

# PERSPEKTIVEN

PERSPEKTIVEN Volume 4, No. 4

Fall 2005

## German Odyssey: The Flaggs' incredible journey

*"Collecting is like hunger that wants to satisfy your heart and soul and feast your eyes...In fact, collecting itself is a very creative activity. You are creating an entity which never existed before."*

Richard Flagg - from a 1978 speech

By Kathleen Geraghty  
and William Lauritzen

In 1932, a young Jewish boy and a Protestant girl were married in the city of Frankfurt, Germany. Although this marriage was forbidden in both religions, the groom's father held a celebration in his home following the civil ceremony that incorporated traditions from both faiths.

Like most newlyweds, the young couple was happy and lived sparsely in setting up their household, but always had a special affinity for clocks and decorative items. Two years later, their daughter arrived, and their collecting was delayed for a time.

But then again, it was Germany in the 1930s; neither of them could have possibly foreseen the other world events that would delay much more than their collection of art.

This story of a young family starting out is like many others. But after this quiet, middle-class beginning, the story takes turn after dramatic turn as the couple attempts to flee from the political upheaval and the impending war in Europe. You may recognize the names of these remarkable immigrants, Richard and Erna Flagg, from their art collection at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

Since the early 1930s, Richard and Erna Flagg amassed an incredible collection of artwork, which they have since donated to the Milwaukee Art Museum. Their first love was European Decorative Art and Sculpture, followed by a collection of highly emotive Haitian art, begun in the 1970s.



Richard and Erna Flagg  
(in their home 1992)

Theirs is a truly remarkable story of determination.

Erna Zubrod and Richard Flagg met at a neighborhood dancing class when they were both 17 and  
[Please turn to Flaggs, Page 4]





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## From the President

### IN PERSPECTIVE

By all accounts, the 25th annual German Fest of 2005 was ein ausgezeichneter Erfolg. If the amount and quality of activity performed by the GOETHE HAUS is any gage of achievement, I can vouch for its success. In no small way did GOETHE HAUS contribute to the overall success of this year's Fest. A brief historical review should put my observation in perspective. A scant six years ago there was little or no evidence of GOETHE HAUS' presence at German Fest other than by attendance. The first year we exhibited a large card board display with pictures of our first Kinder Kamps. By this year we persuaded the German Fest authorities to let us have a full-sized tent. Thus under one roof we were able to place the Computer Test, our oral history project, our membership hospitality area, the Berlin Wall exhibit, the used book sale and last but not least Professor Charles James' Deutsch Disco program. All of our volunteers were so special in their efforts. In fact we had so many volunteers that we loaned them out to other groups who needed help. I must, however, give special thanks to the students of Milwaukee School of Engineering and the German Honor students from Rufus King. Thanks also to Dr. John Pustejovsky for organizing the Berlin Wall exhibit.

ALLES GUTE, ALLES GOETHE  
Ted E. Wedemeyer Jr.

### PERSPEKTIVEN

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# And we are back to school - zurueck zur Schule!

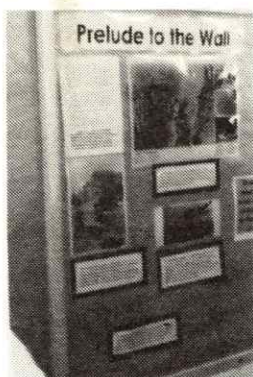
**Katharina Hren**  
Executive Director

Since I am always putting classes together and teaching, I feel like I am always in the school of life. Aren't we all still in school, with all that we learn through our jobs, from our loved ones, from our children? The most oft-repeated lesson of my life is: As soon as I think I've learned it all, I realize how much I have left to learn...and how little I know!

It is such a privilege to work in education and be able to constantly learn something new. Different languages give us different perspectives when it comes to how we communicate with others. Some days we as individuals seem as complex as foreign countries to each other, and there is always something to widen our own personal horizon as we contemplate the world.

Our Kinder Kamps took place this year at Carroll College and Tamarack, and we hope to increase them by theme and level next year. We have added a great many teachers to our membership by offering a free year membership at our "Bausteine" seminars. We have had a number of college and high school students from various German programs assist us at Goethe House this year:

Birthe Klappstein (Bremen, Germany), Genevieve Winter (Marquette University), Jeff Volling (Marquette University), Miranda Beck (Nicolet High School), Matthew Groose (Nicolet High School and now UW-Madison), Tatiana Batova (UWM Graduate Student).



Our tent at German Fest was livelier than ever with a "piece of the Berlin wall" recreated in the center.

Since I was born in Berlin, I found this to be particularly welcome centerpiece to our tent! The wall seemed to attract quite a diverse group of visitors to the tent, rather like the population of Berlin itself, if you think about it.

Dr. Charles James, UW-Madison German Department/GH advisory board, offered up his services as DJ to our tent and gave the tent some cool dance vibes. Our hospitality corner for members (beer and soft drinks provided by Sprecher brewery) made for quite a bit of merriment!



Special thanks go to Boone Sestvold (MSOE), Steven Turner (MSOE), Alexis LaJoie, Diana Felsmann, Carol Bruss, Eileen Johannsen, Dr. John Pustejovsky (the brawn and brains behind the Berlin Wall), Dr. Sy Kreilein, Lorraine Hoffmann, Fred and Joan Kessler, Charles James, Jill Haas (the Board member who coordinated all of the volunteers), Sabine Beirold and her team of Rufus King students who have no lack of enthusiasm, our tireless president Ted Wedemeyer and his wife Susan, Carl (the creator of Professor Umlaut) and Evelyn Ruppert, Dr. Sam Scheibler, and Father John Carlson. Please forgive me if I have forgotten anyone.



Our annual picnic was once again blessed by good weather. Every year the rain always seems to stop early in the day. A delightful feast was shared by all thanks to the pot luck contributions and the expert brat grilling by my mother, Gudrun Edingshaus Hren.

We hope to have a lantern walk at a senior center in November, and our annual dinner and Christmas party for children and their families are coming up at the beginning of December. Don't forget to include us in your holiday calendar of events!

Auf geht's...zurueck zur Schule!



## German odyssey: The Flaggs' incredible journey to the U.S.

[Flaggs, from Page 1]

they were soon inseparable. Richard had always been a collector, but his first "official" purchase was a clock, bought at an auction not long after he and Erna met. They were both well-educated, and fondly remember Erna's father's lessons in connoisseurship. (Interestingly enough, Richard went to Vienna at the age of 21 to study art and voice.) He returned and set aside his artistic ambitions to work at one of his father's tanneries.



From the Flaggs collection:  
Automated Clock in the form of a Dromedary.  
Southern Germany

Early 17<sup>th</sup> century with later movement

Although he came from a secular Jewish family, he lost the job because of his father's heritage. He decided to move on to Holland with the hope of finding a position in a European country that was still free. He left Erna and their daughter, Gabriele, because Erna yet believed they would be safe in Germany.

Richard found himself in the town of Breda, where he began working at another tannery. Soon after, Hitler invaded Poland, and Erna and Gabriele escaped from Germany just before the borders closed. In Breda, they joined Richard and lived in a small hotel, where things were relatively peaceful for a time.

Richard's brother, Kenneth, had already taken his family to the United States, and Richard realized that he, too, should consider moving his family abroad.

On the morning of May 10th, 1940, they awoke at 4:00 a.m. with the sounds of German bombers over the city. The time was known as "Hitler's Hour" because German attacks normally began early in the morning. The city was in chaos, with French soldiers going to meet the German army.

"The French were trying to stop the tanks with machine guns mounted on motorcycles," Richard recalled. Within a day, the French army was in retreat. It was decided that Breda would be the location for the army to make a stand, which meant that the entire population of 50,000 people had to be evacuated almost overnight. The refugees were instructed to take only what they could carry, so as not to jam the streets with cars.

The Flaggs were about to leave their hotel room on foot when they met an elderly French minister who begged them to drive him out of the city in their car. He had a French passport, and claimed that he could get them across the borders with the Flaggs posing as his servants. Erna was ill, and there was 5-year-old Gabriele to consider, so Richard took the risk. They crowded into the car and began driving towards Belgium. On the way, the Flaggs caught up with the line of refugees, where Richard saw one of his friends pushing a baby carriage and carrying his 2-year-old daughter on his back. Unable to stop and help him, they drove on.

The Flaggs successfully passed through every checkpoint until they reached Antwerp, where they were stopped and arrested as spies. The French had reason to be leery of German spies, and they thought that traveling as a family was the perfect disguise. The family was interrogated, and sent to prison, where Richard and Erna were sent to different locations.

When Antwerp was bombed, they were put into boxcars labeled "paratroopers and spies" and taken to France.

Although stories differ on this point, according to Richard, Erna spent an entire year convincing the authorities to release them. Around her, almost a dozen people died every day from the bad conditions at the camp. Erna eventually convinced her captors that she was no threat and appealed to the U.S. Consulate to get Richard released. The Consulate required proof that

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## German odyssey: The Flaggs' incredible journey to the U.S.

[Flaggs, from Page 4]

they were skilled workers who could bring their talents to the U.S. Richard had some earlier training in commercial art, so he drew some political cartoons for the staff. With his quick thinking, they were able to qualify for visas.

Immediately, they booked passage on a ship out of Lisbon. In the office, they met another German woman who was fleeing from the Nazis and the Flaggs decided to assist her. The embassy officials suggested that they visit the "American Friends" organization, operating in Vichy, (The Quakers were allowed to operate there because they had no official ties to the U.S.) There, they learned that the French would not allow any refugees out, and Spain would not allow them to pass through on their way to Portugal.

They did manage to book passage on a ship going from Marseilles to Casablanca, and then on to the U.S. When they reached the port, they were told there were no more tickets to board. In desperation, they called an American from the Quaker agency. They managed to bribe the official into giving them three tickets, but when they saw the ship, they were dumbstruck. It was decrepit and old, with passengers camping on the decks. (Richard described it as looking like the ship from the movie "Exodus.") As it was leaving, the ship was stopped by the British, who had found another ship leaving Vichy to be full of spies. For the next week, the ship was moored at sea, waiting.

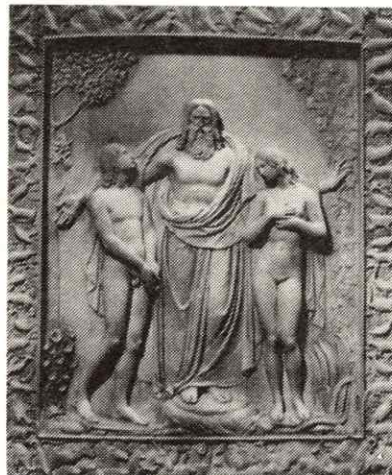
Soon after, members of the Moroccan army boarded the ship and took the refugees to a prison camp in Casablanca. The camp commander was sympathetic to the Flaggs and many other prisoners, and let them go free. Two ships were allowed to leave for the U.S., but Richard's visa had expired and they were forced to remain.

Every morning, Richard went to the embassy to ask for a visa. Finally, he received one, but was refused a visa for Erna. The consulate officials told him that since she still had relatives in Germany, she was considered a risk. They suggested that they divorce so that he could go on to the U.S., but Richard refused. They had been separated for too long, and spend too much time in prisons.

Eventually, the official took pity on them and they made their way to Lisbon via Algiers.

The last chapter in their ordeal was perhaps the most nerve-racking of all. The Flaggs arrived in Lisbon, only to find that their passports were not accepted because they had expired German passports, renewed by the French and stamped by the British. The company running the ship

suggested that the Flaggs go to the German embassy and ask to have them renewed. As a Jewish refugee fleeing



From the Flag collection:  
Marriage of Adam and Eve  
Konrad Eberhard (1768-1859)  
Probably Munich or Allgäu, Germany ca. 1830-40  
Bavarian soapstone

Germany, this was the worst possible thing the Flaggs could hear. But after agonizing over the decision for a month, Richard walked in to the German embassy and asked them to renew their passports. He described the moment when the clerk took the passports into the backroom as one of the most traumatic events in his life. What happened next seemed like a miracle: the passports were renewed with no problems at all! Two years after their ordeal had begun, the Flaggs family boarded a ship bound for the U.S.

Settling in Milwaukee, the Flaggs were eventually able to start collecting again. They learned that some possessions left in Holland had escaped the war, only to be destroyed by an ordinary house fire. They maintained an apartment in New York, but made their home in Milwaukee a fascinating, welcoming place for friends and family.

With a treasure trove of rare and antique items, friends and family marveled at their exquisite taste and the fascinating pieces they collected. In 1991, the Flaggs donated both collections to the Milwaukee Art Museum. Their incredible gift remains one of the single most important gifts to a North American museum.

Information for this article was gathered from a 1997 oral history interview of the late Mr. Richard Flagg, by William Lauritzen. Also, the foreword of the book "A Renaissance Treasury: The Flagg Collection of European Decorative Art and Sculpture" published by the Milwaukee Art Museum provided useful details on the Flagg collections.



## Zeidler writes of his 12 years as the mayor of Milwaukee



Photo - Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

**Mayor Frank P. Zeidler**  
1948 - 1960

"*A Liberal in City Government* is the political testament of a singular figure in modern American history. As Milwaukee's mayor for 12 years and its leading citizen-statesman ever since, Frank Zeidler earned broad respect for his integrity, his vision, and unwavering commitment to his Socialist ideals. This book, written from the intersection of principles and politics, sheds light on a formative period in our nation's urban history - the years just after World War II - but it is even more compelling as the record of a man who never ever stopped trying to lift the society around him to higher levels of justice and compassion."

-Milwaukee Historian John Gurda

In a revealing memoir, Frank P. Zeidler reflects on his victories and losses during his tenure as mayor of Milwaukee from 1948 to 1960. Although the era was marked by Cold War tensions and McCarthyism, Frank Zeidler held fast to his Socialist ideals and was re-elected mayor each time he campaigned. He was the last Socialist mayor of a major American city.

The memoir is titled "*Liberal in City Government - My Experiences as Mayor of Milwaukee*" published by Milwaukee Publishers, LLC (202 pages, including an index, bibliography and 12 pages of black and white photos. Hardcover \$34.95. Softcover \$19.95).

Zeidler was instrumental in the establishment of Goethe House of Wisconsin, is an emeritus member of the Goethe House of Wisconsin board of directors and a contributing editor to PERSPEKTIVEN, our quarterly publication.

During his three terms as mayor, Zeidler played a pivotal role in Milwaukee's growth, more than doubling the land area of the city while fighting the forces of suburban sprawl. At the same time, he succeeded in advancing the tradition of honest and efficient government established by Milwaukee Socialists in the first half of the century.

Zeidler explores issues that are still relevant today. Can vital services and resources be shared fairly among vastly different communities? Can governments find new ways to put aside conflicts and achieve genuine cooperation? Can third party candidates position themselves to win public office, and if so, can they provide effective leadership without the support of a powerful party machine? Can government be kept free of graft and corruption? Can the public interest be served if government hears only the voices of powerful special interest groups while ignoring the needs of individuals who are too weak to have a voice?

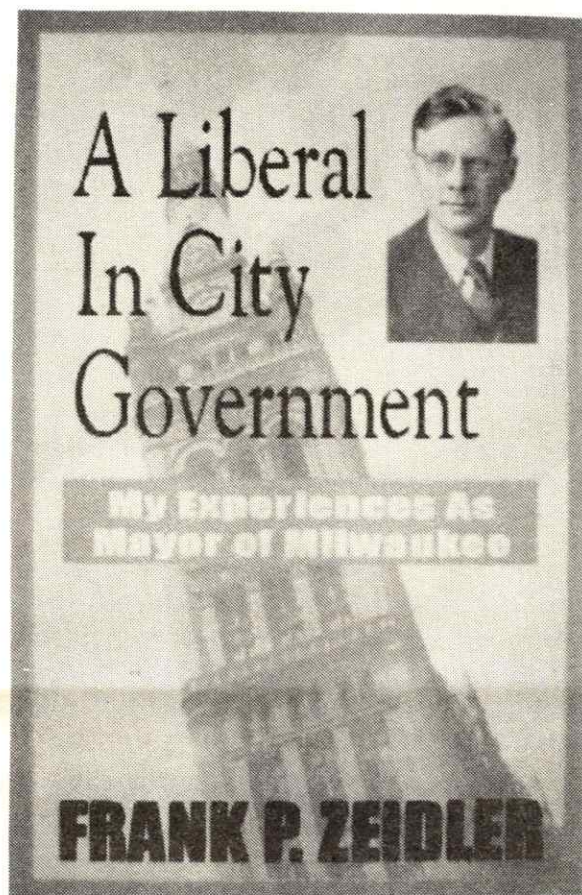
As mayor, Frank Zeidler was widely respected and highly regarded, even by people who disagreed with his political philosophy. His reputation as a man of compassion and integrity has continued to grow over the years. Many people today regard him as Milwaukee's best mayor.

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## Zeidler writes of his 12 years as the mayor of Milwaukee



**From the introduction to  
"A Liberal in City Government"**

Frank Zeidler wrote this book in 1962. Now, more than four decades after it was created, his account appears in print.

The book is divided into three chapters.

In the first chapter, Zeidler discusses his successful campaign for mayor despite strong opposition from business interests and the press. *The Milwaukee Journal*, in its company history published in 1981, confessed that its coverage of the 1948 race had not been completely objective and impartial. *The Journal* was in fact so committed to seeing Zeidler defeated that it was secretly involved in writing the press handouts of Zeidler's opponent.

Unknown to *Journal* management, Zeidler's press handouts were aided by the volunteer efforts of a veteran *Journal* reporter, Hale Champion. A number of workers at *The Journal* were sympathetic to Zeidler's candidacy and

some even attempted a minor revolt until they were threatened with dismissal from their jobs. *The Journal's* efforts to defeat Zeidler ultimately proved ineffective.

Author Robert W. Wells noted, "Around the newsroom, it was felt that *The Journal's* heavy-handed tactics had backfired."

In the second chapter, Zeidler discusses some of the various problems he faced during his three terms as mayor. He also describes the day-to-day duties and burdens of serving as the leader of a major American city.

For Zeidler, foremost among those duties is a constant dedication to a strict set of ethical standards.

The third chapter recounts the city's ambitious efforts to expand its territory despite vigorous suburban opposition. Although the last such conflict in Milwaukee County officially ended in 1962, annexation battles are still fought today among cities, towns and villages in outlying areas of Wisconsin, and these struggles are often filled with the same sort of drama, bitterness and strong language.

The third chapter also describes the local fight between municipalities over water and sewers. This fight, of course, remains with us today, and Zeidler's work offers a valuable glimpse into the historical origins of the current issues, which have yet to be resolved.

**An excerpt from**

**"A Liberal in City Government"**

**The campaign put a considerable strain on my wife Agnes and our six small children. It was a trying circumstance for them for their lives were much disrupted.**

**Mrs. Zeidler helped in the campaign committees and also participated with me on radio programs in which we talked over problems of the government of interest to families.**

**One of the factors that tended to dispel the charges of my being a menace to democracy was a picture published in *The Journal* of Mrs. Zeidler and myself walking on Second Street near our home with the six little children. A public official comes out**  
[Please turn to Zeidler, Page 8]



## Zeidler writes of his 12 years as the mayor of Milwaukee

[Zeidler, from Page 7]

of a certain milieu and social background. He has developed loyalties and ideas of values that profoundly affect his decisions on matters of public interest. This fact was as true of me as of any other person ever



Photo - Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

The new mayor shown with his family in 1948

elected to a position of responsibility and my subsequent actions reflected again and again the background of liberalism from which I had come.

No matter how hard the press attacked me, I could not desert the principles and values of liberalism I had acquired in the previous years, and my campaign was unique only in that I was a member of the Socialist Party running on a liberal platform.

### About the author

Frank Zeidler was born in Milwaukee in 1912, the son of a barber and the third of four children in a German Lutheran family. He grew up in the Merrill Park neighborhood on Milwaukee's near west side. After graduating from West Division High School and attending classes at Marquette University, he found himself compelled

by The Depression to seek employment. He worked as a surveyor and topographical engineer from 1931 to 1948.

Despite the hardships of The Depression, Frank Zeidler continued to educate himself by studying extensively at the Clybourn Street branch of the Milwaukee Public Library. There he read the works of many prominent Socialists and was attracted by the ideal of cooperative commonwealths. He joined the Socialist Party in 1932 and became the secretary of the party in Milwaukee in 1937. He met his wife Agnes through work for the party and they married in 1939.

In 1940, Frank Zeidler's older brother Carl was elected mayor of Milwaukee. Ambitious, handsome and politically moderate, Carl Zeidler was considered a likely candidate for national office. However, Carl stepped down as mayor in the middle of his first term to join the war and was killed in action at sea.

In 1941, Frank Zeidler was elected to the Milwaukee School Board. In 1948, he ran for mayor against Henry Reuss. Zeidler won the race despite attempts by the press to brand him a dangerous subversive. He served as mayor until 1960 when he decided not to run for a fourth term.

As mayor, Frank Zeidler played a pivotal role in Milwaukee's growth, more than doubling the land area of the city while fighting the forces of suburban sprawl. He led the city's postwar urban renewal effort that saw the advent of public housing and numerous other improvements including the construction of a new expressway system, museum, arena and civic center. At the same time, he succeeded in advancing the tradition of honest and efficient government established by Milwaukee Socialists in the first half of the century.

Since leaving office, Zeidler has continued to pursue activities geared toward achieving social justice. He has worked as an arbitrator, college instructor, consultant, historian and activist. In 1976, he ran for president as the Socialist Party candidate.

Frank Zeidler continues to reside on Milwaukee's near north side with his wife Agnes in the home they have shared since 1946. Together they have raised six children. Their daughter Jeanne Zeidler is the mayor of Williamsburg, Virginia.

*www.milwaukeepublishers.com provided the*

*text for this story. "A Liberal in City Government" may be ordered through the web site.*



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## Upcoming German events in southeast Wisconsin



### Celebrate Oktoberfest with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra! October 7-9

Join Doc Severinsen and the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra at the Marcus Center to celebrate the most German tradition of all - Oktoberfest! The symphony is offering special offers for the weekend concerts - just for Goethe House members! Guest group Sonnenschein Express features traditional alpine instruments, gemutlichkeit and spass wherever they perform!

Just call Jennifer at the MSO Ticket Office and mention "Goethe House" to take advantage of these great deals: 414.291.7605 ext. 210.

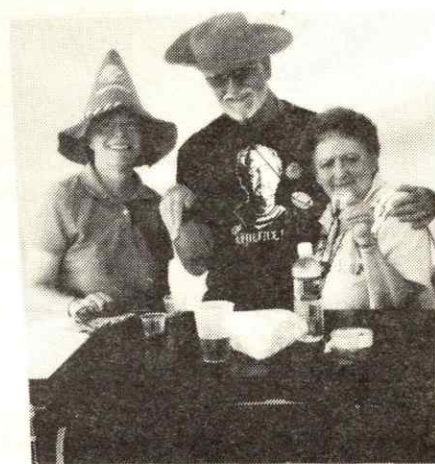
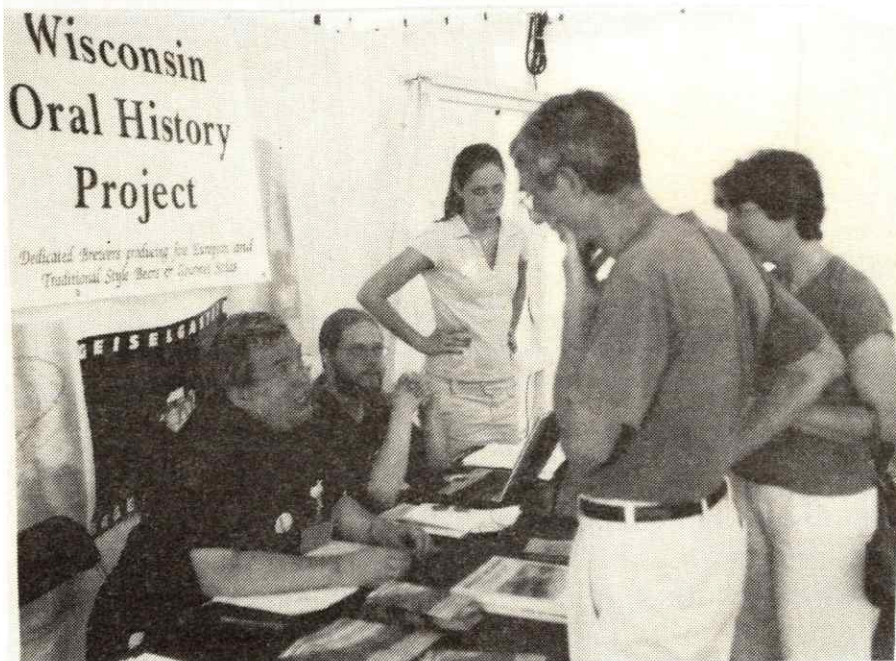
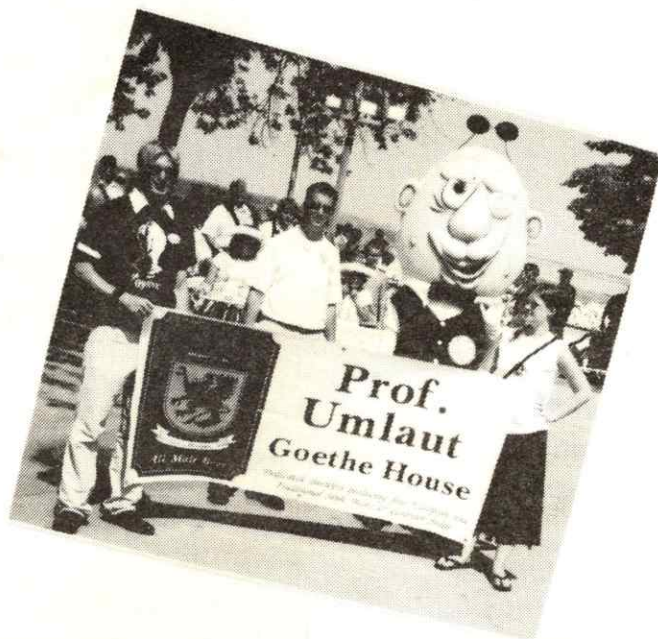
**Friday October 7 - 8 p.m. Uihlein Hall** - Opening Night of Pops Season. Enjoy a special 20% off Goethe House Discount on the Friday night performance. Add pre-concert brats & beer menu for a complete night out! \*Premium Orchestra Seat is \$40.75 and Side/Rear Orchestra \$24.00 (includes all fees). \*Pre-concert beer, brats & yodeling festivities: Add \$10/person.

**Saturday October 8 - 8 p.m. Uihlein Hall** - Dinner & Concert Package. Gourmet cuisine meets traditional German fare at the Wyndham Hotel. Enjoy a 20% discount off your all-inclusive 3-course dinner and concert package. \*Three-course meal, one glass of wine, and Side/Rear Orchestra seat (all taxes and gratuity included): \$75/person. \*Three-course meal, one glass of wine and Premium Orchestra seat (all taxes & gratuity included): \$90/person.

**Sunday October 9 - 2:30 p.m. Uihlein Hall** - Bring the family! All children under 12 attend free! (Children must be 6 or older to attend the concert, limit 2 children per 1 adult).



## GermanFest - A Picture Story



Goethe House of Wisconsin is now online. Visit us at and send your friends to:

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# Goethe House of Wisconsin

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## Goethe Words of Wisdom

In German

Was verkürzt mir die Zeit? Tätigkeit!  
 Was macht sie unerträglich lang? Müßiggang!  
 Was bringt in Schulden? Harren und Dulden!  
 Was macht Gewinnen? Nicht lange besinnen!  
 Was bringt zu Ehren? Sich wehren!

In English

What shortens time for me? Activity!  
 What makes time unbearably long? Idleness!  
 What brings debt? Waiting and enduring!  
 What brings profit? Not reflecting long!  
 What brings honor? Standing up for oneself!

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

On behalf of  
 Goethe House  
 of Wisconsin,  
 I cordially...



Professor  
 Umlauf

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## LEAVE A GERMAN LEGACY

invite you to join in making a bequest to Goethe House in order to guarantee its success and service to future generations.

For more information on supporting Goethe House through your estate plan, contact:

**Katharina Hren**  
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**W**e would like to thank our friends who have generously supported us.  
Herzlichen Dank!

**Ted E. Wedemeyer Jr.**

### 2004

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# Mathilde Franziska Anneke: The Suffragette

By Frank P. Zeidler

**T**his is a time in the United States when it is possible, probable, to talk about a woman being elected as president of the nation. Yet until 1920 when the U.S. Constitution was amended, most women could not vote. The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which brought the right to vote to all women, came only after decades of agitation by women who were called "suffragettes," since the right to vote was called "suffrage."

One of the women playing a national role in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in the suffrage movement was a Milwaukee woman of German birth, Mathilde Franziska Anneke. She was married to Col. Fritz Anneke, formerly of the Prussian army, and later of the Union army in the United States.

Mathilde Franziska Giesler (her maiden name) was born in Ober Levrinhhausen in Westphalia in the Ruhr region in 1817. Hers was a middle-class family and she was the oldest of 12 children. When Mathilde was a teen-ager her family fell onto hard times, and she was induced to marry an older but wealthier person who was to help out the family. However, after one year, Mathilde sought a divorce because of mistreatment. This divorce took seven years of litigation and the proceeding became well known in the German press.

Mathilde, who was a slender woman, over six feet tall, turned to writing articles and journalism to support herself. In her lifetime she wrote journalist accounts, novels and poetry. She was a keen observer of society and especially of women's status in society.

In 1846 Mathilde moved to Munster, Germany, where she became active in cultural groups. Here she met Fritz Anneke, who had been dismissed from the Prussian army because of his strong views on life. Mathilde and Fritz married and continued their activity with groups that were working for a republican Germany in which the royalty and nobility did not hold all the controls. They moved in circles that brought them in contact with Karl Marx, George Herwegh and the poet, Ferdinand Freiligrath.

The period prior to 1848 itself in the German states was a period of great ferment as the republican movement grew in strength. A famous parliament in Frankfurt in 1848 was thought to be the beginning of a republican movement in the numerous German states, great and petty.



**The image is from a stamp in the series  
Frauen der deutschen Geschichte,  
issued in 1988 by the Deutsche  
Bundespost. Original engraving by  
Wolfgang Mauer**

Published in "Mathilde Franziska Anneke: An Essay on Her Life"

The movement broke into armed conflict in southeast German states, and the Annekes associated themselves with this armed conflict. Mathilde herself was a military courier for the armed movement. However the movement was quickly crushed by the forces of the Prussian army and the leaders of the movement, if not captured, had to flee. Some of the leaders were executed. The Annekes escaped to Switzerland.

In 1850 Fritz Anneke went with his wife to Cedarburg, Wisconsin, where Fritz had relatives. However the environment was not suitable for them and they moved to Milwaukee. In Milwaukee the Annekes again became active in German cultural groups, especially the new and growing Turner movement.

Early on Mathilde was concerned with the role delegated to women in Milwaukee and America. This role for women emphasized their responsibility for children and home care. This was true even among the more progressive Turner movement and the early trade unions.

Mathilde, who had a talent for speaking although mostly in German, began to give lectures in Milwaukee and the Middle West on American culture, especially as it affected women. She wrote articles for German papers in the United States and in Germany and began to be

**[Please turn to Anneke, Page 14]**



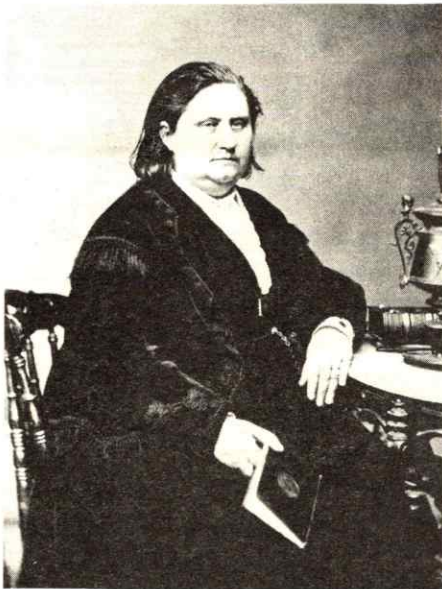
# Mathilde Franziska Anneke: The Suffragette

[Anneke, from Page 13]

fairly well known.

About this time Mathilde came to know and become friends with American women who were leaders of the suffrage movement. They included Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, all well known in United States history. These friendships were enduring.

In 1852, Mathilde started a newspaper for women, "Deutsche Frauenzeitung," which she attempted to have published in Milwaukee. Mathilde wanted women to do the typesetting and printing, but male printers strongly objected and Mathilde moved the publication to New York, then to New Jersey and finally Newark. After two years of publishing, Mathilde gave up the paper and began to crisscross the nation giving lectures calling for the improvement of the conditions of women.



**Mathilde Franziska Anneke (1817-1884)**  
fled her native Prussia after the revolutions  
of 1848 and began a fruitful career  
as a reformer, writer and educator  
in Wisconsin.

Photo - State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Mathilde and Fritz Anneke lived in Newark until 1858. In a short period before that time, they lost four young children, two of them possibly from small pox. Fritz would not let Mathilde have the children inoculated.

In 1858 Mathilde moved back to Milwaukee. She appears now to have been supporting herself by her writings and articles. In Milwaukee she became

acquainted with Mary Booth, the daughter of Sherman Booth, the abolitionist, who was in jail for breaking into jail to free a fugitive slave, Glover. Miss Booth and Mathilde, it appears, had a plan to free Sherman Booth from jail in 1860, but the plan failed.

In 1859 Fritz Anneke, an extremely restless man, went back to Switzerland and Mathilde followed in 1860. When the Civil War started Fritz got a commission in the Union army, but Mathilde stayed in Switzerland until 1865 when she returned to Milwaukee where her mother now was living.

Fritz Anneke deserves an account of his own. In the Union army he had conflict with his peers. He left the army and went to St. Louis, but Mathilde would not follow as the climate was too hot. Fritz later left St. Louis and went to Chicago. Fritz too was a lecturer and writer and became a spokesperson for German organizations. He died in Chicago in 1872 when he accidentally fell in the dark into an excavation ditch caused the year before in the Chicago fire.

Mathilde, for much of her life, had to support herself and after her return to Milwaukee she joined with Caecilia Kapp, the daughter of a well known educator, to found a boarding school for young women: "Tochter-Institut" (Daughters School). Caecilia Kapp took care of the educating and Mathilde the business management.

After two years, Miss Kapp took a better paying position in the East and Mathilde was left with the teaching and business management. She had to arrange for the total care of about two dozen students ranging in age from 5 to about 18, and to arrange and conduct the courses. She had to quickly learn some methods of instruction, and she received the assistance of others as part-time teachers.

The yearly tuition was \$350 and the school lasted for 18 years. It is said that students from the schools were sought after as public school teachers with, what were at the time, large salaries for very young women.

During the period of when she was running the school Mathilde was also giving lectures on the conditions of women and traveling to many cities of the nation. Among the lectures and articles of Mathilde were some on the effects of slavery on women and degradation of women by slave owners. It is said that these articles

**[Please turn to Anneke, Page 15]**



# Mathilde Franziska Anneke: The Suffragette

[Anneke, from Page 14]

influenced German public opinion to favor the Union side in the Civil War because of the evils of slavery.

Anneke became well known in Germany. Her contributions were also recognized by women in the United States who were part of the suffrage movement. The national organization of the League of Women Voters recently recognized her leadership.

Mathilde died in 1888 and is buried in Forest Home Cemetery, Milwaukee. At the time she lived at 871 N. Cambridge Avenue (old numbering).

After her death her work for women's voting rights was carried on by numerous Milwaukee and Wisconsin women, and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for example, most notable by Lutie Stearns. Today, another Milwaukee woman of German origin, Gretchen Rosing, is promoting a greater knowledge of Anneke and her work so that the history of Anneke's efforts will not be lost.

A memorial marker in the city seems long overdue for the person who did so much for women's right to vote.

Professor Charlotte Brancaforte, University of Wisconsin-Madison (retired), produced a very readable booklet on Mathilde titled "Mathilde Franziska Anneke - An Essay on Her Life." This is available at the Milwaukee Public Museum Book Shop. Publication of the booklet was made possible by Joan Robertson.

## Upcoming German events in southeast Wisconsin

### Pommerscher Verein Freistadt

Note: All events take place at the Linderwood Community Center, W-111 N-12351 Granville Rd., Mequon, WI. For additional information call 262-242-0653.

Friday, October 14, 5:30 p.m. - Erntedankfest celebration.

Friday, November 11, 7:30 p.m. - Program still tentative.

Friday, December 9, 6:30 p.m. - Weihnachtsfest celebration.

Elaine Kraft, Pommerscher Verein Freistadt

Goethe House of Wisconsin is a non-profit German-American cultural institute serving Wisconsin since 1958. Our mission is to serve as a statewide resource for information about the past and present culture of all German-speaking people - especially those in the Federal Republic of Germany. Goethe House of Wisconsin invites the financial support of individuals, companies and organizations who share our mission and recognize the value of this important cultural exchange. Goethe House of Wisconsin is a not-for-profit (501) (c) (3) organization. Donations are tax deductible as the law allows.

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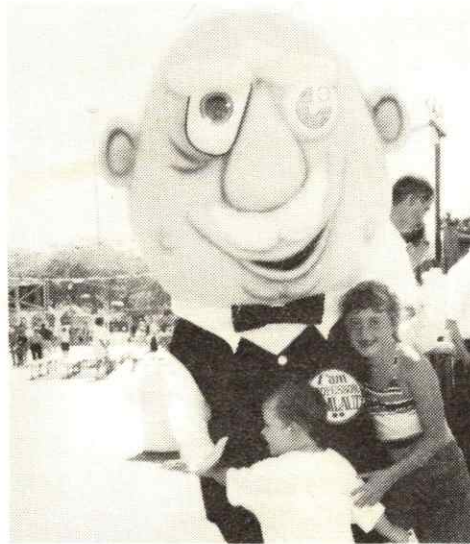
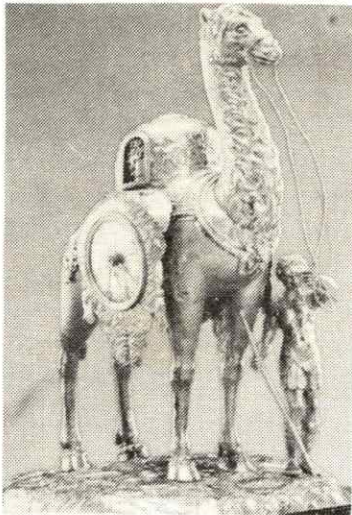




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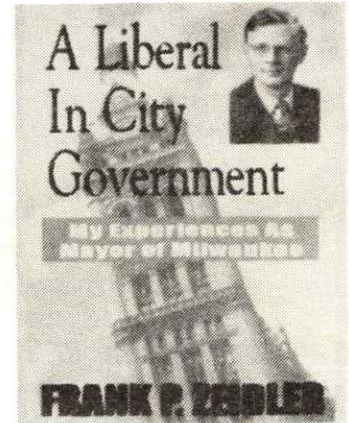
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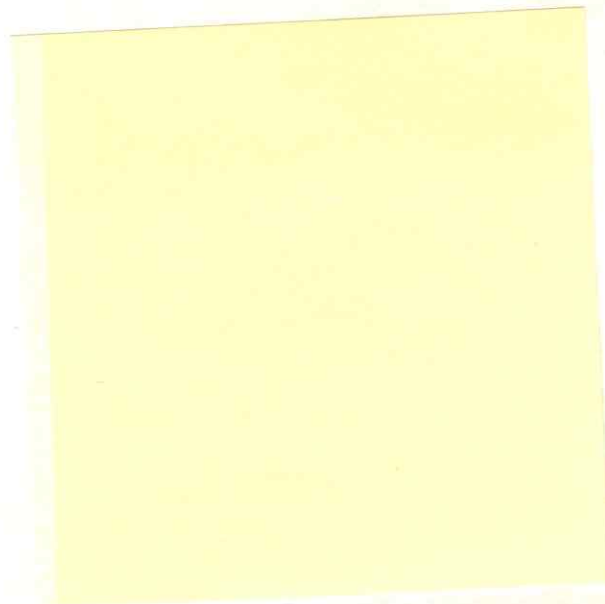


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