentions were good, even former presidents must adhere to the rules.

New Membership Applications - the following individuals applied for membership in December:

- James and Rebecca Harl
- Lauren Ingram and Aaron Nusz
- Claudia Malone
- Margaret Parsons

Applications for January 2024 are now closed and will be voted on during the **Monthly Business Meeting on February 5, 2024, at 7:00 PM**.

All applicants and GAC members are encouraged to attend this meeting.

Welcome New Members

Approved at the Jan 2nd Business Meeting:

- Ed & Barbara Haines
- Adam Watson
- Carol & Ron Lockard
- Cory & Brittany Moneymaker
- Jeremy & Robin Haysley
- Matt & Jacqueline Dennis
- Kasey & Greg Morreau
- John W. Ruhe
- John M. Ruhe
- Alan & Sandra Bryant
- Sara Allen & Calvin Morris
- Stefan Richter
- Douglas Johnson
- Coleen & Scot Costar
- Kristen Willinger & Joe Stigers
- Katherine Willinger & David Russell

Larry Ott,
Alex Otte, &
Andy Feulner
at a GAC
event



Trivia Quiz Night

The Choir is hosting a Trivia Quiz Night Fundraiser on Friday, February 7, 2025 from 6-9 pm.

- Doors open/Happy hour from 5-6 pm
- Tables are \$80 for team of 8 people
- BYO snacks for your table
- Cash & prizes go to the top 3 teams
- 50/50 raffle
- Basket raffles

Reserve your table at: GAC.Lou.Choir@gmail.com

German American Club Choir presents



GHA News

1840 Lincoln Ave
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Stay Safe & Warm!

We're kicking off 2025 with some exciting events:

Feb 1 – Karneval/Fasching Celebration

Join us at the Bier Halle for our inaugural Karneval/Fasching event! Wear a fun or crazy costume & celebrate with us. Need inspiration? Search "Karneval" or think Mardi Gras! Check out flyers around the club or the Upcoming Events email for details.

Feb 23 – Wine Event with Germany's Wine Queen

Mark your calendars! The GAC/GHA will host a wine event featuring **Lucia Winterhalter**, Wine Queen from Baden, Germany. Similar to last year's wine tasting, details will be shared soon—be sure to save the date!

Mar 16 – Guest Speaker Dale Cobler

At 2:00 PM, retired Army veteran & Kentucky resident **Dale Cobler** will discuss his book, *The Cobler Family Story: From Palatinat Germany to 20th Century America*, which explores his family's genealogy & social history. Stay tuned for flyers with more information.

Apr 13 – Annual Grunderfest

Join us for this annual tradition! The GHA will provide the meat & bread, & we invite you to bring a dish for the potluck. Enjoy entertainment from **Steve Wright** of the River City Polkatz & guests. Details will be announced soon, & *reservations are required*.

Next GHA Meeting: Feb 5 at 5:30 PM

The GHA meeting is open to all members & will take place before the monthly member meeting. If you're interested in getting involved in the club's cultural & historical initiatives, we'd love to see you there! Make sure to stay for the GAC monthly meeting afterward.

We look forward to seeing you at these events!



Stein Lockers Fees Due Now

It's time to renew your 2025 GAC stein locker! The fee is still just \$20. Please make your payment by check or cash by March 5th. Payments can be made in person to Joe Schweinhart, the treasurer at the club, or sent by mail.

If you no longer need your locker, please let Joe know. Thank you for your continued support of the club!



Joe Schweinhart, Cathy Reynolds, & Karen Naumowicz at the Installation Meeting on Jan 4, 2025.

Ashlyn Ackerman & Connie Menz at the Installation Meeting on Jan 4, 2025.



Ladies Auxiliary News

1840 Lincoln Ave
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Join us for the next Ladies Auxiliary meeting on **Monday, February 17, at 6:30 PM!** We'll be crafting flower crowns to sell at our booth during Maifest. Please bring along:

- A glue gun
- Scissors
- A few silk flower stems to contribute

Crafters of all skill levels are welcome! Proceeds from the flower crown sales help support Ladies Auxiliary events throughout the year.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Save the Date: Children's Easter Party!

Open to the children and grandchildren of GAC members (ages 10 and under), this fun-filled event will take place on **Sunday, April 13, from 1 PM to 3 PM** in the main hall and outside (weather permitting).

Activities include:

- Easter egg hunts for both younger and older kids (outdoors—please bring a basket)
- Snacks, crafts, and music
- Decorating the traditional **Osterbrunnen** (Easter fountain)

RSVP: Please let us know how many children will be attending by contacting Ashlyn Ackerman:

- **Text:** 812-630-8001
- **Email:** gac.ladies.aux@gmail.com

We look forward to celebrating with you!



Board Member & Kitchen Manager
Tanya Schantz



Kristina Carney & Tim Redmon



Connie & Brian Menz



Board Member Joe Parsons

Arrangements Committee

1840 Lincoln Ave
Louisville, KY 40213



Hello Fellow Members!

I hope you all stayed warm during the recent cold spell! A big thank you to everyone who braved the weather & joined us for the January 18th Bierhalle—it was a fantastic turnout.

We're thrilled to announce some exciting changes for the year ahead! **Mark Schroeder, one of our newer members, has stepped up to assist with several arrangements tasks.** Please take a moment to introduce yourself to Mark at upcoming events & lend him your support.

This year, we're introducing **five different polka bands** & refreshing our events. Our outdoor gatherings have been rebranded from Biergartens to **festivals**, with extended hours and **two bands per event**, featuring great German music, food, & beer. We're also collaborating with other GAC areas to host an array of fun member activities.

One highlight to look forward to is the **Hofbräuhaus Bus Trip** on **Wednesday, April 30th** during Derby week! The bus accommodates up to 50 people, & tickets are just \$30 per person. Sign-up sheets will be available at all upcoming events, so reserve your spot soon!

Don't miss out on the **Hofbräuhaus Bus Trip**—spots are filling quickly, & payment is required at the time of sign-up.

Cheers from the Arrangements Team

Upcoming Events – February 2025

Friday, January 31st – 5th Friday Meet and Greet

- Doors open at 4:30 PM
- Potluck (bring a dish)
- Happy Hour Drinks

Saturday, February 1st – Bierhalle (Karneval)

- Hosted by the GHA
- Doors open at 4 PM
- Costumes encouraged; prizes awarded!
- Contact Nancy Woods: njwoods57@gmail.com
- Happy Hour Drinks & Pretzels: 4–6 PM
- Full Kitchen Service: 6–8 PM
- Live Music: **Rheingold, 6–10 PM**

Wednesday, February 5th – General Meeting

- 7 PM

Friday, February 7th – Trivia Night

- Doors/Happy Hour: 5–6 PM
- Trivia starts at 6 PM
- \$80 per table (up to 8 people)
- Prizes for the top 3 teams, basket raffle, and 50/50 drawing
- Reserve your table: GAC.Lou.Choir@gmail.com

Monday, February 10th – Arrangements Meeting

- 6:30 PM

Saturday, February 15th – Bierhalle (Valentine)

- Doors open at 4 PM
- Happy Hour Drinks & Pretzels: 4–6 PM
- Full Kitchen Service: 6–8 PM
- Live Music: **Polkatz, 6–10 PM**

Monday, February 17th – Ladies Auxiliary Meeting

- 6:30 PM

Saturday, March 1st – Bierhalle

- Doors open at 4 PM
- Happy Hour Drinks & Pretzels: 4–6 PM
- Full Kitchen Service: 6–8 PM
- Live Music: **Polka Cola, 6–10 PM**

Wednesday, April 30th – Hofbräuhaus Bus Trip

- \$30 per person
- Meet at the German Club: 2 PM
- Depart: 2:30 PM
- Arrive at Hofbräuhaus: 4:30 PM
- Depart Hofbräuhaus: 9:30 PM
- Return to the German Club: 11:30 PM

Choir & Volunteer Committee

1840 Lincoln Ave
Louisville, KY 40213



Choir News

Hallo Zusammen!

A big **thank you** to everyone who attended, volunteered, or sang at this year's Christmas Concert!

It was an incredible experience for all involved. If you missed it, you can now watch the concert on the GAC YouTube page.

The choir is back in action, practicing every Thursday night from 7:30–9:00 PM.

New members are always welcome, regardless of skill level or experience. Join us and help celebrate the tradition of German singing!

Upcoming Events:

Trivia Night: February 7th. Tables are \$80 for up to 8 team members, and they're going fast! To check availability, email us at gac.lou.choir@gmail.com.

Spring Concert: Mark your calendars for May 18th! More details to come soon.

Thank you for your continued support, and we hope to see you at an upcoming event!

Join the Volunteer Committee

Looking for a fun way to get involved with the GAC? The Volunteer Committee is the perfect opportunity!

Help organize events, support projects, and create memorable experiences while celebrating our culture and connecting with others.

First Meeting: Feb 13, 6:00-7:00 pm at the club

Contact: Andy Feulner at andyfeulner@att.net or (502) 758-0412

No experience needed – just bring your enthusiasm & let's make a difference together!



Join us in congratulating **Ron & Mary Kemper** who celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary this Valentine's Day!



Meet the Board

1840 Lincoln Ave
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Meet Ashlyn Ackerman

Board Position: Board Chair / Ladies Auxiliary President
Other Club Involvement: Choir member, bartender, active volunteer, trivia host, & our 2024 Oktoberfest Queen!
GAC Member Since: 2020

Why Ashlyn Joined the GAC:

Growing up in Jasper, Indiana, Ashlyn celebrated her family's German & Swiss heritage frequently. Inspired by her parents' involvement in the Jasper Deutscherverein, she developed a passion for engaging with her community in ways that are fun, social, and meaningful.

The GAC has been the perfect fit, allowing her to embrace her German culture, volunteer, & form lifelong friendships. Ashlyn loves showcasing her musical talents in the choir & cherishes the opportunity to plan family & children's events through the Ladies Auxiliary. Plus, the GAC gives her the perfect excuse to wear her beloved collection of dirndls & trachten!



Life Outside the GAC:

Professionally, Ashlyn is an architect and interior designer for a real estate developer, specializing in historic building renovations & boutique hotels. She has been happily married to her husband, Alex Hoffmann, for four years. They live in the Highlands with their two spoiled dogs, Noodle & Roux. Together, they enjoy trivia nights, cooking, baking, and traveling—especially their annual ski trips. In 2024, they were so excited to experience Oktoberfest in Munich! They head to Ireland & England for the British Open Golf Tournament in 2025!

Favorite GAC Memory:

One of Ashlyn's highlights was attending the 2023 National Sangerfest in Madison, Wisconsin, with the choir & introducing the unforgettable "Schnapps Ski" to the GAC!

Check out our new website!
click here: www.gaclouisville.org

Submit your GAC photos for
the website at:

GAC.historian@gmail.com or
lougac.technology@gmail.com



GAC Book Club

Are you interested in exploring German literature and connecting with others in the community? We're considering starting a book club at the GAC! The club would meet monthly or bimonthly to discuss books by German authors, available to read in both English and German. This is a great way to dive into Germanic culture while building new connections. Email isgriggs5@gmail.com if you are interested.



Our club is signing up a 2025 team to help raise money to fight childhood cancer. If you would like to sign up to be a Shavee, please get with Joe Parsons and he can get you registered on the team. If you would like to donate money to the club team, please click the link below. Our goal as a team this year is to raise \$6,500.00 and we know that is more than possible with the generosity of our amazing members.

Click here: [St. Baldrick's Donations](#)



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Messages of Care & Comfort

Please keep in your prayers all members and their loved ones who have passed away.

We ask for special prayers of comfort for the friends and family of **John and Jim Combs**, whose brother, **Don**, passed away on **January 16**.

Please hold the Combs family in your thoughts during this difficult time.

Continue to pray for all who are in need of comfort and healing, especially:

- Mary Beck
- Norma Heitz
- Martha Liles
- Bob Naumowicz
- Ilona Segó
- Gary Segó
- Bengta Sell
- Diana Sexson
- Janet Schweinhart
- Belinda Willinger
- Andy Fuchs
- Judy Fuchs
- Ron Kemper
- Anita Waters (Dane's mother)
- Gerald Williger
- Mike Brauner
- Cecilia (sister of Steve Oswald)
- Mike Lawson