



GERMAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER NEWSLETTER

A publication of the Friends of the GACC
519 Huey P. Long Ave., Gretna, LA 70053

June 2021
Issue



Return of Our Member Meetings

Mark your calendar — monthly meetings of the Friends of the GACC will resume on **Saturday, July 17, at 6 p.m.** Because of the pandemic, it has been 16 months since we have come together on the third Saturday of the month to socialize. Much too long!

Here are the arrangements for this long-awaited meeting:

- For this meeting, as we work toward a complete return to normalcy, there will not be a full meal. We will provide light refreshments such as finger sandwiches.
- There will be German beer and wine, water and soft drinks, as we have served

in the past. And pretzels!

- In order to attend, you must be current with your GACC dues of \$20 per person. We will be collecting dues at the meeting.
- The guest speaker will be the GACC Director Carol Schlueter. She will give a brief illustrated talk on the German immigrants who came to Louisiana 300 years ago, and the impact those settlers have had on our area. Let's remember our ancestors at this tricentennial year!

We hope to see you back in the GACC meeting room on July 17.

Our Tree is Growing at Deutsches Haus

In the spirit of *Gemütlichkeit*, the GACC made a donation to help Deutsches Haus with landscaping at its new Moss Street location. Our tree is growing at the Haus, with a plaque under it — a Gracey Greybeard white fringe tree that will bloom beautifully in the spring in future years. We're glad to help out our friends at Deutsches Haus.



One More Look at Maifest 2021

Our Maifest celebration in Gretna was such a success, here's another look at the happenings. On Friday, May 14, two Maypoles became the center of attention on the Huey Long neutral ground. Children from Lily White Ruppel School worked with Mayor Belinda Constant to learn the circular steps and wrap the Maypoles with long colored ribbons. Dr. Eric Hahn played his accordion for the occasion. Afterward, the GACC and its volunteers



The Maypole dance is on!



served warm pretzels and water to the children and onlookers. It was a festive start for the Maifest weekend. The following day, May 15, was the GACC's Maifest Beer Garden, which everyone enjoyed.

Nathan Billedeau, grandson of Dr. Eric Hahn and wife Ani, enjoys his Maifest pretzel.

Oktoberfest
Beer Garden
October 9



These books have been added to the GACC's library in our research room.

Stop in and Visit the GACC Library

Tucked away in the GACC research room is our library, which has many interesting books. One group of bookshelves has genealogy records such as listings from McDonogh and Hook and Ladder Cemeteries and reference books on various parishes and the German Coast families. Other shelves have collections of newsletters from the Gretna Historical Society, the German-Acadian Coast Genealogical Society, and others. These resources can't be removed from the center, but you are welcome to study them in our research room.

The library also has books on West Bank history, European travel and a variety of subjects written in German. Most of these books can be checked out and returned later. Stop in soon!

Books Recently Added to Our Library

- *Italian Immigrant Families: Grocers, Proprietors and Entrepreneurs, The Story of the Italian/Sicilian Corner Grocers and Markets of Algiers, Louisiana*, by Joseph N. Macaluso, Sr. (2004)
- *Emigration from the Bavarian Forest in Germany to the United States from 1841 to 1931*, by Friedemann Fegert. (2021)
- *Kassel: Moderne Stadt Mit Tradition*, by Christine Bruckner, Manfred Hausmann, Hans Werner Kalbfuss and Karl-Hermann Wegner. (1985, in German) Donated by Beth Shoemaker Davis.
- *The West Bank of Greater New Orleans: A Historical Geography*, by Richard Campanella. (2020)
- *New Orleans in the Fifties*, by Mary Lou Widmer. (1991) Donated by Don Costello.
- *Nostalgia: Lifestyles of "Old" New Orleans*, by Marvin Perrett. (1982). Donated by Don Costello.
- *More Nostalgia: Legends, Lifestyles, Landmarks*, by Marvin Perrett. (1983). Donated by Don Costello.
- *Louisiana: A History*, by Bennett H. Wall, Editor. (1984) Donated by Don Costello.
- *A History of the Archdiocese of New Orleans*, by Charles E. Nolan. (2000). Donated by Don Costello.
- *Martin Luther: A Biographical Study*, by John M. Todd. (1965) Donated by Sevilla Finley.

Charles Frederic Zimpel: Prussian Soldier, Architect and NOLA Cartographer



In 1830, after a remarkable career in the Prussian military, Charles Frederic Zimpel left his home country and came to Louisiana. He was 29 years old and was an engineer, architect and surveyor in Prussia, serving as personal adjutant of King Friederich Wilhelm III. In Louisiana he soon was named deputy city surveyor in New Orleans, and also became chief engineer of the New Orleans & Carrollton Rail



Charles Frederic Zimpel

Road Company. His name is still a common sight on street signs in uptown New Orleans, as he created a highly detailed map of both the East and West Bank areas in 1834.

He described the map like this: "Topographical Map of New Orleans and its Vicinity, Embracing a distance of twelve miles up and eight and three quarter miles down the Mississippi River and Part of Lake Pontchartrain, representing all Public Improvements existing and projected and

important Establishments, accompanied by A Statistical Table, containing the most accurate illustrations; prefaced by A Splendid View of New Orleans, & Compiled from actual surveys and the best authorities, by Chas. F. Ximpel, Deputy City Surveyor of New Orleans, Chief Engineer of the New Orleans & Carrollton Rail Road Company and late Engineer in the Prussian Service, Scale six inches to the mile, New Orleans March 1834." The map was produced two years before German immigrants established Mechanikham, forerunner of Gretna, but it does contain early, detailed drawings of McDonoghville and Algiers.

He was the architect for at least five buildings in New Orleans, including the Orleans Cotton Press and the Bank's Arcade.

Ill health caused him to leave New Orleans for Germany in 1837. His work in the railroad industry continued in Europe, but he also traveled extensively to Italy, Greece, Turkey, Asia-Minor, Syria, Egypt and Nubia, as well as other countries in the Middle East. He developed a great interest in homeopathic medicine later in life. He died in 1878.

Spaghettieis: a Summer Favorite in Germany

tastes like ice cream! Spaghettieis is a fun ice cream sundae created by Dario Fontanella, son of an Italian immigrant and owner of an ice cream parlor in Mannheim, Germany, in 1969.

It has been a German specialty ever since. The original method called for pressing vanilla ice cream through a spaetzle press, creating "noodles." Strawberry sauce looks like tomato sauce, and coconut or white chocolate shavings play the Parmesan cheese role. (Source: German Consulate, Washington, D.C.)

With the weather heating up in the Gulf Coast, you may be reaching for a bowl of ice cream. Residents of Germany do the same thing! If you've ever been to Germany in the summertime, you might have noticed the many different Eisdielen (ice cream parlors) or Eiscafes. Germans love to get together over a refreshing bowl of ice cream when it's hot outside. In fact, there are over 3,300 ice cream shops in Germany!

While gelato might hit the spot, a more unique option is a cool bowl of Spaghettieis – a German style of ice cream that literally looks like a bowl of spaghetti. We promise you, it still



Gretna Prayer Dinner — A Community Tradition Continues

The GACC was proud to donate to the 27th Annual Gretna Prayer Dinner, held June 15 at the Mel Ott Multipurpose Center. A sold-out crowd attended the annual event and enjoyed musical presentations, prayers and scripture readings, and guest speaker Gayle Benson.

The dinner is sponsored by the Gretna Community Association and the St. Cletus Knights of Columbus, who prepared the dinner.

GCA President Val Coles was very pleased to announce that the event raised \$6,000 — \$3,000 for Archbishop Shaw High School scholarships and \$3,000 for GRID recreation activities.

Jackie Berthelot, Gretna councilman, was honorary chairman. The event was dedicated to the memory of Jo Duhe', former GCA President and founder of the prayer dinner 28 years ago. She passed away in June 2020.



Gayle Benson, owner of the New Orleans Saints and Pelicans NBA team, was guest speaker at the dinner and received a warm welcome.



Representing the GACC at the Gretna Prayer Dinner were, from left, Pam Boudreaux, GACC Director Carol Schlueter, and GACC board members Wilma Thompson, Gisela Galjour and Delia Hernandez. Pat Smith also joined the group.

Remembering Gretna's Streetcar History

Streetcars were a common sight in Gretna in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. (See the related photograph on the back page.) On September 3, 1882, streetcar service began from Algiers to Gouldsboro (McDonoghville). Two years later, the street railway came to Gretna, traveling down Front (First) Street and turning onto Copernicus (Huey P. Long Avenue).

When the railroad bridge was built across the Harvey Canal, streetcar service extended to Marrero. But technology caught up with the streetcars ... buses replaced them in 1931.



Above: George Strohmeier, right, and Sidney Debartlo are at the controls of the West Bank streetcar. Left: The red line on this 1908 West Bank map is the path of the streetcar



Meet The Immigrants

A column spotlighting German families, part of research by genealogist Pat Smith



Henry Kleinpeter

Born in 1802 in Waldeck, Germany; died in Gretna in 1862

Christina Kinsley

Born in 1823 in New York; Died in Gretna in 1908

Records show Henry and Christina had two children who were born in Ohio, John (1842) and Mary (1844). By the 1850 census, the family was in New Orleans, where Henry was a carpenter. Henry and Christina had two more sons, George and William, both born in Gretna in 1850 and 1852. In the 1900 census they are living in Gretna on Lavoisier Street. Their son George married Sophie Gelbke and they had seven children: William, Louise, Henry, G.R., Sophie, George and Mayme.

A Kleinpeter tomb in Hook and Ladder Cemetery.

GACC Staff:

Carol Schlueter, Director
Ira Hopkins, Cultural Center Assistant

The **GACC Newsletter** is published monthly. Suggestions are welcome; email them to germanamerican@bellsouth.net, or call newsletter editor **Carol Schlueter**, 504-363-4202.

The Board of the Friends of the GACC

- Barron Burmaster (President)**
- Michael Schäferkötter (Vice-President)**
- Chris Ziifle (Treasurer)**
- Val Coles (Secretary)**
- Gisela Galjour**
- Delia Hernandez**
- Robert Kallies**
- Irvin Schwarz**
- Wilma Thompson**



DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR GACC DUES FOR 2021!

Membership Form

- Yes, I want to renew my membership.
- Yes, register me as a new member in The Friends of the GACC.
- Yes, I would like to Volunteer .

All Memberships are \$20:

Mail to:
 German-American Cultural Center
 519 Huey P. Long Ave.
 Gretna, LA. 70053

Questions: Contact us at 504-363-4202
 Or email us at: germanamerican@bellsouth.net

Your Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

DISCLAIMER: The German-American Cultural Center is a non-profit organization. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the GACC, its members or its officers. The GACC does not verify for accuracy the articles in this newsletter and leaves verification of accuracy to its readers.



A streetcar (at left) turns from Front Street onto Copernicus (Huey P. Long Avenue) in downtown Gretna in the late 1920s. For more history on the streetcar service in Gretna, see page 4. (From the *Jefferson Parish Review*)

SAVE THE DATES! Our Meetings Resume Saturday, July 17, and Oktoberfest Beer Garden, Saturday, October 9.



**Friends of the
German-American
Cultural Center**
519 Huey P. Long Ave.
Gretna, LA 70053

Museum open 10 am - 3 pm, Wed-Sat
Telephone: 504-363-4202
email: germanamerican@bellsouth.net