



2011 Christmas Greeting from the President

On behalf of the Trenton Donauschwaben organization, I would like to wish all of our members and friends a blessed and enjoyably merry Christmas as well as a happy, healthy and prosperous 2012. May your holidays be filled with good tidings and cheer in the company of family and friends.

This past year has been another good one for the Trenton Donauschwaben. Let me briefly mention some of the highlights.

Clearly youth participation remains a big part of club life at the Donauschwaben. Our young people are making a difference! Up to a dozen of them are part of the Philadelphia/Trenton Folks Dance Group that has performed in places as impressive as the Trenton Thunder and Philadelphia Phillies Stadiums, as far away as the Catskill Mountains of New York and the Mansfield, Ohio *Donauschwabentreffen* and many places in between. All the while they have represented the very best our club has to offer with enthusiasm and style. Of course, they're also an important part of staffing and organizing our club's regular activities too. Thank you one and all.

Speaking of our regular activities: Our monthly dinners remain the life-blood of the organization and we are very grateful for the talented and dedicated volunteers who make them possible. They are the finest club members anyone could ask for! The dinners are the only way we are able to keep the doors open after all. More importantly, these undertakings bring together our members and friends in a way that strengthens the bond that holds our club together. We encourage everyone to join us for dinner at least once in 2012... but do call/e-mail ahead for reservations to insure seating!

Our language and cultural education program over the past year has enjoyed some big successes even while challenges remain. Thanks to the generosity and hard work of our membership, the scholarship program has been able to award thousands of dollars to deserving high school students for German language excellence. This is not just a tangible way for us to give back to the community but it also affirms the very reason our club exists in the first place. There are other initiatives related to this outreach including welcoming dozens of German language high school students and their families to our *Schlachtfest* and ongoing efforts to build a museum. We will be addressing the challenge of restarting our own language school over the coming year and welcome any suggestions you may.

Let's not forget to mention the wonderful crew staging our Euro-American Auto Show; our adult folks dance group; this fine newsletter; our super website; our memorial services; special programs for Mother's Day, *Stiftungsfest* and *St. Nikolausfeier*; outdoors activities and more. Wow!

While the successes over the past year were many, let us remember the members, family and friends who are no longer with us. It is because of them that our club is where it is today and it is in their memory that we continue to do the good work that lies ahead tomorrow. May they rest in Peace, Amen. Let us also keep our members and friends who are suffering from illness or injury in our thoughts and prayers. Best wishes one and all.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, we look forward to another successful year. Please make every effort to support your club wherever and whenever possible. We need you! With your continued help there is no doubt 2012 will be good year for the Donauschwaben. *Prosit.*

Frohe Weihnachten und alles Gute im neuen Jahr.

Hochachtungsvoll, *Joseph Brandecker*,
President - Trenton Donauschwaben