

Hispanic, German and Polish Heritage Month

During September/Oktober Fountain Hills Sister Cities joins in the celebration of the Hispanic Heritage Month September 15 - Oktober 15 and the German and Polish Heritage month October 1 to October 30.

Fountain Hills Sister Cities has partners in each of the countries with Ataco in El Salvador, Dierdorf in Germany, and Zamosc in Poland.

Fountain Hills Sister Cities has developed ongoing relationships with the residents in each of the cities. This is made possible with adult trips and student exchanges. Mayor Gomez of Ataco and Mayor Vis of Dierdorf have visited Fountain Hills several times, and in the middle of October we will welcome Mayor Wnuk and the delegation of Zamosc. Fountain Hills Mayor Dickey has issued a proclamation commemorating each of these occasions. The adult visits and student exchanges have brought awareness of the diverse cultures in each country and we find that we have much in common with each other. Life long friendships have developed as a result.

Germany: As early as 1683, families from Germany began settling in Pennsylvania. Ever since then, waves of immigrants brought their ingenuity and perseverance to the United States. When we hear them, we recognize them. German Americans established the first kindergartens in the United States and the Christmas tree tradition. They also introduced popular foods such as hot dogs, hamburgers, pretzels, strudel, sauerkraut and lager beer to America. German-Americans make up the largest self-reported ancestry group within the United States accounting for roughly 49 million people and approximately 17% of the population of the US.

Hispanic: Each year, National Hispanic Heritage Month celebrates the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South Americas. "It is dedicated time to celebrate the traits that make us unique and add to the flavor of our culture," said Sgt. Major Angela Guigni Hernandez, the U.S. Army South chief religious affairs NCO. The Census Bureau estimates there were roughly 63.7 million Hispanics in the U.S. as of 2022, a new high. They made up 19% of the nation's population.

Polish: During American history and culture, Polish people had played an important role since 1608, when the first Polish settlers arrived at Jamestown, VA. The movement began in Philadelphia, PA, and became a national celebration of Polish history, culture, and pride.

A 243rd anniversary will be marked in honor of **General Casimir Pulaski**, Father of the American Cavalry and American Revolutionary War Hero **Thaddeus Kosciuszko**. As we mark the anniversary of the first Poles in America, we are reminded of the journey of our ancestors who contributed to the American mosaic. There are an estimated 8.81 million self-identified Polish Americans, representing about 2.67% of the U.S. population.