

PERSPECTIVEN



Exciting New German Classes Added!

Due to high enrollment, we added a second German 101 A1 class to the winter session! Keep reading to explore our expanded spring schedules.

Keep an eye out for summer plans! Secure your spot today and join our growing community!

Read More About...

DSSV Essay Contest and Career & College Day

Current German Elections

Upcoming Goethe House Events!

Rep. Fred Kessler's Obituary

Dr. Sy Kreilein's Obituary

Introducing The New Goethe House Board Of Directors

We are excited to announce the new leadership team at Goethe House!

President: Dorothy Smaglick
Secretary: Mary Alyce Lach S.S.N.D.

Treasurer: Attorney Heiner Giese

We look forward to an exciting future for our organization. Keep an eye out for updates and upcoming initiatives!

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Spring Courses

Eine kleine Notiz...

Hallo Zusammen!

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Tim Miller and I took over the role of executive director for Goethe House Wisconsin this past Fall. We are thrilled to share that our Winter classes showed strong enrollment and great enthusiasm by both teachers and students alike. We are offering Spring classes beginning April 1st (no fooling!). Most classes will run Tuesdays & Thursdays from 6-8pm.

We also hope to continue to sponsor and support a variety of events for anything and everything German: from Art Gallery Exhibits, Movie Nights, and Game Nights.

Stay tuned at ghwisconsin.org and reach out and contact us to keep our sense of the German community strong.

Alles Gute!

Tim Miller, GH Director

Spring classes are priced as follows:

\$250 per course

Spring 2025 Schedule

Beginning April 1st:

German 201 A2 Level

Tuesdays 6-8pm

German 203 A2 Level

Tuesdays 5:30-7:30pm

Beginning April 3rd:

German 102 A1 Level

Thursdays 6-8pm

German 103 A1 Level

Thursdays 6-8pm

German 204 A2 Level

Thursdays 6-8pm

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Upcoming Events

1. **German 20th Century Art Exhibit and Lecture by Dr. Emmerling** from the Chicago Goethe Institute at the Marquette University Haggarty Art Museum. *Sat., April 5 at 2 pm*. Reception and Cash Bar.
2. **DSSV - German Language & School Society - Awards Ceremony** will recognize students from the DSSV Essay Contest and AATG Language Exam. Presented by Mac Weast from Kronen Intl. and Dr. Emmerling, the event is on *Sun. May 4th @ 3pm at Marquette University High School*.
3. **The Third Man: Movie Matinee** join us on *Sat. May 17th* at the Goethe House Technology Innovation Center. The movie is free with snacks and beverages to purchase!
4. **Game Night:** Get your spiel on at the Goethe House MKE on *Sat., April 26 at 6:30 pm*

Empowering Futures: Career Day

In November of last year, a variety of Wisconsin schools gathered for an exciting **Career and College Day**, which featured more than 30 exhibition booths from colleges, companies, and organizations connected to the German community. Sponsored by the German Language & School Society, this event offered valuable insights into various career paths and educational opportunities. Highlights included an engaging panel discussion with Graeme Gross - a lighting and sound engineer, Sommer Finn - International import intern, and McCartney Weast - a Sr. International Buyer at Kronen, who shared their experiences and advice for students looking to navigate their future careers. It was a fantastic day of learning, networking, and inspiration for all involved!



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Empowering Futures: DSSV Essay Contest

The German Language and School Society of Wisconsin (DSSV), founded in 1956, has been dedicated to promoting German language and culture through initiatives like its annual German Essay Contest. Open to all Wisconsin high school students enrolled in German, the contest is held alongside the AATG national language test. This year marks the 70th annual contest, which has seen nearly 42,000 students participate and over \$35,000 in prizes awarded, including study trips and funds to support AATG test costs. One of this year's major winners is from Milwaukee School of Languages, pictured with Teacher Janelle Pfaller and German Consul General Michael Ahrens. Congratulations to all involved!



DSSV/AATG Annual Awards Ceremony – May 4 at MUHS

For many years, the DSSV/AATG Annual Awards Ceremony has been a highlight for students, teachers, and parents, and this year it's happening on Sunday, May 4 at 3 p.m. at Marquette University High School (MUHS).

The ceremony is not only about awarding prizes but also includes inspiring talks on the value of learning a second language, especially German. Past speakers have included representatives from German companies, U.S. companies with German ties, education, and government. Students who won study trips in previous years also share their experiences. The event is open to the public, so everyone is welcome to attend!

More Than Just the Essay Contest

The DSSV has expanded its reach by providing grants to schools for special programs and materials, as well as supporting university students studying abroad in German-speaking countries. They've also sponsored a German-speaking contest at the Milwaukee German Immersion School and the bi-annual Career and College Day. (Keep reading for more on the Career and College Day!)

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German Election Results: A Turning Point.

The German federal election on February 23, 2025, witnessed a historic voter turnout of **82.5%**, marking the highest level of participation since the country's reunification in 1990. This surge in voter engagement, up from **76.6%** in 2021, reflects growing public concern over the political and economic landscape, particularly after the collapse of the previous government in November 2024.

Over 59 million eligible voters went to the polls, casting two votes each: one for a direct candidate representing their district and another for a party's state list. The election determines the composition of the Bundestag, Germany's lower house of parliament, which consists of 630 seats. Parties are awarded seats based on their vote share, with a 5% threshold for parliamentary entry, although parties that win at least three individual districts are exempt from this rule.

Election Results:

- **Christian Democratic Union (CDU/ CSU):** Led by Friedrich Merz, the CDU emerged as the winner, securing 28.6% of the vote and 208 seats in the Bundestag.
- **Alternative for Germany (AfD):** The far-right party came in second with 20.8% of the vote, translating into 152 seats.
- **Social Democrats (SPD):** Former Chancellor Olaf Scholz's SPD secured 16.4%, earning 120 seats, while the Greens earned 11.6%, securing 85 seats, both showing a decrease from the previous election.
- **The Left Party:** This party gained 64 seats, while the Free Democratic Party (FDP), which had been part of the outgoing coalition, failed to surpass the 5% threshold and will not enter the Bundestag.

Looking Ahead: The Federal Electoral Committee will verify and finalize the results by March 14, 2025. The outcome of this election sets the stage for a potentially restructured political landscape, with significant shifts in power that could have far-reaching implications for Germany's future governance.

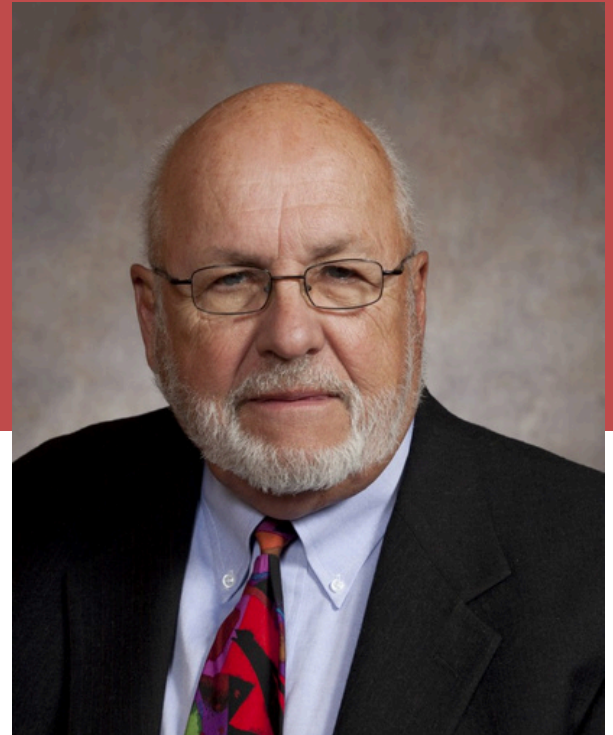
[Deutsche Welle Election Results](#)

[Link](#)

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Celebrating the Life of Fred Kessler

Frederick P. Kessler was born on January 11, 1940, to Frederick P. Kessler, Sr. and Marie Schroeder Kessler, and passed on November 12, 2024. Fred was Goethe House Board Vice President at the time of his death and past board president.



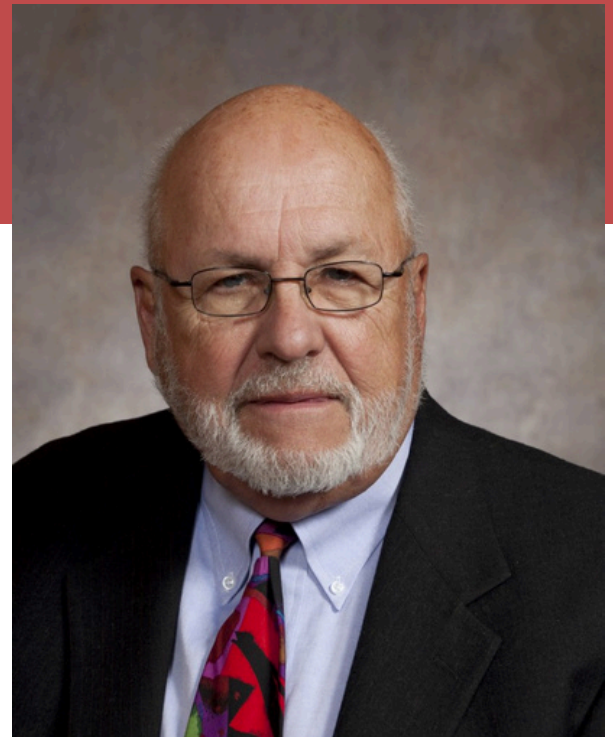
He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Joan (Fowler) Kessler, daughters Liza Kessler and Anna (Jason) Rulnick, grandchildren Noah & Josephine Barry-Kessler and Maxim & Hailey Rulnick, sister Suzanne (Tom) Frost, and many beloved nieces and nephews; preceded in death by sister Dr. Karen (Dr. Albert) Kreutner.

Kessler was a Milwaukee County judge from 1972-78 and helped lead the statewide court reform efforts, serving as a Circuit Court judge in Milwaukee County from 1978-1981 and 1986-1988. He was reelected to the Wisconsin Assembly in 2004 and served until 2018. Kessler was also active with the ACLU of Wisconsin, Goethe House, World Affairs Council of Milwaukee, DANK (German-American National Congress), Amnesty International, Milwaukee Turners, Milwaukee German Immersion Foundation, Milwaukee Donauschwaben, Harbor Commission, the NAACP, and other local and professional organizations.

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Celebrating the Life of Fred Kessler

One of his most passionate interests was in the art and science of redistricting maps; he helped draw competitive legislative and congressional district maps in both Wisconsin and Nevada beginning after the 1970 census, and helped organize the challenge to extreme partisan gerrymandering in Wisconsin which led to the *Whitford v Gill* case before the US Supreme Court in 2018. Funeral services were held at Cross Lutheran Church on Saturday, November 16, 2024, at 11 am. In lieu of flowers, memorials to ACLU of Wisconsin or the German Immersion Foundation. Please see funeral home website for full obituary.



[Find Fred's Obituary here.](#)

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A Life Well-Lived: Dr. Sy Kreilein

On June 19th, 2024, Dr. Sylvester “Sy” Kreilein, passed away in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. A life-long traveler, humanist, and acclaimed foreign language educator, Dr. Sy Kreilein is survived by his loving wife, Joan Parsley, devoted son, Alex, and thankful daughter-in-law Amber.

Sy was the Goethe House Board of Directors President until his passing this past summer.



Born in 1939 to Raymond and Lucille Kreilein, and brother to Fr. Phil Kreilein, Sy grew up in Jasper, Indiana. He was educated in that region at the St. Meinrad Seminary (1957-1961), offered the opportunity to complete his studies and Orders in Austria, and over his lifetime became a known master of German language, culture, and history. With a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Sy would go on to become an award-winning foreign language educator who changed the lives of thousands of students over a 45-year career at Marquette University High School, even completing his career as a visiting professor down the hill at Marquette University. He helped tear down the Berlin Wall, built a lasting foreign exchange program with colleagues in Bavaria, and brought his passion for the arts of centuries past to the greater Milwaukee community through collaboration with his wife Joan.

Sy spent his life living the example that we can help each other, take chances for ourselves, and enjoy the beauty the world has to offer while being unpretentious and kind. He enjoyed sharing his passions with others and made the world accessible to so many through the ways he did it.

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A Life Well-Lived: Dr. Sy Kreilein

If you speak with his former students, colleagues in the German community, or friends around the world, they will tell you that Sy Kreilein led a life well-lived. As a young seminarian in Indiana, Sy took a chance and moved his life from a small rural town to study in Innsbruck, Austria. In 1961, this was nearly unheard of. He would later say that learning to take chances is what changed his life.

While at the Leopold-Franzen University's Canisianum during Vatican II, arguably the most important theological event of the 20th century, Sy was privileged to learn under luminaries such as Karl Rahner and his contemporaries. This changed his views on life, society, and even theology, giving him the permission to find a different path than the one he set out on.

Sy is perhaps best known for having founded MUHS' German American Partner Exchange with the Christoph Scheiner-Gymnasium in Ingolstadt, Germany – now in its 36th year. He ensured that trips between Germans and Americans would be adventures for young men and women, bringing us closer together. He could do this because he himself had a transformative learning experience abroad –

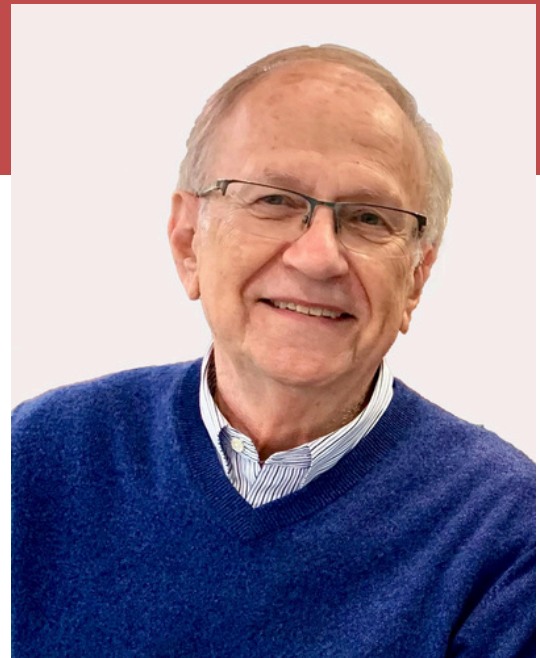
he uniquely understood the importance of cultural immersion as a way of connecting people.

From the late 1950's to the early 1970's, Sy traveled extensively to parts of Europe and the Middle East at a time when that was rare – and he became a fuller person for it. Traveling on his NSU motorcycle, Sy had to learn local languages, cultures, and customs. His love for literature and theater were heightened as he frequented East Berlin's contemporary theater and literature scene, discovering plays of Berthold Brecht and other East German playwrights and authors like Franz Kafka. His mind was like a curio cabinet tightly filled with personal treasures. He was passionate about art and music as well, making them a material part of his life and work.

Even in his earlier life, Sy was dedicated to music. In 1964, he directed the liturgical music opening of the Innsbruck Winter Olympics in the Wilten Basilica. For 20 years, starting in the 1980's, Sy worked closely with his wife Joan Parsley, an early music entrepreneur, to bring the music and culture of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, and many others to life in Milwaukee's concert halls. With her original instrument ensemble, she directed and performed music of the Baroque and Classical periods, and he made composers of another time accessible to concertgoers through his pre-concert lectures.

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A Life Well-Lived: Dr. Sy Kreilein



Even when their son Alex was born in 1984, Sy chose the music of C.P.E Bach to be played in the operating room, proving that it is never too early to begin cultural immersion. While Sy also brought the arts and humanities into his classroom, his students will never forget that he held the last 15-minutes of class on Friday's for them to sing German beer hall songs. To this day, hundreds of his former students still know the words.

Throughout his life, Sy Kreilein was the recipient of a truly stunning number and range of awards for his leadership in the classroom and in the field of German culture. He contributed to and led organizations that focus on preserving and promoting our shared history and aspirations, winning accolades at the national and state levels. He is one of the most recognized members of the German American community. He is widely known and respected for being a truly great educator and Germanist. And yet, none of this made Sy unrelatable to anyone. Success motivated him to give even more.

Despite the sophistication and accolades, Sy was also an everyday person. He proudly shoveled snow, raked leaves, and cleaned gutters. While he inspired so many to take chances and love complexity, he reinforced that we can do it all without taking anything away from anyone else. He passed these principles onto the young men he educated and people he befriended. Sy Kreilein was a genuine humanist and renaissance man. His voice will be missed, but his love and care are felt each and every day. Immer vorwärts!