

...Farewell continued from page 1

Carpathia built until a larger one was commissioned by park management along with a pavilion that replaced the tent

The Volksfest was a good moneymaker for Carpathia and income from the three-day event often paid many of the bills for the rest of the year while the club resided on Republic Road. This was especially true in the early days of the festival, when large crowds consumed upwards of 200 barrels of beer over the weekend. The hot, dust filled beer tent added to the thirst among partygoers. Even rainy years did not seem to deter crowds in those days. Of course, beer consumption was supported by liberal drunk driving laws as well as a legal drinking age of 18. Later, stricter laws and an increase in the legal drinking age to 21 cut into the Volksfest revenue. More recently, when beer consumption approached 90 barrels for the weekend, it was considered an excellent year.

Is the Volksfest dead? Not likely. Carpathia has been hosting summer picnics since its founding in 1913. During the 1920's and 1930's, Sunday at Carpathia Park was a weekly ritual for Detroit area Germans.

Currently, the Board is considering a one-day event at a new location, possibly our own grounds. Wherever the Volksfest ends up this summer, one thing is certain: there will be plenty of Gemütlichkeit to go around.

Richard Gerhardt ❁

General Election Generates New Bar Manager, Resurrects Old Faithfuls

Carpathia's February 22nd General Election had some exciting moments and, in the end, resulted in a single new face on the Board. Willi Grotloh accepted the nomination for Bar Manager and was, not surprisingly, unopposed in assuming one of the club's most important and demanding positions. Grotloh is no stranger to bartending at Carpathia and has developed a reputation among his fellow bartenders as a very competent and hard worker. As Bar Manager, he assumes responsibility for ordering and replaces the 4-man rotating crew that tended bar during the week.

The Bar Manager post has been a difficult one to fill because of the demanding workload and long hours involved. For this reason, the job had been divided for several years among 5 volunteers. Grotloh is the first individual to assume full responsibility for the position since Joe Mayer had the job in 1994.

In a move that surprised Carpathia's entire general assembly, 1st Vice-President John Huth resigned his position without warning in mid-term citing health reasons. This sparked a spirited debate over how the position should be filled with some members demanding an election. Those opposed to the idea, cited by-law rules that give the president authority to appoint someone in the event of a mid-term resignation by an officer. By-law rules won the day and President Gerhardt agreed to appoint a 1st Vice President in the coming weeks,

Since that time, Gerhardt has announced that she asked Ron Blasius to serve as 1st VP and Blasius agreed. The experienced Blasius has previously served as Carpathia's 1st Vice President for a total of 4 years and as 2nd VP for 2 years.

The other board seat to change that afternoon was that of Press Secretary. Ingrid Grotloh had completed her 2-year term and declined to accept the nomination for 2 more years. Although not present at the meeting, this writer agreed to take the job if no one else would. Naturally, this news did little to encourage other candidates to accept their nominations.

Annemarie Gerhardt began her 7th year as President of Carpathia Club when she accepted the nomination and was unopposed. All other board members whose offices were up for election accepted their nominations in much the same way. In fact, the only actual vote taken that afternoon was for Second Vice-President in which the incumbent Mike Talan defeated challenger Hans Steiner.

Richard Gerhardt ❁

Blasius Named German-American of the Year

The Detroit area German community will honor Ron Blasius by naming him German-American of the Year. Blasius was nominated for the award by the Carpathia Board of Directors for his "exemplary performance, dedication and 52-years of service to Danube Swabian, German and American communities." The award will be presented at the German-American Cultural Center's 54th Anniversary Banquet on April 17 at Carpathia Hall.

The following is a summary of Ron's life and contributions to the German community taken from the nomination letter written by Carpathia President Annemarie Gerhardt and submitted to the GACC by our Board of Directors. Reading it leaves no doubt about this year's choice for German-American of the Year.

Ron Blasius was born in 1946 in Hemmersheim, Germany to two dedicated Germans of Swabian descent. His parents raised him to love ethnic songs, the German lan-