

News & Information

German Language School of Morris County Celebrates 40 Years of Success

By Michael M. Shapiro

The German Language School of Morris County (GLSMC) celebrated its 40th year of German language and culture education last week with celebrations featuring traditional German food and music, an all-ages soccer match, and a reunion including one of the school's founders, Bill Killen.

In 1968 Dr. Ernst Scheja led a group of local citizens in incorporating the GLSMC and instruction for children and adults began in September of that year. Since that time, the school has striven to make language learning an enjoyable and multifaceted cultural experience by bolstering traditional classroom instruction with participation in German cultural events such as the Steuben Parade in New York City.

This year, with Dr. Christiane Reves as principal, they have implemented a new two-level class structure in order to better meet the needs of both native speakers and second-language learners. This approach is in keeping with the original vision of the school: "to contribute to the education of students, regardless of ethnic background, who are interested in the German language and culture."

With over one hundred students currently enrolled, the school is comprised of not only Germans, Swiss and Austrian children, and Americans with ancestral ties to those nations, but also of children whose parents come from nations as diverse as China, Turkey and India. Their parents appreciate the advantages of learning a second or third language and many have lived in a German-speaking country and wish their children to maintain knowledge of the language. The chance to connect with other German-speaking folks is especially attractive to parents coming from overseas, many of whom say they enjoy the social aspect of the Saturday school as much as its top-notch academic standards.

Over the years GLSMC teachers have helped thousands of students from preschoolers to adults develop their German skills, and have prepared hundreds of high school students to excel in advanced exams. These include the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) test, which if passed, earns students college credits and the "Deutsche Sprachdiplom" which helps to get access to German and other European universities. The AP examination is accepted as sufficient proof of language proficiency for admission to a course of study at a German university.

Because of the excellent standards the GLSMC is recognized and partly funded by the German government. The German Language School of Morris County offers instruction at all levels to students ages 4 and up. Classes are Saturdays from 9-12 at the Morristown Beard School in Morristown. For more information please visit www.glsmc.org or call (973) 586-3689.