



Executive Director

Courtney Thraen

Manager, Communication and Membership Engagement

Rachel Lewellen

Manager, Preservation Advocacy and Member Services

Ariana Riccardi

Board of Trustees

Anthony Meyer, President
Anne McGee, Vice President
Cynthia Watson, Secretary
Scott Glaser, Treasurer
Robert Caplin
Mary Connolly Ross
Michael Cornelis
Jessica Fleming
Lori Fry
Michael Gallaugh
Jeff Lamb
Jim Nichols
Lucy Whittier

Countless Volunteers

Steadfast Membership

German Village Society 2025 Impact Report

Who We Are

For over 65 years, the German Village Society has been a reputable steward and convener of one of America's most iconic historic neighborhoods by:

- preserving its legacy,
- connecting people to place, and
- transforming heritage into shared civic, cultural, and economic value for Columbus and beyond.

How We Do It

We do our work through rigorous stewardship, inclusive programming, data-informed advocacy, and sustained collaboration that balances historic integrity with our dynamic, 233-acre village.

Our Service to You

For residents, members, and fans across the world, the German Village Society is a trusted partner and community anchor by:

- actualizing stewardship,
- delivering on a menu of support services, and
- showcasing meaningful ways to connect with neighbors, history, and place.





Communications Highlights

GVS Facebook Page

- Followers: 12,867
- Page Visits: 18,200
- New Followers: 785
 - **1 New Follower for Every 23 Page Visits**
- Views: 601,500
- Interactions: 7,500

GVS Instagram

- Followers: 15,459
- Profile Visits: 14,200
- New Followers: 2,000
 - **1 New Follower for Every 7 Profile Visits**
- Views: 750,000
- Interactions: 8,300

GVS Website

- Views: 247,400
- Total Users: 97,000
- Average Session Time:
 - 1 minute, 19 seconds
- #1 Page: Village Lights
- #2 Page: Haus und Garten Tour
- #3 Page: Home Page

GVS Email Marketing

- Total Emails Sent: 432,426
- Average Campaign Open Rate: 54%
- New Subscribers: 769

GVS Events

GVS events activate German Village as a living historic district, converting heritage into tourism, small-business support, and economic vitality for Columbus while protecting the neighborhood's character.

GVS events deliver measurable social, cultural, and economic impact by pairing meaningful community experiences with visibility, goodwill, and return on investment for sponsors.

Maifest: Legends and Landmarks

- 2025 Attendees: 140 (27% increase from 2024)
- 2025 Marketing Reach: 177,000+ (digital channels)
- 2025 Sponsorship Return Ratio: 2.24
 - GVS received \$2.24 for every \$1 of sponsorship (up from \$1.80 in 2024)
- Over 25 local volunteers worked tirelessly to plan and host this event!

Haus und Garten Tour and PreTour

- 2025 Attendees: 2,800+ (54% increase from 2024)
- 2025 Marketing Reach: 1,000,000+ through TV spotlights, radio features, news articles, website promotions, and social media platforms.
- 2025 Sponsorship Return Ratio: 5.6
 - GVS received \$5.60 for every \$1 of sponsorship (up from \$5.18 in 2024)
- Over 200 local volunteers worked tirelessly to bring this event to life!

Oktoberfest: Tap the Keg

- 2025 Attendees: 230 (first-year event)
- 2025 Marketing Reach: 100,000+ (digital channels)
- 2025 Sponsorship Return Ratio: 2.97
 - GVS received \$2.97 for every \$1 of sponsorship (in its first year)
- In its first year, over 25 local volunteers helped plan and host this festival!

Monster Bash

- 2025 Attendees: 301 (up 20% from 2024 for this limited-capacity event)
- 2025 Marketing Reach: 150,000+ (digital channels)
- Over 30 local volunteers planned and designed this amazing spectacle!

Village Lights

- 2025 Attendees: 5,000+ (Village-wide)
- 2025 Marketing Reach: 300,000+ (digital channels and news sites)
- 2025 Sponsorship Return Ratio: 2.83
 - GVS received \$2.83 for every \$1 of sponsorship
- Over 35 local volunteers helped plan and host this festival!





Membership Highlights

Active Memberships: 482 (totaling over 750 people)

- **Individual:** 175
- **Household:** 204
- **Mason:** 53
- **Builder:** 28
- **Archivist:** 13
- **Preservationist:** 6
- **Caretaker:** 2
- **Honorary:** 1

Membership Changes

- **New:** 135
- **Renewal:** 281
- **Upgrade:** 13
- **Downgrade:** 6
- **Reactivated:** 85

Highest Membership Support Months (Join, Renewals)

- **March** (95)
- **February** (84)
- **January, April** (43)

Preservation and Tourism

The German Village Society advances heritage tourism while safeguarding historic integrity by supporting property owners through the Certificate of Appropriateness process, preserving stories through historic house plaques, restoring historic brick sidewalks, and advocating for policies that protect German Village as a living economic and cultural asset for the Columbus region.

Sidewalk Repair and Restoration Incentive Program

Since 2024, the Society has facilitated:

- 19 projects to restore brick sidewalks
 - 4 concrete-to-brick conversions
 - Spanned over 4,000 square feet of sidewalk
- Disbursement of more than \$13,000 in grant incentives
- Successful application and receipt of grant awards from The Columbus Foundation and The Stark County Community Foundation (via Belden Bricks).

Historic House Plaques

- Researched 11 properties using appropriate maps, deeds, archives, and family histories (with additional support from GVS Member Dave Randall).

Certificate of Appropriateness Guidance

- Supported over 200+ unique requests from GVS Members
- Attended associated monthly German Village Commission Meetings
- Created an internal database of past projects
- Sought collaboration with the City's Historic Preservation Office

Tourism Outcomes

In 2025, GVS Welcomed:

- Over 1,660 tourists into its Visitors Center
 - 1,500 were from the United States
 - 160 were international visitors
 - 806 (49%) were from the Midwest (76 from the Columbus region).
- October saw the most visitors (267) followed by June (237) and April (212).
- International visitors were highest from Canada (35), Ukraine (16), Germany (13), Scotland (12), and Australia (12).
- Visitors found us through our website, Google Maps, Google Search Engine, our physical A-Frame sign on 3rd Street, and through word of mouth.
- Visitors stopped in to explore German Village for 1) authentic sightseeing, 2) while passing through on a road trip, 3) staying in Columbus for a conference or school visit, or 4) often while visiting family and friends.

Advocacy Out Front

- Hosted two Candidate Panels for District 7 Columbus City Councilor.
- Conducted a Water Meter Survey and shared outcomes and action steps with City Councilors and the City's Water and Power Department.
- Conducted an Advocacy Survey, creating associated action plans.
- Held meetings with City Councilors to discuss legislation pertaining to work in the right-of-way, working in special collaboration with German Village Commission Chair Anthony Hartke.

German Village



Stay in Touch!

On the operational front, we are proud to announce that we've stood up an improved customer service system through Salesforce for Non-Profits, where targeted inbound emails, phone calls, and website forms can be tracked in one easy portal.

Thank you for actively supporting and financially sustaining the German Village Society as we embody the spirit of continuous improvement, one of our core values!



2026 GVS Event Showcase

GVS is taking it up a notch in 2026!

The Third Annual Maifest Gala will feature a formal program honoring our local caretakers and renowned community leaders.

We're also officially hosting activities on the Platz for Village Valuables on May 16! Stay tuned for more details on how you can participate in this village-wide event!

Volunteering and sponsorship opportunities will soon be announced for the 2026 GVS Event Showcase. The events below will all be hosted at the Meeting Haus (588 S. Third Street) unless otherwise noted.

Maifest Gala: Honoring our Caretakers

- Thursday, April 30
- Highline Car House
- germanvillage.com/events/maifest
- *Featuring Awards for Caretakers of a Legacy

Village Valuables

- Saturday, May 16
- germanvillage.com/events/valuables

Haus und Garten Tour and PreTour

- Haus und Garten PreTour - Saturday, June 27
- Haus und Garten Tour - Sunday, June 28
- germanvillage.com/events/tour

Oktoberfest: Tap the Keg

- Saturday, September 19
- germanvillage.com/events/oktoberfest

Monster Bash

- Saturday, October 17
- germanvillage.com/events/monsterbash

Village Lights

- Sunday, December 6
- germanvillage.com/events/villagelights