



Baltimore Kickers

History of the Baltimore Kickers

The Baltimore Kickers was founded in **1953** when Eddie Thau, a former player of the Erster Deutscher Sport Klub, and Werner Juergensen, an immigrant from W. Germany, met and discussed the possibility of forming a German soccer team. Eddie Thau contacted several German businessmen who were former members of the Erster Deutscher Sport Klub and willing to lend their support. Otto Stiefel, George Maex and Anton Wilke were among those who responded. Gustav Horn joined the group during the German Day celebration in August 1953 and by the 23rd of September 1953, the Baltimore Kickers became "official" with the adoption of the traditional black and white uniform. The Team entered the Baltimore Unlimited League and, despite many early losses due to lack of time for training and practice, maintained its high spirits and learned to win.

George Maex, Augustus Thau, Robert Bockringer, Werner Juergensen and Eddie Thau served as "temporary" officers until January **1955** when the first permanent slate was elected and installed: President-Joe Hanle; Vice President- Adam Kimmel; Treasurer-Augustus Thau; Financial Secretary-Werner Juergensen; Recording Secretary -Anna Harter (Steffen); 2nd Recording Secretary-Karl Seybold; Manager-Gustav Horn.

The new team had no home of its own and accepted the generous offer of the Eichenkranz Singing Society for the free use of their hall.

Three major developments marked the beginning of 1955. Adam Kimmel arranged the incorporation of the club which was finalized on the 15th of April. Paul Trautner found so many active players on hand that a second team was formed. The by-laws were formulated to enunciate that the aims of the Baltimore Kickers were to promote soccer and fellowship through social events.

On May 13, **1956** the Baltimore Kickers participated in hosting TSV Schwaben Augsburg, W. Germany vs. the Baltimore-Washington All-Stars. Result: 4:3. On August 26, 1956, German Day, the Baltimore Kickers played an exhibition game against the Washington Sports Club at Gwynn Oak Park and they also participated in a small parade.

The Baltimore Kickers participated in Coach Don Minnegan's Indoor Soccer program at Towson State on February 14, **1957**. This was an important first for a Baltimore club team. On April 28, 1957, Mr. Arnold Lasch, a well-known restaurateur of Washington, DC., instituted the Arnold Cup Competition in order to help promote soccer in the Baltimore-Washington area. The following teams participated: Ukrainian (Dnipro) Soccer Club, Olympian SC, Washington Sports Club, Myron Cowell, the Inca Team of Washington and the Baltimore Kickers. On May 19, 1957, the Baltimore Kickers took the first of many chartered bus trips to attend the international game of 1.F.C. Kaiserslautern against Philadelphia All Stars in Philadelphia, PA. On August 8, 1957, a ladies group was formed and assumed responsibilities to arrange and promote our social affairs and was later known as the Baltimore Kickers Kickerettes. In November of the same year, the Baltimore Kickers gave their first public showing of European soccer films in order to reawaken an interest in soccer.

In the 1957-58 season, the Baltimore Kickers won the Stewart Cup for the first time. In September **1958**, the Team accepted an invitation from the Reading Amerks that began a series of exhibition matches, tournament contests and social affairs and established a bond of friendship and respect between the two clubs. This was a real season for expansion of friendships. The Team traveled to Philadelphia and played against Phoenix SC. In Hagerstown, MD they won the Invitational Tournament, and in Washington, a "Patenschaft" was established with the Washington Sports Club. Through the years, the Baltimore Kickers played many exhibition matches with teams from visiting merchant and military ships and also with the U.S. Naval Academy.

Through the initiative of Paul Trautner, a membership pin was conceived, designed and made in West Germany in **1960**.

In January **1961**, the Baltimore Kickers started a newsletter that, up to the present time, continues to be a source of club information.

In March **1962**, the Baltimore Kickers won first place in the Baltimore Soccer Tournament and in the Washington, DC Tournament. The Happy Wanderers, under the direction of Alfred Zeller, were adopted as the Baltimore Kickers' official band.

On June 22, **1963**, The Baltimore Kickers hosted KFV Karlsruhe, West Germany vs. the Baltimore All-

Stars. Following the game, we had an enjoyable evening with our guests at the Deutsches Haus. Our first group flight of 55 members to West Germany took place in the late summer of 1963.

In January **1964**, a Junior Team (16-18 years of age) was established under the name of Baltimore Kickers. They took the championship in their first year. On April 25 and 26, 1964, a Cherry Blossom Tournament took place in Washington DC with the following teams participating: Baltimore Kickers, Elizabeth SC, New Jersey, D.S.C. Richmond, Max Blobs' and the Washington SC. Another event taking place in 1964 was the formation of our Old-Timers Team. They played their first game against the visiting British Ship 'Decoy' on September 10, 1964. That same year, for the first time, a "Miss Kickers" was chosen and crowned at the Anniversary Dance. This tradition continued four more years. In the autumn of 1964, the Baltimore Kickers and Edelweiss Club held their first Oktoberfest at the Alcazar. This event proved to be a big success. In **1965**, Matt Fraunhoffer became the manager and molded a team from the Baltimore Kickers and from Max Blobs players. The Team's first trip to Harrisburg, PA was judged a success despite a 2:3 loss.

In January **1966**, the Baltimore Kickers rented a room at the Deutsches Haus. This was the Baltimore Kickers' home until the eventual closing of the Deutsches Haus on December 31, 1970.

On August 5, 1966, the Baltimore Kickers joined Schwaben International, a charter flight organization, at the suggestion of Heinz Beck.

In May of **1967**, the Baltimore Kickers hosted a tournament between the Reading Amerks, Washington SC and Allentown, PA teams. In the same month, they participated in the Oppenheimer Tournament through an invitation from Harrisburg, PA. The Team took second place. In 1967, the Unlimited League's name was changed to the Maryland Major Soccer League.

The first big Oktoberfest was held at the Fifth Regiment Armory in October **1968**. The organizers, along with the Baltimore Kickers, were the German Radio Club, the Edelweiss Club and the Club Fidelitas.

In the **1968-69** season, The Baltimore Kickers won the Stewart and Rowland Cups. To top this success, they were also champions of the Maryland Major Soccer League in 1969-70. The Junior Team won the championship the same year.

In **1970**, the Baltimore Kickers held a picnic at Bill von Paris' home in Bel Air, MD.

On September 12, **1971**, the Baltimore Kickers played a friendly game against Lancaster, PA. On September 19th of the same year, they played against the Washington Bavarians.

On June 4, **1972**, F.V. 06 Weingarten visited the Baltimore Kickers for the first time. They returned on June 13, 1975 and June 17, 1977. The Baltimore Kickers lost 2:1 in 1972; won 5:3 in 1975 and lost 4:3 in 1977. A lasting bond of friendship was established between these two Teams.

In the summer of **1973**, the Baltimore Kickers hosted the F.C. Sonthofen from West Germany and after the game everyone enjoyed a picnic at Bill von Paris' place. In the late summer, the Old-Timers Soccer Team played against Clark, NJ's soccer team at the Schwaben International Conference Center on the Eastern Shore.

During the **1973-74** season, the Baltimore Kickers started a team in the Third Division of the Maryland Major Soccer League. This team was made up mostly of the Old-Timers players. Fritz Steffen served as manager, coach and player.

In May **1974**, The Baltimore Kickers received an invitation from the Clark, NJ soccer team for a return match. The Baltimore Kickers' Old-Timers spent a most memorable evening with their friends in Clark. The Happy Wanderers Band entertained them. Also that year, the Baltimore Kickers played friendly games against the Lancaster, PA Soccer Club and visiting teams from the German missile destroyers, Luetjens and Moelders. In the same year, the First Division Team was dissolved and the Baltimore Kickers continued with their Third Division Team.

The Baltimore Kickers held their 22nd Anniversary Dance in **1975**. Adam Kimmel was recognized as Honorary President in appreciation of his 12 years of faithful service as president. In November 1975, Adam Kimmel passed away and on December 8, 1976, Eddie Thau passed away. They will always be remembered for their contribution to the Baltimore Kickers' development.

Another exciting day for the Baltimore Kickers was May 26, **1976** when they became the proud owners of the present Clubhouse located at 26 South Broadway, Baltimore. It was through President Alfred Baumann and the combined efforts of many members who gave their time and talent in redecorating and furnishing the clubhouse. The Club members also formed a \$100 Club. The grand opening of the Clubhouse took place on November 21, 1976. Under the able leadership of then president Alfred Baumann, the Clubhouse made great progress. In June 1976, the Baltimore Kickers participated in the German Ethnic Festival at College Park and introduced Bratwurst to the area and demonstrated their soccer skills against the team from the West German Embassy in Washington DC. The Baltimore Kickers' Old-Timers played against the Clark, NJ Team at the Pasadena Conference Center. The Bicentennial Year brought many notable visitors to the Maryland shores. Among them was the German training sailship, Gorch Fock. Members of the ship's crew and officers were guests at the Clubhouse as well as at the homes of some of the members. The Baltimore Kickers played a game against the ship's crew at Rash Field and won. On Sunday, August 15, 1976, the Baltimore Kickers took second place in the Reading Tournament. Other participants were: SC Phoenix PA; Allentown SC; and

Reading Amerks. President Alfred Baumann received a personal invitation to visit the sail ship, Pride of Baltimore, from Mayor William Donald Schaefer.

On May 14, **1977**, The Baltimore Kickers shared their German culture and hospitality with 681 Girl Scouts at the Clubhouse. On August 27, 1977, the Baltimore Kickers participated in the Columbia Soccer Tournament and lost 1:0 in the final to Howard University after defeating Howard University, 1:0; University of Maryland, 1:0; and Columbia SC 4:3. However, they took the Dnipro Cup and qualified for the Second Division the same year. The annual German Day festival in September 1977, held at Fells Point, was considered a great success. The destroyer, S.S. Rommel, from West Germany anchored in Fells Point, Baltimore for this occasion. The Baltimore Kickers and the soccer team of the S.S. Rommel played at Rash Field and the Kickers walked away as the winners of the match. Starting on October 5, 1977, the Baltimore Kickers offered a German language course, free of charge. Classes were held every Wednesday evening.

Also in 1977, the Kickers Ladies were reorganized. They participated in the International Christmas show in the city and were in close cultural contact with their homeland. In prior years, Willi Steinebrunner made all the arrangements for the following groups to be the guests of the Baltimore Kickers at their Anniversary dances: 1972- Fanfarenzug und Stadtmusik Saulgau; 1973- Accordion Klub Triberg; 1974-Trachtenkapelle Gutach, Schwarzwald; 1975-Fanfarenzug Zell im Wiesental; 1976-Musikverein Ehningen; 1977- Musikverein Spielberg/Altensteig. The Baltimore Kickers helped house the Buergergarde Hechingen, Hohenzollern, West Germany who played for the Oktoberfest in 1974.

In January 7, **1978**, the Baltimore Kickers' Old-Timers Soccer Team played against the German military team and won 5:3. This was followed by a celebration at the Clubhouse.

The 25th Anniversary Tournament was held on June 11, 1978 with Washington SC, Lancaster SC, and Reading Amerks giving opposition to the Baltimore Kickers. After a round-robin series, Lancaster won. Further competition was provided in a match of the Kickers Old-Timers against a German military team from Washington DC.

The Baltimore Kickers' library was established in 1978 and has proven to be a valuable source of information for the members and has also served as the center for their archives.

Our international connections brought Dingolfing, W. Germany here for a game on July 16, 1978 (4:4). We also helped host the Karlsruhe Junior Team.

The Baltimore Kickers participated in the Columbia Tournament and played against Howard University; University of Maryland; American University, Columbia SC; and Rockville SC in the Columbia tournament. Again, the Baltimore Kickers lost the finals to Howard University, 1:0.

Perhaps their proudest day in 30 years came on September 24, 1978, when the Baltimore Kickers burned their mortgage.

On January 27, **1979**, The Baltimore Kickers honored Paul Trautner and George Hokemeyer for their many services to the organization at the Soccer Night. Paul's soccer career extended some 60 years. He was a member of the Baltimore Kickers from 1955 to 1979 serving in many leadership positions. Paul passed away on June 18, 1979. Three teams from W. Germany were to highlight the 1979 soccer season: Mönchengladbach (4:0); Weingarten (4:4) and Pliezhausen (3:5). Following the enjoyable games, the players, friends and members returned to the Clubhouse for an evening of Gemuetlichkeit prepared by the Ladies group. The Baltimore Kickers won the 2nd Division Championship and advanced to the First Division. On September 22, 1979, they had a concert and dance that featured the Rötgen Musikgruppe (Rötgen bei Aachen, West Germany).

The Baltimore Kickers stature in Baltimore was recognized when, on March 22, **1980**, then Mayor William Donald Schaefer came to the Clubhouse with Helmut Barkentien, the culture representative from the German Embassy, to introduce Würzburger, new imported beer from West Germany. In March, the Old-Timers Team played against the crew of the German containership, Emma Oldendorf (6:1). On June 18, 1980, the Baltimore Kickers played Düsseldorf from West Germany (2:3).

Our participation with Dr. Mary O'Neill and the exchange student program of the University of Maryland was noted on April 4, 1980 in the Washington Journal.

The Baltimore Kickers-sponsored trip to West Germany from July 4 to July 27, 1980 covered 9 cities: München, Dingolfing, Ehningen, Spielberg, Karlsruhe, Weingarten, Pliezhausen, Düsseldorf and Mönchengladbach. The Team played 9 games, returning the visits of teams and music groups from each city except Munich. A 3-day tournament was held in Pliezhausen and they received the red carpet treatment in each city. They were also introduced to the mayors at a champagne breakfast reception. This helped the members renew their heritage. They met Sepp Maier, the famous goalie from West Germany's National Team. They met the Borussia Mönchengladbach Team and visited the Sportschule Schönecke. The tour also highlighted the most important cultural and industrial features of each region.

The Clubhouse held a Crab Feast on July 27, 1980, the day the team returned from West Germany. Several members left the Crab Feast and went to the airport to welcome the Team back home.

The Baltimore Kickers' Old-Timers fielded a team to match the Baltimore Blast on September 20th at

Patterson Park High School. This was a benefit for Southeast Community Organization (SECO). The Old-Timers traveled to Gaithersburg for the National Bureau of Standards' Tournament on June 7 and won first place in competition with 3 other teams.

On September 5, 1980, the music group from Lauf an der Pegnitz were the guests of the Baltimore Kickers as were the Jagdhorngruppe from Ehningen on October 4, 1980. The Baltimore Kickers held their first New Year's Eve party at the Clubhouse with the Heimat Echo providing the entertainment. (Some members of the Happy Wanderers formed a new band called the Heimat Echo).

The Baltimore Kickers Old-Timers' Team, under the management of Klaus Haarich, participated in the Outdoor-Indoor League for Seniors Over 30 years of age. On February 22, **1981**, they participated in the first 6-team Spring German Military Tournament at Potomac, MD and came in 3rd place. The Ladies Group continued with their monthly Ladies Nights featuring a special theme for each month.

Ten thousand people at the Baltimore Civic Center had witnessed the awarding of the Nick Kropfelder Cup to the Baltimore Kickers on March 6, 1981 during the Baltimore Blast game intermission. Also in March, an 8-piece German military band visited the Clubhouse and entertained everyone with familiar music from the Old Country. In April, the Baltimore Kickers sold Bratwurst and highlighted German culture and soccer at the Festival of Nations at the Harford Community College.

In June 1981, Weingarten from West Germany returned for a soccer match where the Baltimore Kickers won 5:1, and on July 4, 1981, the Blau-Weiss Soccer Team from Poughkeepsie, NY beat the Baltimore Kickers' Old-Timers Team 6:2. On July 30, Paderborn, West Germany visited and matched the Baltimore Kickers 2:2.

In August 1981, the Old-Timers Team returned to National Bureau of Standards Tournament, but unfortunately they did not win first place this time. The Neumarkt (Austria) Musikkapelle played for the Baltimore Kickers at a special concert and dance held in the Steelworkers' Hall in Dundalk, Maryland.

The Southampton Rangers and Devonshire Colts SC (Bermuda, West Indies) were on a goodwill soccer tour in the U.S.A. On September 6, 1981, the Baltimore Kickers played Southampton and won 5:2. On September 9th, the Kickers played the Devonshire Colts and won 1:0. These victories against first division Bermuda clubs were noteworthy. On September 22nd, the Old-Timers played a 3:3 tie with old friends from the National Bureau of Standards.

In December 1981, the Baltimore Kickers participated in the George Washington University Invitational Indoor Tournament with 99 other teams and advanced only to be defeated in the semi-final 3:1.

In January **1982**, the Baltimore Kickers traveled to Olney, MD for the Sherwood Indoor Tournament, played 7 games and again lost in the semi-finals 4:2. The crew from the German ship, S.S. Lütjens D185, gave opposition to the Baltimore Kickers in February and the Baltimore Kickers won 4:0.

The Clubhouse was open every day during the International Week in March 1982 when they had the opportunity to host visitors from all over the world to showcase their German culture.

On May 22, 1982, Karlsruhe F.V. Old-Timers Team featuring Berni Termath, formerly of the West German World Cup team who was 54 years old, helped defeat the Baltimore Kickers Old-Timers 5:1. He wore the black and white colors 7 times.

The Baltimore Kickers took a 10-day goodwill tour in June 1982 to Canada where they played Guelph Oaks Sport Club 2:2, Brantford Falkons SC 4:1 and lost to Klub Heidelberg in St. Catherine, 1:0. On July 10, 1982, the Baltimore Kickers traveled to Adamstown, PA with a busload of members and players for the Reading Tournament where the Team won against Ephrata, 3:2; Harrisburg, 3:2 and Reading, 3:0. On August 8, 1982, they participated in the Harrisburg Tournament with the following events: Baltimore Kickers vs. Chambersburg, 3:2; Baltimore Kickers vs. Harrisburg 3:0 and Baltimore Kickers vs. Heidelberg 2:1. The Baltimore Kickers won the 1st Place trophies for these 2 tournaments.

On July 24, 1982, the Baltimore Kickers' Old-Timers took part in a tournament in Lower Paxton, PA. They beat Allentown 2:0 Paxton No. 1 (tied 0:0) and Lower Paxton No. 2 5:0. The Baltimore Kickers' Old-Timers won the final game 2:0 against Lower Paxton No. 1 and won the first place trophy.

Toni Riedlbauer organized a new Baltimore Kickers' Junior Team in September 1982 (1970 birthday) in which he served as coach while George Layfield served as manager. The Team entered the National Capital Soccer League Division III scoring 43 goals and allowing only 10.

In October 1982, the Junior Team entered in the Bowie Soccer Association Tournament and finished 2nd in their bracket losing only 1 game to Fairfax VA in the quarterfinal.

On October 16, 1982, three teams participated at the fifth Annual Invitational NBS Soccer Tournament. The Old-Timers placed 1st again. In the Gray Charles Over 30 League with a record of 8 wins, 1 loss and 1 tie, the Old-Timers took 1st place. In the Gray Charles Recreation Council Indoor League, the Baltimore Kickers placed 3rd and took first place in the Baltimore Indoor Soccer League.

On October 23, 1982, the 1st Team played against Three Brothers (5:3) and the Junior Team played against the Bowie Rebels (1:1) at the Catonsville Community College Oktoberfest.

In November 1982, the Junior Team entered the Bethesda Soccer Assn. Tournament and won their division but lost to McLean, VA in the semi-final. That game went into 2 overtime periods and was decided on penalty shots. In the Winter Outdoors, the Junior Team entered Baltimore City 11-14 Sunday League and finished in 2nd place. They then entered the Baltimore Indoor Soccer 11-14 Saturday League, won their division championship and received their trophy during the Baltimore Blast game with over 10,000 spectators applauding.

The Junior Soccer Team was upgraded and promoted to the Division II in the spring of **1983**. They entered the Maryland State Cup, went to the final and lost 6:1 to Wheaton.

In the summer of **1983**, a second Junior Team (1971 birthday) was formed under the leadership of George Layfield.

On July 16, 1983, the Old-Timers participated in the Lower Paxton Second Annual Tournament and finished 3rd.

On August 27th, the Old-Timers took 2nd place at the 30th Anniversary Tournament. The Junior Team lost to Bowie Rebels 2:0 and the 1st Team captured first place on August 28th. An exhibition match with Poughkeepsie, NY on July 23, 1983 resulted in the Baltimore Kickers' Old-Timers losing 3:1.

The First Team 1982-83 season ended in 3rd place in the league. In the National Challenge and Amateur Cup, the Baltimore Kickers went to the quarterfinals. In the Rowland Cup, they lost 3:1 in the final against Apollon but won the Stewart Cup against Wilkens House 4:1. In the Thursday Unlimited Men's Indoor Soccer League, they came in 2nd place. In the Sherwood Indoor Tournament in January 1983, they came in 1st place. On July 9th, they won the Reading Tournament. In the Men's Unlimited Indoor Tournament, they came in second and received the trophy at the Baltimore Blast game with over 10,000 spectators present. On August 7, 1983, they participated in the first Three Brothers Annual Tournament at the Prince George's Community College taking last place but won first place at the first annual Banneker Festival Tournament the following Sunday.

On April 24th, the Baltimore Kickers dedicated the Dr. Johann Eltermann Museum at the Clubhouse. Also in April, they received the colorful flower boxes that are now in the Clubhouse windows.

Trophy cases, now well stocked, were created in the Clubhouse by closing the side windows on the main floor and putting in shelves. Wimples and patches were designed and obtained.

The Baltimore Kickers were very active in the Tricentennial Celebration of Germans coming to America, with the German Language class students doing a play and exhibition at the clubhouse. The club members with the Edelweiss Club and the United Singers had a concert/dance on November 5, 1983. The Baltimore Kickers also participated in many of the events sponsored by the Deutschamerikanischer Buergerverein von Maryland.

The spring of **1984** saw the Baltimore Kickers' 1970-71 Junior Teams sponsoring a benefit dance to promote and support the Junior Teams' goodwill trip to England from August 9th to 26th of the same year. They also hosted the village of the Branch Irish Knights Team from New York. Over the 1984 Memorial Day weekend, both Junior Teams played in the Bowie Tournament and brought home 1st place trophies. The 1970 Junior Team completed their 1983-84 campaign with a record of 8 wins and 1 tie. The 1971 junior Team had 6 wins and 3 losses. Over a period of six weeks, the Junior Teams participated in a Special Tournament where the 1975 Team took third place and the 1971 Team won the first place trophy.

The Old-Timers concluded their 1983-84 season with a 4 and 3 record. They also started their first Indoor League games on January 9, 1984. In the Lower Paxton Tournament, they secured 3rd place.

The First Team finished in 8th place out of 12 teams in the 1983-84 season. They lost in the Stewart and Rowland Cups. They were eliminated in the third game by 1 goal in the Sherwood Indoor Tournament; however, took first place in the Annual Reading Tournament.

On March 19, 1984, Baltimore Kickers Financial Advisor, Bob Sheppard, was honored with the Bundesverdienstkreuz 1.Klasse des Verdienstordens in recognition of his exceptional services.

When the Baltimore Kickers celebrated their 31st Anniversary on September 8-9, the 50-piece Lauf Band from W. Germany was there to entertain them.

The German Language class hosted the dance group from Frommern, West Germany. They also took the first of many subsequent trips to the German Embassy on October 4, 1984.

One of the highlights of **1985** was the Baltimore Kickers' Bayern Abend on January 19. The sell-out affair treated the guests to the sounds of a 9-piece military band from Garmisch-Partenkirchen, West Germany.

On February 10, the Baltimore Kickers sponsored an Ehrentag for members of the German Community who have contributed to its growth and awareness. The German Embassy Cultural Department representative, Dr. Linsmayer, honored Margret Gross, Otto Kappus and Paul Ludtke

Another memorable event in 1985 was the Baltimore Kickers' 32nd Anniversary Dance on September 14th in which the Happy Wanderers came out of retirement to entertain everyone.

On the soccer front, on June 1, 1985, the Baltimore Kickers hosted the German Military Soccer Team from Washington DC. Both the First and the Old-Timers Teams triumphed in their matches. The First Team made 4th place in the league but lost in the quarter final of the Stewart Cup. They participated in the Indoor

Tournament and lost by the number of goals in a three-way tie for first place. On June 22, the First Team won again in the Reading Tournament in Adamstown, PA. Two busloads of Baltimore Kickers fans accompanied the team as they won their third straight championship there. The Old-Timers Team participated in the Harrisburg Tournament of July 13 and September 21st. They won the Indoor and Outdoor Leagues. The 1971 and 1975 Teams won first place in the Indoor League. The 1970 Team finished with 3 wins, 4 losses and 1 tie. All three Junior Teams played in the annual Columbia Tournament of Champions and all three teams lost in the semi-finals. The 1971 Team lost in the State Cup finals. From June 14th to 16th, the 1971 Team won the Reeses Cup of the Annual Hershey's Kicks Soccer Tournament.

In August, the Board accepted, in good faith, the resignation of our Junior Teams so they could play more competitively in the National Capital Soccer League in the Washington DC area.

On March 2nd and May 4th, the Baltimore Kickers hosted German military bands at the Clubhouse. On May 3rd, the Baltimore Kickers welcomed the Walt Groller Band to Baltimore.

During the week of April 13, **1986**, the Baltimore Kickers held a Lady Liberty Week in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty. Various cultural and social activities were held at the Clubhouse.

Over 50 members and friends traveled to West Germany from September 19 to October 4, 1986 and took in the flavor of the Old Country.

The Happy Wanderers again provided the entertainment for the Baltimore Kickers' Anniversary Dance on September 13, 1986.

On November 9th, Baltimore Kickers President Hans Steffen was awarded the German-American Friendship Award of the Federal Republic of Germany for all his work in fostering German culture in the Baltimore area.

On June 8th, the First Team and the Old-Timers played against the German Military Team with the First Team winning and the Old-Timers tying 1:1. On July 12th, the Old-Timers took 3rd place at the Harrisburg Tournament. On July 26th, the First Team played Fortuna Wien from Austria and tied 2:2. On August 2nd, the First Team and the Old-Timers played against BSG Kox Automobile 1956/Remscheid from West Germany. On June 21st, the First Team won first place for the fourth straight year in the Reading Tournament.

On July 11th, the club accepted a new Junior Team for players under 10 years of age. Honorary Life Member, Matt Fraunhoffer, was the Manager. The new Junior Team took last place in their opening season.

On March 8, **1987**, the First Team, combined with the Old-Timers, beat the team from the NATO ship, Rheinland/Pfalz 7:3. On June 19th, again the combined teams played against Karlsruhe, West Germany 4:1.

The Old-Timers took 1st place in the Indoor League and 4th place in the Outdoor League. They came in 2nd in the 1987 Lower Paxton Tournament but captured 1st place in the Bowie Tournament.

The First Team finished their league in 3rd place. They lost in the National Open, National Amateur and the Rowland State Cup. On May 31st, they won 4:3 against 2 of the visiting German Navy ships, Bauern and Moelders, anchored at the Inner Harbor.

On June 13th, the First Team took 1st place in the Reading Tournament, taking the Delaware Tournament on June 28 and topping Fortuna Wien, Austria 4:2 on July 25, 1987. A First Team player, John Sanchez, was selected to the U.S. Soccer Team for the Summer World Games for the Deaf held in New Zealand in 1989.

On February 22, **1988**, a German military band played at the Clubhouse and on May 17th, a four-piece band from Koeln, West Germany entertained the Baltimore Kickers.

October 25th marked the formation of the Baltimore Kickers Volkslieder, a German singing group with about 30 members.

The Baltimore Kickers began their 35th year by hosting the wonderful Volkstanzgruppe of Frommern on the Schwäbische Alp, West Germany. On April 30th, a German military band played for us.

The First team traveled again to Adamstown, PA for the Annual Reading Tournament, but was not able to win their 6th straight trophy, settling for the 2nd place. The First Team was defeated 1:0 by La Dolce Vita in the Rowland Cup final. In the Summer League, they captured the 2nd place and took 1st place in the Indoor League and also participated in the Delaware Tournament. The Junior Team won the Indoor Championship. They also won the York County Indoor Championship. The Old-Timers finished 3rd place in their Indoor League that year.

In commemoration of the Baltimore Kickers' 35th Anniversary, a tournament was held on June 25, 1988 where the First Team took 1st place beating the Delaware Kickers, Harrisburg SC and the German Military Team.

In April 1988, a German Video Library was started at the Clubhouse. In September, the Kickers received a generous donation from the disbanded Eichenkranz Singing Society. In appreciation, they named a meeting room in the Clubhouse, The Eichenkranz Room.

The Baltimore Kickers traveled to Austria in September headed by Hans Steffen. Lebkuchen chests were again sold during the Christmas season under the supervision of Hans.

In 1988, October 6th was designated as German-American Day throughout the U.S.A.

Ray Frampton, a Baltimore Kicker member, resigned as president of the Oktoberfest after many years of service and Bob Sheppard succeeded him.

On April 1, **1989**, the Baltimore Kickers supported the Operetta Renaissance by Sousa. In the same year, a Baltimore Kickers member, Paul Ludtke, was honored with the Bundesverdienstkreuz in recognition of his exceptional services in the German community. In May, the library was dedicated to the memory of a deceased member Jim Briscoe. Bob Sheppard accepted the position of House Chairman.

In September, John Exter and Morgan Pritchett were honored with the German-American Friendship Award.

In soccer, the Junior Team won the league championship. They were not so successful in the USF&G Tournament. The Old-Timers took 2nd place in the Indoor League and participated in the Lower Paxton Tournament. The First Team finished 2nd in their league and played in the National and State cups. They took 1st place in the Delaware Tournament. The Reading Tournament was not held that year due to the death of a Baltimore Kickers friend and tournament president, Peter Weiss.

In March **1990**, Anna Steffen, Harold and Traudel Quaas, and Heinz and Hannelore Specht were honored with the German-American Friendship Award. On April 1st, an Ehrentag was held honoring the late Jim Briscoe and the remaining members of the Eichenkranz Singing Society.

Hans Steffen led another trip to Germany in September. Folker Schmeissner, Baltimore Kickers' German Language class instructor, was recognized with the Verdienstkreuz from the German Embassy.

On the soccer front, the Junior Team won the Memorial Tournament. They split for Indoor competition - a Red Team and a White Team. Both teams took 3rd place. The First Team landed 2nd place in League play. They lost 2:1 in overtime and penalty shooting to the Hummers in the semi-final of the National Open Cup. They, then lost 2:1 against La Dolce Vita in overtime in the National Amateur cup final and lost in the semi-final of the Stewart Cup. They beat Karlsruhe, Germany 3:1 and the team from the German ship, Rheinland/Pfalz, 7:1. The Old-Timers finished their 1st season with 7 wins, 2 losses and 1 tie. They ended second place in the second session and won the Lower Paxton Tournament. They also won against Erzgebirge, PA in a friendly game.

On March 7th, the Baltimore Kickers' First Team was one of the several different ethnic clubs to participate in Maryland Public Television's (MPT) Eastern European Freedom Celebration. Fritz Steffen and Susan White Bowden narrated the highlights of the Club and the soccer game. The players were Gordon Harris, Joe Dal Porte, Steve Callahan and David Kuhn. The Program celebrated the fall of the Berlin Wall and the emergence of democracy in the former Eastern Bloc countries.

The **1991** trip to Austria was postponed due to the conflict in the Persian Gulf.

On March 21st, Bob Sheppard, president of Deutschamerikanischer Buergerverein von Maryland and Baltimore Kickers' House Chairman, was awarded the Ehrenkreuz by the German Navy.

In May, Honorary Life members, Willie Steinebrunner and George Lechelt, made five shields, representing the newly released East German states, and presented them to the Club which are now hanging in the meeting room.

In June, the Junior Team participated in the National Soccer Hall of Fame Tournament in Oneonta, NY. They won the Fall Outdoor League in the A&B Division. The First Team lost in the semi-final Stewart Cup, coming in 2nd in league play. They took 1st place in the Delaware Tournament and won against the English Cable ship, Iris. The Old-Timers participated in the Lower Paxton Tournament in the Over 30 and Over 40 groups and finished 3rd in the Indoor League.

In **1992**, Club members, headed by Hans Steffen, took another trip to Austria.

In memory of a long time Baltimore Kickers member Frank Plogman, a memorial scholarship fund was established at UMBC for students of the German language. The Club held an Ehrentag honoring the Happy Wanders and the family of Frank Plogman. In the same year, the Kickers also hosted the crewmembers of the German tall ship *Gorch Fock* at the Clubhouse.

The 1992 soccer season saw the First Team take 2nd place in the league. They won the Delaware Tournament and played the *Gorch Fock* Team, winning 3:1. The Junior Team played against the Mönchengladbach Team from Germany and lost both the indoor and outdoor matches. The Old-Timers won 6 games, lost 3 in the 1st session of the Indoor League and took 2nd place in the 2nd session. They took 1st place in the Lower Paxton Over 40 group.

In **1993**, during the Club's 40th year, Hans Walter received the German-American Friendship Award. The Club purchased a newly designed 25-year pin to recognize member service. Also during this year, John Sanchez, one of the First Team players, was accepted to play at the Special Olympics for the Deaf in Bulgaria. This was the 2nd time he received this honorable selection.

The First Team had an undefeated season in the 1993 Summer League. They played in the Delaware and the 40th Anniversary Tournaments and captured 1st place in both. They lost in the semi-finals of the National Amateur and Rowland Cups. They played against the team from Lufthansa/Germany at Catonsville Community College winning 5:0.

The Junior Team played competitively in both the Indoor and Outdoor Leagues.

The Old-Timers came in 2nd in the Indoor session and won the Harrisburg, PA Over 40 Tournament.

In the 1993-94 Season, the First Team came in 2nd in League play, lost in the semi-final of the National Amateur Cup and the final in the National Open Cup. They took 2nd place in the Summer League and came in 1st place in the Delaware Tournament.

The Old-Timers finished their indoor session in 2nd place. They won again the Harrisburg, PA Over 40 Tournament, retiring the traveling trophy by virtue of their 3rd win.

The Junior Team finished their season with 4 wins, 3 losses and 1 tie. The Oldtimers Soccer Association of Maryland inducted Matt Fraunhoffer, Junior Team coach, into the Maryland Soccer Hall of Fame.

The Club members took a trip to Stoudt's Brewery in Adamstown, PA in June and in September, Hans Steffen led a group of Baltimore Kickers' members for another trip to Austria.

In the **1994-95 Season**, the First Team settled for 3rd place in the League. They won the coveted Stewart Cup but lost in the final in the Rowland Cup. They did well in the Delaware Tournament and took 2nd place in the Summer League. Fritz Steffen was awarded the President's Plaque by the Maryland Major Soccer League as its top manager in Division I

The Old-Timers took 4th place in the Indoor League and once again won the Harrisburg, PA Over 40 Tournament.

The Junior Team tied for 1st place.

The Baltimore Kickers sponsored a soccer clinic at Banneker Field in July. The Deutschamerikanischer Buergerverein von Maryland celebrated its 95th Anniversary in May 1995 with a banquet at the Sparrows Point Country Club. Baltimore Kickers' current president, John Exter, served as the Master of Ceremonies. Several Baltimore Kickers' members attended this affair.

A Family Day was held at the Clubhouse where the Annapolis Bavarian Dance group members gave various German folk dance lessons.

As in the past years, our Culture Director, Hans Steffen, led a group of Baltimore Kickers' members for a two-week trip to Austria in September.

The Baltimore Kickers initiated the club license plate program in October. The license tags include the soccer ball logo in black and white team colors.

A new sound system was added to the Clubhouse in November to enhance the listening enjoyment of the members.

In the 1995-96 Season, the First Team settled for 2nd place in the League, Delaware Tournament and Summer League. They did fair in Cup play. The Junior Team held their own during this season. They passed the 18 year-old age limit and retired. Victor Vega was named coach of the new Under 12 Junior Team succeeding Matt Fraunhoffer who retired after many years of dedicated service to the Team.

The Old-Timers took 2nd place in the Harrisburg PA Over 40 Tournament.

The Baltimore Kickers held its first Schützenfest on February 25, **1996**. This event was a sellout and a complete success that the club continues to hold this every year. James Monskie was crowned as the Club's 1st Schützenkönig. The Club members expanded the activities in the game room with the installation of regulation European-style dartboards. A multi-disc CD player was also added to the clubhouse's entertainment systems. DAB German draft beer was introduced at the bar and a 24-hour events hotline was established to give members up to date information on all Baltimore Kickers activities. The kitchen began serving reasonably priced dinners before the monthly meetings, which became immediately popular with the members and guests.

On November 2nd, two busloads of members traveled to the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City for their Oktoberfest. Everybody enjoyed the celebration.

In the 1996-97 Season, the First Team came in 2nd place in the League, took 3rd place in the MMDSA Spring League, and lost in the Cup games. They captured 2nd place in the Delaware Tournament. They won the Summer League and also won 5:2 against the team from the visiting German navy ship, Brandenburg.

A former Baltimore Kickers player, Carlos Stecco, was named Assistant Coach to Fritz Steffen. For the 3rd time, Baltimore Kickers' First Team member John Sanchez was selected to participate in the Special Olympics for the Deaf held in Denmark that year.

The Junior Team did especially well in their first season and advanced to the Division A class.

The Old-Timers won again the Harrisburg, PA Over 40 Tournament.

Mark Duerr assumed the office of Club President in March **1997**, succeeding John Exter who served as president since March 1989.

The newest ship in the German navy, the Frigate Brandenburg, visited Baltimore's Inner Harbor from June 2nd to June 6th. The Kickers held a Früschoppen at the clubhouse for the sailors and hosted a friendly soccer game between the ship's team and the First Team. After the game, the teams as well as many Baltimore Kickers' members and the ship's crew returned to the Clubhouse for an enjoyable evening with Alfred Zeller providing continuous entertainment.

The Club members ventured again to Europe in September, this time visiting Austria, Germany and the Czech Republic. A new travel destination was added in December visiting several of the Christkindlmarks throughout Germany.

Another expansion to the Club's game room, in addition to the four dartboards and regulation pool table were the Shuffleboard and Fussball. The Clubhouse began opening every Friday night to members interested in these activities.

The Maryland Oldtimers Soccer Association, at their bi-annual meeting on October 24th, honored the Baltimore Kickers with a plaque. The award was in recognition of the Kickers long time support of soccer in the Baltimore area. In the 1997-98 season, the First Team successfully competed in the MMSL, coming away as First Division Champions. They also won the Mid-Maryland Spring League. They were unsuccessful in the 3 major cups - Stewart, Rowland and National Amateur.

They lost in the MMDSA Interdivisional Cup 1:0 against the Three Brothers Team in overtime. In the Maryland State Champions Cup final, they lost 3:0 to Columbia Select. Our 45th Anniversary Tournament in 1998 was very successful.

The Junior Team captured 2nd place in the Beltway A League. In the Metro A League, they were runners-up. They took 2nd place in the Thanksgiving and the Indoor Holiday tournaments. They won 1st place in the 3rd annual Bays Cup for the Under 12 division. In the Under 14 Spring League, the team had 1 win, 4 losses and 2 ties.

An Ehrentag was held on January 11, **1998** at the Clubhouse to recognize John and Doris Exter for their many years of dedicated service to the Baltimore Kickers. A sellout crowd gathered at the clubhouse for the celebration in their honor.

On February 6th, the game room was dedicated to long-time member Alfred Zeller, and officially proclaimed "Zeller Keller" in his honor. A custom table tennis board was designed to fit over the pool table, further expanding the variety of activities available in the "Zeller Keller".

On March 6, Bob Gibson was elected as Club President.

On May 15, the Oldtimers Soccer Association of Maryland inducted Baltimore Kickers members Alfred Zeller and Carlos Stecco into the Maryland Soccer Hall of Fame.

Many members enrolled in our newly formed Stein Club with personalized beer mugs etched with the distinctive Baltimore Kickers logo.

On September 12 at our 45th Stiftungsfest the following members were honored as Honorary Life Members: Joe Heine, Doris Exter, Irene Juergensen, Hannelore Specht and Traudel Quaas.

Fritz Steffen received an award for serving 25 years as the First Team manager and extraordinary service to soccer and to the Baltimore Kickers in particular. Awards were also presented to Matt Fraunhofer for longstanding service as team manager prior to Fritz, and to Klaus Haarich as Old Timers Team manager for 19 years.

Our 1998 travel took us to the Lechtal/Tirol area in September and Bad Windsheim in December for the Christmas Market tours.

The weekend following Thanksgiving saw a new event added to our many Club activities. In conjunction with Zion Church, we held a traditional Christkindlmarkt in the church's historic Adlersaal. This successful event featured authentic German delicacies and crafts. The Christkindl Markt has become an annual event on the Kickers activities calendar. We again participated in the Delaware Tournament taking second place during the 1998 – 1999 Season.

The First Team was relegated to the Division II in the Maryland Major Soccer League (MMSL) this year due to their performance. Fritz immediately started to rebuild the team for the following Spring Season. The Junior Team won the CMSL Fall League with a 6-1-1 record. They also won the Edreco, Metro Cup Thanksgiving Classic and the Bays Cup Tournaments under the skilled coaching of Mr. Victor Vega.

On April 9, **1999** the Junior Team played Borussia Mönchengladbach, Germany which we housed and hosted, exchanging 20 years of friendship.

On May 14, Coach Fritz Steffen was inducted into the Maryland Soccer Hall of Fame in recognition of his contributions to the game as player, coach and manager. Sadly, on June 25th, while inspecting and preparing our home field, Fritz suffered a massive and fatal heart attack. He truly lived and died doing what he loved – Soccer!

Vienna and Arnbruck were the destinations of our travel group this year, and we again visited Bad Windsheim in December.

Carlos Stecco succeeded Fritz as coach of the Baltimore Kickers First Team for the 1999 – 2000 Season. On August 1st, the Kickers lost 3:0 in overtime to the Shooting Stars in the final of the Mid-Maryland Soccer Association Spring League and on August 7th, the team took 3rd place in the Delaware Tournament that was dedicated to the memory of Fritz Steffen. This year was one of rebuilding our First Team, competing rather successfully in the MMSL and the Mid-Maryland Spring League.

The Junior Team again completed successfully, placing 2nd in the BBSL A League (5-2-1), and 1st in the

CMSL with a 6-2 record. They also won the October Baltimore Classic, the Bays Cup and Mountain Top Tournament, and took 2nd in the South Penn Classic and Thanksgiving Classic.

In January **2000**, member Volker Schmeissner discussed a proposed German – American Cultural Center and Museum in Washington, D.C. and announced that Cecilia League has made a memorial donation in her father's name and will match all donations up to \$10,000 from the Kickers. In June, the Kickers entertained the officers and crew of the tall ship "Gorch Fock" while it visited Baltimore Harbor.

Our September trip this year included Vienna, Prague and various German cities. Bad Windsheim again served as our Treffpunkt for the December trip.

Late September, saw the renaming of Banneker field #3 in Catonsville to the Fritz Steffen Field in Fritz's memory for his dedication and volunteer work for 23 years with the Catonsville Recreation Council. In December yet another honor for Fritz as the MMSL renamed the First Division Champion Cup the Fritz Steffen Cup. Anna Steffen had the honor of presenting the first Fritz Steffen Cup to Hen's SC.

On September 8, Carlos Stecco retired as First Team manager. He was replaced by player/coach Carlos Cysneiros.

Our rebuilding efforts were rewarded as we won the Conference B Bracket Division II and the Division II Championship Cup. More importantly, we advanced to Division I status again and promptly won the DiMarco Cup and Indoor League. In the Delaware Tournament we took 3rd place. We were back!

A new youth team developed this year U-11. Finishing 2nd in the CMSL League and Thanksgiving and Bay Summer Classics.

The year **2001** marked the 25th year in our clubhouse at 26 South Broadway.

On May 19, the front room of the Kickers Clubhouse was dedicated as the Fritz Steffen room. Many old friends and Kickers members were in attendance to honor his memory.

There was big news for what did NOT happen in 2001. The annual Oktoberfest was cancelled due to repairs at the 5th Regiment Armory. It resumed in 2002.

Changes to the By-laws were enacted in December with Board of Directors holding a 2-year term of office beginning with the March 2002 elections. Travel plans took us to the Weissensee and Lugano, Switzerland. In addition to our traditional December trip to Bad Windsheim, a second group of members visited the Erzgebirge region's Christmas Markets.

As the 2001-02 Season began, the First Team participated in a friendly game against the Men's National Deaf Soccer Team in March, with the Kickers winning 2-1. John Sanchez, a veteran Kickers player, played with the visiting team in preparation of their trip to Rome, Italy. We captured the Championship in the Mid Maryland Soccer Association Spring League. In the Delaware Tournament we took 2nd place. Our Jr. Team U-12, won both the Sunday CMSA League and the Bays Cup.

As **2002** unfolded, we began preparations for our upcoming 50th Anniversary celebration with the Anniversary Committee headed by Phil Hucht and Carolyn Helldorfer. We instituted a welcoming committee that greets members and guests at the meetings. The "Kinder Keepers" entertain the young children of our members while they attend the monthly meetings.

On May 4, we co-sponsored our first Mai Tanz (May Dance) with Zion Lutheran Church.

This year's cultural trip ventured to Budapest, Vienna, Arnbruck and the Bavarian Forest. Our Christmas trips were again to Bad Windsheim and Chemnitz/Saxony.

Past President Alfred Baumann passed away on September 13, 2002. He was instrumental in the purchase of our Clubhouse at 26 S. Broadway. The Koch Family of the Weissensee and Frau Schultz of Bad Windsheim were made honorary members of the club.

On December 10, Fritz Steffen was posthumously inducted into the Catonsville Recreation and Parks Hall of Fame for his over 23 years of dedicated service.

At the start of the 2002-03 Season, our First Team had the distinction of 50 consecutive years in league play – the longest of any team fielded in the area. We came in 8th place out of twelve in league play.

It was a year to remember for our Junior Team. It reached the Championship game in the 5 tournaments it played, winning 2 and placing second in the other three.

We celebrated our **Golden Anniversary Year in 2003.**

Our gala 50th Anniversary celebration was held on May 3 at Columbus Gardens in Perry Hall. Nearly 450 persons were in attendance to recognize the Club's 50 years of achievements. In addition to hosting representatives from the German Embassy, the Club honored Anna Steffen, General Soccer Manager; Werner Juergensen, founding member and Club president from 1964 – 1965; Alfred Zeller, Club president in 1966; and posthumously, Joseph Hanle, Club president in 1955. Joe passed away in early 2003.

Honorary Life memberships were awarded to Rose Gaida, Oslinde Grohs, Annemarie Horn, Hilda Maex, Maria Ruth Steffen, Cherlein Scharpe and Annegret Kasper.

The *Heimatlänge* provided the evening's entertainment. All in attendance agreed this celebration was the most enjoyable event ever held by the Club. Chairman Phil Hucht and his committee were congratulated by the membership for a memorable evening.

Our 2nd Annual Maifest and Dance was held at Zion Church's Adlersaal on May 10.

In this anniversary year, the club trips included Tirol and Tuscany, Spain and Portugal, the Catskills, and the Stuttgart region for the Christmas Markets.

An Appreciation Party was held for the visiting Werner Koch family at Zion Church on November 8 in recognition of their hospitality during our many trips to their resort in Austria.

Our Junior Team again played competitively, finishing tied for 1st place in the Indoor League. They took 1st place in both the Spring League and Fall Season and won the championship against the Newark Barons.

The 1st Team was not as successful however, losing in both the Rowland and Stewart Cups. They captured 2nd place in the Delaware Tournament. For the 2003 – 2004 Season, the team settled for 5th place out of 12 teams.

The next 50 years began in **2004** with John League elected Club President in March. Elli Hein was named new House Chairman to succeed Bob Sheppard. Anna Steffen announced that she would not seek re-election as General Soccer Manager and recommended that Victor Vega, successful coach of the Junior Team, be nominated for this position.

A new event, the Springfest, was held May 21 – 23 at the Dundalk American Legion Post field. Phil Hucht chaired this event that brought rides, live German music, food and crafts to the area. A wine garden was also provided.

On the soccer pitch, the 1st Team lost 2-0 in the National Amateur Cup quarterfinals and lost 1-0 in the Rowland Cup semi-finals. In the Stewart Cup they lost in overtime in the quarterfinals 2-1. On June 19 we played the visiting German team, SV Griesbach from Tirschenreuth at the Dundalk American Legion field in conjunction with our annual Workers Appreciation Picnic. The team won this match 5-1. The 50th Anniversary Tournament that had been postponed from 2003 was played on June 26 at Baneker Field, with the team finishing in 3rd place. John Sanchez, a steady, dedicated player on the 1st Team for 18 years, retired due to a knee injury.

The Junior Team won the first Haribo Tournament played in conjunction with the Springfest and also won the Beltway Tournament.

Our Clubhouse Search Committee visited a potential property in Edgemere, a Knights of Columbus hall, but no further action was taken.

This year, the club's "Happy Wanderers" travel group visited the Black Forest and Alsace in September, the Catskills with the Skat Club in June, and the Nuremburg/Bad Windsheim area in December.

Member Karl Heymann passed away in December. Karl's family was long-associated with the Deutsches Haus in Baltimore.

We held our 500th General Meeting on January 7, **2005**. On January 16, we deservedly honored Anna Steffen and Elfriede Heine with an *Ehrentag* for their years of dedicated service to the Kickers.

A Cultural Forum was established in January with members of the Kickers, the Edelweiss Club and Zion Lutheran Church to cooperatively promote German culture and history in the Baltimore area.

A new event was introduced this year – the Heuriger. The Clubhouse was transformed into a comfortable Viennese café setting for the sampling of German-style wines from a Maryland vintner.

Our second Springfest was held April 23 – 24 at the Towson Court House Plaza. This proved to be a successful event both financially and for the large number of volunteers who participated.

The Club contributed \$250 to the *Pride of Baltimore II* for general upkeep as she sailed to the opening of the Bremerhaven Emigration Museum in Germany.

The Junior Team continued where they left off in 2004, winning the championship in a U-15 tournament against Westminster SC and placing 2nd in two other tournaments. They finished 3rd in the Spring League and in 2nd place in the Williamsburg, Va. Tournament

The 1st Team lost in the quarterfinals of the Rowland Cup and lost in the first round of the Stewart Cup. We placed 3rd in the annual Delaware Sängerbund Friendly Tournament in August. Carlos Cysneiros resigned as coach of the 1st Team after five years. His successor was veteran Kicker player Ricky Sanchez.

The Kickers made a generous donation to Zion Lutheran Church for their elevator fund. Zion is the location for our annual Christkindlmarkt.

Trips in 2005 were made to Frankenmuth, MI, in June, the Tirol in Austria and Saxony for the Christmas Markets.

In **2006**, not to be outdone by Angela Merkel in Germany, the Club witnessed the election of its first woman president, Margot Senula.

The Cultural Forum was expanded to include the Deutsche Geselligkeit. The Forum held a Mai Tanz in the Adlersaal at Zion Church as their first combined affair.

Yet again, the Junior Team won the Spring Season championship. They also won the Indoor Christmas Tournament. They finished 3rd in the Indoor League. The 1st Team again placed 3rd in the annual Delaware Sängerbund Friendly Tournament in August. We were unsuccessful in both the Stewart and Rowland Cups this year.

And with further recognition of the ladies, a U-17 Girls Soccer Team was established, coached by Preston and Lisa Green.

The 106th German Festival, long held in Baltimore City, was moved to the Timonium Fairgrounds in Baltimore County this year. The location under the Grandstand proved a much more accommodating and successful venue.

The 2006 Maryland Oktoberfest was unfortunately the last celebration of this annual event. Declining attendance, attributed by many to a lack of promotion and innovation, contributed to its demise. The 5th Regiment Armory location was also mentioned as a factor. The Kickers were a one-third owner of the Oktoberfest, along with the German Radio Klub and Club Fidelitas.

We lost a dedicated Honorary Life member in Elfriede Heine this year. Elfriede was a devoted supporter of the Kickers, always available to participate in most every event, either at the Clubhouse or outside locations. She will be missed.

Our cultural trips included Berlin, Thuringia and Saxony in September, New Braunsfels, TX in November for their Wurst Fest, and Salzburg and Weissensee for Christmas shopping in December.

The 1st Team was moved to the Second Division in **2007** with hope of improving during the upcoming season. They took 2nd place in the DSB Tournament in Delaware. The Junior Team was most likely distracted during their Ocean City Tournament in March as they did no better than 5th place. They were second in the Spring League. The Girls Team began league play in the fall, participating in the Calverton Tournament in October where they tied for 1st place but lost in the tie-breaker. They won the Pikesville Tournament outright and took 2nd in the Westminster Four Seasons Tournament.

We congratulated Anna Steffen as she was inducted into the USASA Hall of Fame for her tireless efforts in promoting what Pelé called the "Beautiful Game."

On June 16 we held a Soccer Party at the Clubhouse for players and families to become more acquainted with Club members and our other activities. We also welcomed the new Girls Team. There were 60 guests in attendance. Victor Vega retired in June after 11 very successful years as coach of the Junior Team.

Elli Hein resigned in October as House Chairman. Elli was very instrumental in arranging much needed Clubhouse repairs. She also organized our inventories and made many improvements to our kitchen area. John Exter assumed responsibility as the Kitchen Chairman.

In lieu of the cancelled Maryland Oktoberfest, we celebrated with our own Fest on October 7 at the Clubhouse. Travel this year included Franconia and Bavaria in September, and the Stuttgart Christmas Market in December.

In **2008**, we begin our 55th year of promoting German "*Kultur, Sport und Gemütlichkeit*." The streak continued with the March election of our second woman president, Betty Niemann. Betty previously held this title with the Edelweiss Club. Dutch Niemann was appointed as the Club's new House Chairman.

At our *Stiftungsfest* this year, we bestowed Honorary Life memberships to Elli Hein, Phil Hucht, Ray Scanland, Lewis Johnson and Denis Smith.

As we celebrate yet another milestone, our Club traditions continue with our yearly Fasching, Schlachtfests, Schützenfest, May Dance and Shrimp Feast. We also celebrate at the Heuriger, Club Picnic, Crab Feast, German Festival, Christkindlmarkt and Children's Christmas Party, among others. We have expanded our knowledge of, and appreciation for, our Germanic homeland and its many cultural offerings through our annual trips abroad. After 55 years, the Kickers remain an active, congenial club with a diverse membership whose background includes educators, craftsmen, musicians, professionals – in short, a group much like the German immigrants who contributed so much to our Country's growth and development!