

F R U M



FALL 2025



calendar of

EVENTS

Oct. 24 Football Tailgate vs. Cal

Nov. 1 Football Tailgate vs. Louisville

Nov. 19 The Dekker Leadership Conference

Nov. 22 Football Tailgate vs. Miami

2026

Jan. 21 Candlelight

Feb. 27 Midwinters

April 28 Candlelight

May 2 GCAF Regional Alumni Social – Washington D.C.

May 4 Senior Banquet

May 15 University Commencement

**THIS IS
HOME**



GERMAN CLUB FORUM | FALL 2025

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FRONT COVER

Top – Michael Munton '07, Chris Trotman '08, Quinton Callahan '07, Dan Knisley '09, and Michael Sun '08, hiked to Humpback Rock this past May.

Bottom – German Club men leading the charge at Relay for Life.

BACK COVER

German Club Alumni and their families on a fall hike to the Cascades.

German Club Alumni Foundation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chuck O. Gordon	1969
W. Earle Spruill	1970
George R. Umberger	1970
Ed T. Overton	1971
Chuck F. Rowell	1971
Calvin L. Henderson	1972
Randy S. Minix	1972
Alan W. Myers	1972
Mike S. Eggleston	1973
W. David Kiser	1974
Randy L. Walker	1974
Bob R. Derrick	1977
Mark B. Wigginton	1977
R. Craig Balzer	1979
Andy M. Scherzer	1981
Dave S. Cooper, Jr.	1983
Steve R. Lavinder	1984
J. Wacho Slaughter	1984
Mike T. Foster	1985
Charlie L. Watson	1986
Howard M. Watson	1987
Tommy M. Yambrick	1987
Grady B. Baker	1988
Chaz T. Long	1988
Steve G. Upton	1989
Billy P. Donavant	1990
Scott A. Sangrey	1990
Mike E. Clark	1991
Steven P. Wrenn	1991
Colin E. Wright	1992
Brian S. Dunch	1993
Enrique A. Morales	1994
Scott M. Cowan	1995
F.O. Robbie Roberts, III	1995
Keith R. Stemple	1995
Eric M. Brittle	1997
Ted J. Gill	1999
C. Ramsey Duck	2000
Andrew D. Lessner	2000
Carlos A. Muñoz	2000
Mike R. Munsey	2000
Charles E. Gordon	2004
Demas E. Boudreaux	2006
Jordan R. DeDona	2006
Brian E. Torgersen	2007
Ryan E. Costa	2009
W. Andy Webb	2009
David K Glenn	2011
Ash P. Heatwole	2012
Kyle R. Pryde	2012
Jay M. Tucker	2014
Taylor W. Malbon	2015
Luke J. Boorady	2019
Ben T. Nicoll	2019
P. Carter Ward, II	2020
Jack W. Proctor	2022
Matt M. Snuggs	2023
Adam V. Gentile	2024

Alumni Relations **Update**

Greetings! The last year has brought many new opportunities for alumni to gather. From exciting football tailgates to unforgettable concerts and special reunions, it has been a wonderful year reconnecting with Hokies near and far.

Last Fall, the Virginia Tech football season brought the energy we all love, and we were thrilled to host spirited tailgating events at the Manor before each home game. We saw outstanding turnout from alumni, with many returning to reconnect, share food and laughter, and show their Hokie pride. Each game day became even more memorable thanks to the strong support and enthusiasm of our alumni community.

In May of this year, Lane Stadium hosted a once-in-a-lifetime event: the Metallica concert! We were delighted to open up the Manor for the special occasion where Club members and alumni enjoyed a unique chance to experience world-class music right here on campus, bringing together generations of Hokies for a night to remember.

In June, we welcomed alumni back to campus for Virginia Tech Alumni Weekend. Our Friday evening welcome reception at the Manor was a highlight, providing a warm and festive start to a weekend full of reconnecting, reminiscing, and celebrating our shared bonds.

We're also in planning for the club's 135th anniversary celebration, which promises to be an extraordinary milestone event. We'll be sharing more details soon — so stay tuned and make sure we have your preferred email address. 

Ben Nicoll '19
VP Alumni Relations



Be on the lookout for a designated tailgate area for the current Club members and their guests in the northeast corner of the field, closest to where the Huckleberry Trail crosses Southgate Drive. Likewise, the Young Alumni Committee (YAC) will have a centralized tailgate area to facilitate easy connection and reunions for those alumni returning to campus. Both areas will be marked with large banners for easy identification.



▲ Rowan Leary (I) is sworn in as the new Junior to the Executive Committee with outgoing officer Jonah Middleton.

German Club Alumni Foundation

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman Keith Raymond Stemple 1995

President David S. Cooper 1983

Executive Director and Secretary C. Ramsey Duck 2000

VP Facilities Robert Craig Balzer 1979

VP Development Brian Scott Dunch 1993

VP Club Relations Charles E. Gordon 2004

VP Alumni Relations Ben Nicoll 2019

VP Finance and Audit Robbie Roberts 1995

VP Communications J. Wacho Slaughter 1984

VP University and Community Relations Jay M. Tucker 2014

VP Nominations and Governance Colin Eliot Wright 1992

a message from the

GCAF PRESIDENT



As I write this we are about to celebrate Military Appreciation Day during the Wofford football game, and shortly after we will observe Veteran's Day. Let us always take a moment to express our gratitude to the military men, women, and families whose sacrifices ensure the freedoms we enjoy every day.

With the close of the 2025 fiscal year, I'm pleased to report that it has been a truly exceptional year for the Foundation. We have much to be proud of.

The Manor has received a well-deserved facelift, and the improvements have been met with enthusiastic praise. New lighting, flooring, furniture, and a beautifully enhanced bar have brought renewed life to the space, reminding us of the Manor's elegance when it first opened.

Our third annual Giving Day was a resounding success, setting new records in both donor participation and total contributions - for the third consecutive year. Thank you to everyone who gave

and supported this important initiative.

At our Board meeting in Richmond, we were thrilled by the strong alumni turnout from the Richmond and Tidewater regions for a memorable regional social.

Another first this year: our Manor parking event during the Metallica concert. We hosted 85 cars filled with alumni and guests. While we can't be sure how many attended the concert versus listened from the lawn, I can say firsthand as one that attended - it was an incredible experience, and the media coverage certainly agreed!

Just a week and a half later, we proudly welcomed a new class of graduates into the ranks of our Alumni Foundation - congratulations and welcome to each of you! I had the pleasure of attending their Senior Banquet and was genuinely impressed by the plans and aspirations each graduate shared for their future.

This summer, several of our alumni participated

2025-26 GERMAN CLUB OFFICERS



Zach Rosen
President



Ethan Brown
Executive
Vice President



Justin Ward
Leader



Jonah Middleton
Vice President
for Membership



Will Forth
Alumni Secretary

in Virginia Tech's Summer Reunion. In addition to a weekend full of university events - capped by a spectacular fireworks display - we hosted a well-attended Friday night social at the Manor with approximately 50 guests.

Finally, construction is underway on a new Annex at the end of the parking lot. This addition will provide a much-needed, secure storage space for Foundation and Club equipment.

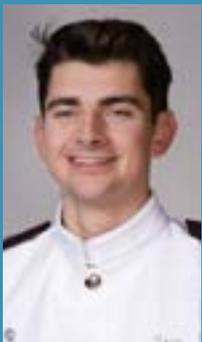
I wish everyone an enjoyable and safe fall, and I look forward to seeing many of you back at the Manor. 🏠

Go Hokies!

*Warm regards, Dave Cooper
GCAF President*



▲ Current German Club students dressed to impress for Ring Dance.



Nate Scott
Senior to the
Executive Committee



Rowan Leary
Junior to the
Executive Committee



Rhett Moyer
Sophomore to the
Executive Committee



Cam Hart
Secretary



Cam Smith
Treasurer



Liam Curtis
Historian

a message from the

GERMAN CLUB PRESIDENT



My name is Zachary Rosen, and I am serving as the German Club President for the 2025-2026 academic year. Over the last couple of years, the German Club has evolved and progressed in such a positive way, far beyond the possibilities of our imagination. New challenges arise that affect the German Club; however, they are worthy challenges for the members and I to overcome. The Club has goals and aspirations to improve the good name of the German Club even further.

One of the exciting events for this semester is the Henry Decker Leadership Seminar sponsored by German Club in Squires Ball Room. Our leadership chair, Ryan Hendrickson, has been working very hard to bring back a tradition for Virginia Tech and the German Club. The seminar will be open to all Virginia Tech students and have speakers such as Major General Bruce Scott; our own Club Mother, Nancy Brittle; and our faculty advisor, Dr. Bruce. We are very excited to bring back the leadership seminar and plan on making it an annual event. Our annual Motto Weekend trip during fall break is another exciting event on the horizon. This weekend entails the Club traveling together to Sevierville, TN to improve our abilities to lead, serve, and grow brotherly bonds. We are planning on completing two service projects while there, as we did last year to give back to the local community.

Within leadership, the Club continues to have a strong presence in many different organizations around campus. For example, we have members in leadership roles in the Corps of Cadets, Student Alumni Association, Young Life, Cru, Relay for Life, and Big Event Committee, and others involved in designing the class ring and hosting the Ring Dance. My goals for the new leadership conference are to expand the

attendance, invite the university, have key leaders around the university come and speak, and put the German Club on the radar of the university as the best leadership organization on campus.

Philanthropy continues to be an emphasis for the Club. In the fall, we will also be bringing back Gold Rush. We are going to make this similar to our Midwinters Philanthropy Week, but with an emphasis on service. Our plan is to complete 3-4 service projects throughout the week around Blacksburg. Organizations participating can compete for points based on their participation within the projects. The week will conclude with a concert for all students on campus to attend. Other exciting news for philanthropies is that our annual philanthropy, Midwinters, will be back in Squires Ball Room. Our Midwinters chairs, Alex Frank, Thomas Rockecharlie, and Will Forth, are already planning on all aspects of Midwinters to make this long tradition for the German Club, the best one yet.

Our Fellowship remains strong and true. We have continued to form brotherly bonds by spending time together during movie nights, watching sporting

Midwinters was last held in the Gordon Ballroom before the current Club set its sights on returning to Squires Commonwealth Ballroom this year.



Our Fellowship remains strong and true. We have continued to form brotherly bonds by spending time together during movie nights, watching sporting events, playing sports like pickleball and basketball, and events like “Thursday Night Tradition.”

events, playing sports like pickleball and basketball, and events like “Thursday Night Tradition.” Jonah Middleton has done an amazing job in the past year working in the fellowship chair position. He has maintained a positive attitude and mindset, and he continues to carry fellowship in a positive

direction. We continue to have our “Fellowship Talks”, which are events for brothers to openly talk about the struggles they may have occurring in their life or to just listen and try to help their fellow club members in any way possible. This promotes a deeper side of fellowship within the Club.

The three previous Motto chairs will be working closely with our new Motto chairs; Ryan Hendrickson (Leadership), Carter Ferguson (Service), and Rhett Moyer (Fellowship). These three gentlemen are extremely excited to make their ideas reality, improving the status of the Club and perpetuating the success of the German Club for future generations.

Recruitment for the fall has begun. Vice President for Membership, Jonah Middleton, has been working tirelessly to bring some of the best prospective members to German Club. Our active membership is 92 members strong, and we are excited to add more potential German Club men to our prestigious organization. Our former recruitment chairs, Rhett Moyer and Mathew Chapman, worked earnestly to get the name of the German Club out and educate potential prospective members on who and what we are and what it means to be a German Club man. We look forward to seeing Luke Snyder and Ethan Knoll carry on their success as the new Recruitment Chairmen for this cycle.

We are seeking to improve the interaction between alumni and current Club members. As always, we look forward to seeing them at tailgates during football season. Our Alumni Secretary, Will Forth, is planning on continuing an initiative that started last semester. Working with the Club Mother, Nancy Brittle, Will has been planning breakfasts in the University Club with local alumni, members of the GCAF board, and current



▲ **German Club President Zach Rosen sharing thoughts at the Ritual Meeting.**

members to further improve the relationship between alumni and the current Club. If any alumni are ever in town and want to talk to the current Club or want to learn more about what the Club is doing, please feel free to contact Will Forth.

I am pleased to say that the new leadership and current members are working tirelessly to enhance the good name and success of the German Club. We are honoring old traditions while creating ones of our own. The German Club will continue to grow and evolve. Aiming for excellence is one of the aspects that German Club men are known for, and we will continue to be excellent. We will continue to balance and embrace the Motto and the Ritual, build relationships around campus, and continue to be the best student organization on Virginia Tech’s campus.

The German Club has a definite Aim. We dedicate ourselves, by earnest work and unflagging zeal, to provide dances that are of the highest credit to our Club and to our Alma Mater. Through the loyalty of us all to our Club and through unbreakable bonds of brotherly love, we seek to promote good fellowship among us. The enrichment of our own lives and the enrichment of our Alma Mater must forever be our Aim, our common goal. See to it that our social functions are chastened by culture and dignity. Make certain that our good fellowship continues firm and constant. Remember always that the only way to have a friend is to be one. ☺

*Germanly,
Zachary Rosen,
German Club President*

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

**The Foundation's
Communications
Committee has been
working on the
following projects over
the past few months.**



▲ vtgc.net

German Club Website (targeted for Oct. 31, 2025)

Our objective is to maintain a more dynamic, current site for the Club and alumni. As such, we will be updating images and content for currency, including a link to the Alumni Portal (which houses the Alumni Directory) and adding a “History” link that references the “History of the German Club” book. We are looking to expand this link over time to include Annual Class Summaries.

Oral History

We have conducted our first Oral History Interview! Many thanks to Doug C. Petty, Jr. Class of '52 for sharing his life experiences as a German Club Member. Once completed, we will let you know where to check it out. We will be reaching out to additional Alumni with whom we can schedule interviews and continue this invaluable collection.

Doug Petty '52 was the first to sit for an interview in the new Oral History project. The Communications Committee is coordinating additional interviews and working to make these recordings available to our alumni.

Museum 3.0

We are starting to cataloging the various materials we have collected over the years and will begin creating new labels for the current Museum displays. We plan to start digitizing some of the content we have and defining how/where it will be stored and accessed.

Alumni Communications

We want to solicit alumni human interest stories, help to further develop the Decade and Class chair process with our sister committees to keep current our alumni rolls, and better enable interaction among alumni. As such, please feel free to send any information/images you would like to share. Also, if you have not updated your contact information, please see the attached article on how to do so.

GCAF Connections

Finally, we want to help the GCAF connect more closely with the current Club members via the Website and other avenues. Please let us know your thoughts on how best we can accomplish this.

I'm excited about my new role as your Communications Committee VP. Please reach out to me (wslaughter60@gmail.com) if you have suggestions, improvements or concerns you'd like to share. ☺

*Wacho Slaughter '84
VP Communications*





A *German Club* Man for all Seasons

RANDY MINIX

According to Wikipedia, the play, *A Man for All Seasons*, is a portrayal of a man “who remains true to himself and his beliefs while adapting to all circumstances and times, despite external pressure or influence.”

Randy Minix '72, certainly fits that description. Throughout his life, Randy has been true to his strong Christian values, his wife and family, his alma mater, and the German Club Ritual, despite health challenges and social environments that have led many others astray. A couple of anecdotes illustrate this point:

- As one might imagine, life in a “jock dorm” (Randy was a standout for the Gobblers in basketball) would not be in consonance with that of a religious teetotaler. In fact, Randy’s desire for sanctuary was a motivating factor in his decision to pursue German Club membership, which provided the wholesome environment he sought.
- Only once, when he was the co-captain of the basketball team, did Randy miss curfew – yes, he was out drinking and playing cards! But the coach extended Randy some grace, maybe in part because the drinks were Cokes (unadulterated), and the card game was Hearts, and the location was the German Club!

Randy was also dedicated to any sports he played, which were basketball, baseball, and later, church softball. As a freshman at William Campbell High School, he would leave open a window in the gym and sneak in on weekends to practice. His hard work paid off, resulting in winning the district scoring title three times and the state scoring title twice. Randy was also a standout in baseball, enough so that the Chicago Cubs offered him a signing bonus. But he was astute enough to recognize his future lay in getting an education, while also playing basketball at VT, where he was the starting point guard and shares the record of most minutes played in a single game (55) with Dale Solomon and Dell Curry. Years later he would lead his church league softball team to a state title and third place in the national Church League World Series.

In addition to athletics, Randy excelled in academics and leadership, disproving the myth that athletes are “dumb jocks.” An accounting major, he graduated Cum Laude and passed all parts of the CPA exam on his first try, before graduation, and received the Wall Street Journal Award for accounting seniors. He won the Carol M. Newman award for outstanding sophomore, and the GC’s most coveted honor, the Bev Parrish Award. He was President of the Beta Alpha Si Honorary Accounting Society. In an unofficial capacity, he acted as “leader” in the Club, not being afraid to tell members who strayed from Club standards to “straighten up.” He quashed a suggestion to drop or re-word the Ritual, and led the effort to repulse a popular national fraternity’s takeover bid. In business, Randy’s accounting prowess started him off with a “Big 8” public firm, and later saw him start his own firm, which he ran for 28 years with much success.

Through it all, Randy has been loyal to his high school sweetheart, and wife of 53 years, Patricia, and their children and grandchildren. He also provided financial support and friendship to the nanny who helped raise him when she had to live in a retirement home. Finally, Randy continues to serve the Club’s legacy, both as a GCAF Board member, and as ‘70s Decade Chair for Giving Day.

As GC classmate Calvin Henderson stated, “Randy Minix is the consummate German Club Man.” 🏆

As GC classmate Calvin Henderson stated, “Randy Minix is the consummate German Club Man.” 🏆

Material for this article was taken from the book, “The Life Story of a Division I College Athlete” by Randall Minix, and contributions from Earle Spruill '70, Chris Spruill '72, Calvin Henderson '72, and Mike Eggleston '73.



A WHITE HOUSE EXPERIENCE

“Winning this award showcases our efforts to innovate and excel in providing an immersive front row experience that brings the White House and its history to life. This collaboration aligns with our mission to offer engaging and accessible experiences for all.”

Luke Boorady '19



First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy envisioned a restored White House that conveyed a sense of history through its decorative and fine arts. She sought to inspire Americans, especially children, to explore and engage with American history and its presidents. In 1961, the nonprofit, nonpartisan White House Historical Association was established to support her vision to preserve and share the Executive Mansion's legacy for generations to come. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association's mission is to assist in the preservation of the state and public rooms, fund acquisitions for the White House permanent collection, and educate the public on the history of the White House.

Fast forward to September 2024 and discover "The People's House: A White House Experience". Located less than a block away from the White House, at 1700 Pennsylvania Avenue NW in Washington, D.C., The People's House transports visitors of all ages through the storied past and present of our nation. From a large-scale White House model embedded with engaging storytelling to a gallery of real White House staff revealing behind-the-scenes features and facts, the state-of-the-art technology enhances opportunities for independent and guided discovery throughout the 33,000-square-foot site.

The museum has won multiple awards including the top 2025 Innovation Award, presented in Barcelona, recognizing the highest achievement in applied technology in the museums and heritage category. Luke Boorady '19, Managing Director of The People's House: A White House Experience, reflected on the significance of this recognition: "Winning this award showcases our efforts to innovate and excel in providing an immersive front row experience that brings the White House and its history to life. This collaboration aligns with our mission to offer engaging and accessible experiences for all."

For more information, please see <https://thepeopleshouse.org>, or plan a visit. You'll be impressed! 🏠





FINANCIAL REPORT

With fiscal year 2024-2025 just ended June 30, 2025, the Finance Committee looks forward to the analysis of final income and expenses for the period and will identify any items of concern relative to the budget that was approved by the Board of Directors for fiscal year 2025-2026 at the Spring meeting. We will complete the transition to assistance with bookkeeping from an external business partner and develop new standardized reports for presentation at meetings of the Executive Committee and full board.

Our investment funds continue to be managed by

the Virginia Tech Foundation (VTF), and Virginia Tech Gift Accounting continues to facilitate most of the contributions from alumni and friends to the German Club Annual Fund Drive. VTF provides consistent reporting on both gifts and our investment funds so that we always have a current, accurate assessment of our financial position. We will be working closely with our consultants to identify ways to close the books and perform audits of our financial statements more quickly each year.

Lastly, the most fun work that the Finance Committee performs is working with other standing committees to ensure the programs that the German Club Foundation is advancing can be funded. While it is anticipated that the Facilities Committee will not be quite as busy after several years of major projects including but not limited to the Alumni Hall Refresh and Annex Replacement, the focus is expected to shift to planning for the 135th Anniversary Celebration in Spring 2027! 🎉

Robbie Roberts '95
VP for Finance

REVENUES*	
Gifts to GCAF	142,000
Gifts through VTF	325,000
VTF Endowment Income	236,000
Other Income**	177,000
Total Income	\$880,000
EXPENSES*	
Foundation Ops	189,000
Manor & Guest House Ops	101,000
Capital Projects	296,000
Club, Alumni & VT Relations	117,000
Total Expenses	\$703,000

*All amounts rounded to nearest thousand
**Includes Manor & Guest House rentals, etc.

APPEAL SETS NEW HEIGHTS, YET AGAIN

The FY25 Annual Fund Appeal raised \$462,385 from 839 unique donors. We surpassed our \$250,000 goal yet again and set a new high-water mark for annual giving, reflecting the deep loyalty and generosity of the German Club community.

At the heart of this success was the participation of over 800 unique donors, each playing a vital role in fueling the Foundation's mission. From small recurring gifts to major one-time contributions, every donation counted—and every donor made a difference. The average gift size was \$615, a testament to the collective power of broad-based support.

A particularly impactful moment came on Giving Day, when we raised more than \$126,000 in just 24 hours from 632 unique donors. This was (nearly or more than) double the amount raised last year. This surge in contributions reflected not only effective outreach but also the enduring spirit of fellowship that binds German Club alumni across generations. Whether it was the first time giving or a continuation of longstanding support, each contribution helped push us to new heights with this important event.

This year's results not only demonstrate financial success but also a strong sense of community. The appeal engaged alumni from all decades, proving once again that the shared experience of the German Club continues to resonate long after graduation. The campaign's effectiveness stemmed from heartfelt connections, personal outreach, and a shared belief in our mission to sustain the German Club, Virginia

We extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated in the FY25 Annual Fund Appeal. Your generosity—whether it was a large gift or a modest one—made this success possible.

Tech, and the New River Valley community.

As we celebrate this achievement, we extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated in the FY25 Annual Fund Appeal. Your generosity—whether it was a large gift or a modest one—made this success

possible. Every gift, regardless of size, truly makes a difference.

The funds raised through this appeal provide critical support for the day-to-day operations of the Foundation and its ongoing programming. Annual giving continues to be a cornerstone of GCAF's ability to serve the Club, foster alumni engagement, and create meaningful experiences for current and future members. By exceeding our goal, we are able to reinvest these funds into our endowment, which generates interest to help fund our annual operating budget.

Above all, the FY25 campaign reflects the enduring values of the German Club: lifelong leadership, service, and fellowship. The generosity shown by so many alumni this year ensures that these values will thrive in the years to come. With gratitude and renewed momentum, the GCAF looks ahead to building on this success and continuing to unite and inspire the German Club community. 

*Brian Dunch '93
VP Development*



▲ Gerry & Richard Weinberger '78 and Cindy & Randy Walker '74 enjoying Alumni Weekend.



Amy Wells (former HokieBird), Ramsey Duck '00, Dave Brown '99, ▲ Jeff Orsulak '99 and Rush and Jennifer Middleton '00 cheer on the Hokies.



▲ Michael Wunderlich '25 (left), and Alex Frank '27, ran 30 miles each and raised 2,500 dollars at Virginia Tech's annual Relay for Life.

Nominations & Governance Committee Report

Over the last year the committee has brought forward six new Board members for confirmation, all of whom were confirmed by the Board. At the fall meeting, Charlie Watson '86, Adam Gentile '24, and Calvin Henderson '72 were all confirmed. In the spring, Ted Gill '99, Kike Morales '94, & Carlos Munoz '00 were confirmed as new board members.

The committee also nominated two former board members to Director Emeritus status. Col. Lewis I. 'Bud' Jeffries '64 and Bill Merkt '69, were confirmed by the Board for Director Emeritus status. Both were long-term board members providing meaningful impact to the GCAF over their tenure.

Lastly, the committee nominated Keith Stemple and David Cooper to continue in their roles as Chairman and President respectively for another three-year term. Both were confirmed by the board.

In the coming year the committee will be reviewing and updating the GCAF bylaws as presented to the board. We also presented the board member class of '28 for confirmation.

In the continuing work of the Committee, we will continue to assess new nominations for board membership. We have a few new board member nominations to review and will continue to field and assess new nominations for board membership as well as honorary awards and emeritus status candidates. ☺

Colin Wright '92
VP Nominations & Governance



OUR 2025 GRADUATES

“The enrichment of our own lives and the enrichment of our Alma Mater must forever be our Aim, our common goal.”



Brian Aguilar



Matthew Benevento



Jack Bonner



TJ Brooks



Eric Bu



Wesley Clarke



Spencer Cross



Nolan Crumley



Colin Durken



Vincent Favazzo



Yianni Fifs



William Girling



Johnny Holman



Nicholas Iannone



Michael Makuszak



Derek Memmesheimer



Jackson McGeachy



Brooks Murden



Zeyd Myers



Michael Nicpon



Samuel Nunez



Jonathan Prevete



Sean Roth



Wagner Spiva



Parker Waters



Michael Wilson



Michael Wunderlich



Matthew Zimmerman



A few words from the

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It has certainly been a remarkable year for the Foundation! The year was marked by records across the board, from tailgate attendance to Giving Day dollars, and from the number of events hosted at the Manor to new members added to the Purple and Gold Society.

Thanks to your generous support and the leadership of the Executive Committee, we were able to accomplish all of that while also completely renovating Alumni Hall and installing a new Annex. We were able to achieve all of this without a capital campaign, without pulling from our reserves and while actually reinvesting in our endowment.

Thanks to your encouragement, the Club is working to revitalize traditions like Midwinters, Gold Rush and the Dekker Leadership Conference.

On a personal note, I would also like to thank all of you for the opportunity to have served as your Executive Director. It has been an incredible time to return to Blacksburg and reengage with a school and an organization that meant so much to me and to connect with generations of German Club men who have worked tirelessly to build a principled membership committed to leadership and service.

*I wish Eric all the best and remain
Germanly,
C. Ramsey Duck '00
Executive Director*

▼ 15 new members were inducted at Candlelight on April 30, 2025.





Smaller improvements **Big Picture**

FACILITIES UPDATE

The Club's Facilities Committee has had a relatively quiet 2024/2025 year following a few busy years of Manor Renovations projects and continued routine maintenance items. Club members and guests saw the completion of much needed improvements and "modernizations" to Alumni Hall, including new furniture and artwork, a new and expanded Bar, and new flooring throughout. These recently completed projects followed the previously completed renovations of the restrooms serving Alumni Hall.

Recently wrapped up projects for 2024-2025 were installation of a new annex and new doors at the basement entrance.

Demolition of the old and badly deteriorated annex cleared the way for a new prefabricated modular building to be delivered to the site and placed on the existing concrete slab, thus providing great economy and alignment with the budget for the project. Club members will enjoy a new facility with great space and utility.



Installation of a new set of aluminum entry doors and hardware has just been completed at the entrance to the lower level just off the parking and loading dock areas at the rear of the building. These new doors will resolve the water migration issues and offer a nicer look to that building entrance.

As is typical every year, routine maintenance items will be addressed and additional projects considered. Projects on the horizon include a kitchen renovation and continued installation of pavers on the Cutchins Terrace (as donations require).

A strong reach out of thanks goes to the Club members on the Facilities Committee for their continued work and help with various needs, and to Ramsey Duck for his continued leadership and oversight of the Manor and property as the GCAF's Executive Director.

It's been a pleasure again this year serving on the Facilities Committee, and we look forward to addressing the future needs of our fabulous Manor and "Home". ☺

R. Craig Balzer '79
VP Facilities

In Memoriam

Through continued research and help from several alumni, we became aware of some alumni whose passing was not previously known. If you learn of a classmate's passing, please email us so that we can inform other alumni and keep our records up to date.

James C. Dieffenderfer '41, served in both the US Air Force and its predecessor, the Army Air Corps, flying 46 combat missions in a B-17 in the Pacific theater, earning two Distinguished Flying Crosses, two Purple Hearts, and three Air Medals. Col Dieffenderfer also worked for Walt Disney Corp. He passed away Sept. 16, 2022, at age 102.

Frederick "Buddy" Hilbish '45, who served in the Pacific as a Naval Officer in WWII, and then started and operated a successful car dealership for over 70 years, passed away at age 100 on Aug. 3, 2024.

William C. "Bill" Pollok '50, who served on Navy torpedo bombers in the Pacific during WWII, and enjoyed a successful career in the steel industry, passed away on Feb. 1, 2025.

Jack M. Patteson '51, was an Army platoon leader at the infamous battle of Pork Chop Hill in Korea, earning two Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart. After retiring as General Manager at Kaiser Aluminum, he ran his own store in Buckingham County. He passed away on Oct. 4, 2024.

Calvin B. Schadel '51, a 22-year Air Force veteran who served during both the Korean and Vietnam wars, passed away Nov. 21, 2023.

James P. Baker '54, passed away on Jan. 27, 2025 (see article).

John M. Steingasser '54, a small business owner, passed away Jan. 26, 2024.

Philip J. Long '54, a Korean War veteran and industrial engineer, passed away on June 19, 2025.

Denwood T. Milby '55, who was a Professional Engineer for 50 years and ran his own firm, passed away Nov. 20, 2024.

Phillip W. Unger '56, a football letterman for the Gobblers, had a long career in the building materials industry, culminating as a CEO. He passed away December 30, 2024.

Charles "Dale" Harman '56, who was a paratrooper (83 jumps), Green Beret, and accomplished lawyer (never lost a case), passed away May 7, 2025.

John M. Richardson, Jr '56, an Army veteran and county administrator for three different Virginia counties, passed away on May 10, 2023.

William H. Moore '59, who rose through the ranks in the pulp and paper industry to be Regional Vice President of a California start-up, passed away Nov. 6, 2024.

Thomas B. Worsham, Jr. '59, a Korean War veteran and chemical engineer, who was President and CEO of Kemira USA, passed away July 13, 2018.

Dr. James Baker 1931-2025

The German Club family lost an exceptional Man this past January – Dr. James Baker, '54, Captain, USN (Retired). Jim was the epitome of a German Club man.

As a student, Jim was a member of the Club's Executive Committee. As an alumnus, he was an early board member of the GCAF, served as its President from 1999-2005, and then continued as Director Emeritus. He was a member of both the Mel Jeffries and Purple and Gold Societies.

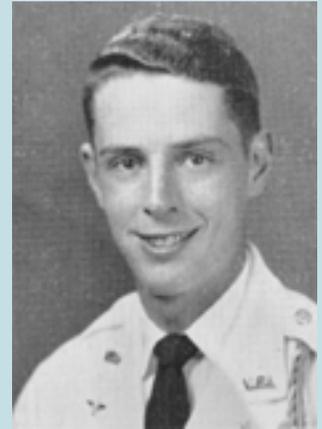
Jim was an outstanding student on campus as well as in the Club. In the Corps, he served as Commander for the Second Battalion and as Judge for the Cadet Honor Court. He was also a member of the Gobblers track team. In 1954, he was honored as "Campus Man of the Year."

In his professional career, Jim served in the Navy as a flight surgeon. During a tour as attending physician at the U.S. Capitol, Jim oversaw the lying-in-state of President John F. Kennedy under the Rotunda. In civilian medicine, Dr. Baker helped establish Virginia's first respiratory ICU at MCV in Richmond, and then went on to create the department of Pulmonary Medicine at EVMS in Hampton Roads.

Jim's German Club and professional legacy leaves a lasting example of one who closely followed what is embodied in Ut Prosim and The Ritual.

Jim's German Club and professional legacy leaves a lasting example of one who closely followed what is embodied in Ut Prosim and The Ritual. Fun Fact: Many members had nicknames bestowed on them by the Club - Jim's nickname was "Precious."

By member request, a tribute record has been established for those wishing to donate in Jim Baker's memory.





▲ German Club alumni Dick Arnold '56, Buddy Russell '52 and Doug Petty '52 were joined by classmate Al Hardy at this summer's Alumni Weekend.

Randy Walker '74, Buddy Russell '52, Mike Eggleston '73, Richard Weinberger '78, and Mark Wigginton '77. ▼



Winfred M. Phillips '62, was a lifelong academic, serving at Penn State, Purdue, and most notably, the University of Florida, where he ultimately served as Graduate School Dean. He passed away on Feb. 24, 2024.

John J. Mayfield '62, a sales professional and business owner in the print and direct mail industry, passed away Aug. 7, 2025.

Malcolm H. McGregor '65, a longtime employee of the State of Virginia, passed away Apr. 2, 2025.

James E. Smith '66, a leader in the Club, the Corps, and the Alumni Association, and recipient of the Alumni Distinguished Service Award, passed away on July 14, 2025.

K. Wayne Rice '66, an Army veteran from the Vietnam War, spent 40 years in investment real estate. He passed away Jun. 25, 2021.

Raymond J. Gordon, Jr. '80, a highly respected technical writer for several hardware and software development companies, passed away Apr. 29, 2025.

Frederick B. Hoffman '85, passed away on Mar. 13, 2025.

Robert C. Lowerre '89, who spent his career as an educator in secondary education and then a Director of a Governor's School in Richmond, passed away Feb. 23, 2025.

Ramon Jerel Motos '97, a gifted cartoonist and graphic designer, passed away on September 23, 2024.

Wayne M. Worner, Honorary, Faculty Advisor from 1977-83, and known to Club members as Dean Worner, helped create the College of Education, and later served as its Dean and Dean Emeritus. He passed away on Apr. 25, 2025.

Class Notes

Richard "Drew" Marrs '08 and his wife are delighted to share the arrival of our second child, Charlotte Elizabeth Marrs, born April 29, 2025, affectionately known as Lottie.



Dr. James Priest '72. The new Sentara Halifax Regional Hospital (SHRH) surgical area will be named the James H. Priest Surgical Center in honor of the physician and leader who focused his career on improving healthcare for the Halifax community and inspiring generations of healthcare professionals to treat patients with quality and compassion.



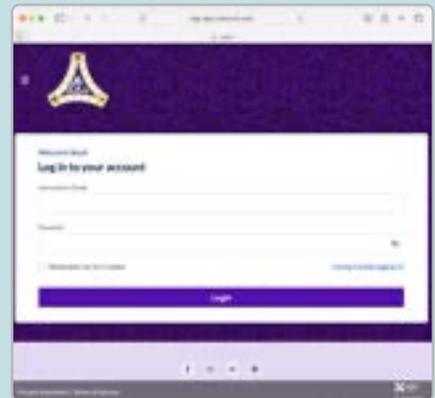
Zach Jacobs '19, Virginia's Deputy Secretary of Education, was honored by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences as this year's Outstanding Recent Undergraduate Alumni.

Online Alumni Directory is Available

Calling on all Alumni to recall these two Aim excerpts from The Ritual:

"...through unbreakable bonds of brotherly love we seek to promote good fellowship among us."

"Remember always that the only way to have a friend is to be one."
With those words in mind, we remind all Club Members and Alumni there is an online searchable, sortable, and secure German Club Portal and Alumni Directory, but you must consent for your contact information to be available to fellow alumni. We encourage you to "opt-in" upon reading this.



Here's the how, what, and why:

HOW:

If you don't already have a login (two steps):

Create Account: <https://vtgc.app.neoncrm.com/forms/createaccount>

Receive login information

Login at: <https://vtgc.app.neoncrm.com/forms/8>
(upper right corner)

Register / complete profile (yes, slightly redundant);
no donation required

After creating your account you can login via the
German Club website (<https://vtgc.net>) and selecting
Alumni - Alumni Directory

Need help? Email: director@vtgc.net

WHAT:

Online portal and directory for updating contact
information, donating, modifying giving (both
one-time or recurring), and reviewing your personal
donation history.

No cost or donation required to opt-in and register.

Donation history is private

All information is secured behind a login. Information
is not available outside the GCAF network. You may
limit what contact information is available.

Information may not be mass exported for non-GC
marketing or solicitation purposes. Any individual
use of information for non-GC/GCAF solicitation or
marketing is prohibited and could result in a perma-
nent ban of access to the site.

WHY:

Fellowship / Aim

Social Network

Keep up with classmates

Make new alumni / member acquaintances when
traveling / relocating

Search by Name, City, State, Zip, Class, etc.

Employment Network (NOT business solicitations)

Be available to current club members and alumni
seeking career opportunities

The German Club is unique to Virginia Tech and
special. Hopefully, it is lifelong for you, "out of the
past and into the present".

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F O R U M

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