

Indianapolis - Cologne Sister City Partnership

Since 1988, Indianapolis and Cologne, Germany have been connected through an active and lively sister city relationship. The mission is to foster international understanding at all levels by forging person-to-person bonds between the people of Indianapolis and Cologne.

The Indianapolis - Cologne partnership is one of the most active groups in the city and in the past twenty five years the committee has hosted cultural, educational and economic exchanges between the two cities. Notable among these are the exchanges between the two fire departments, where a member of one organization would spend three weeks living and working with their counterparts. More recently, we have just completed the first exchange of librarians between the Indianapolis Public Library and the Cologne City Library. Some of our city's most revered institutions have been part of these exchange programs, such as the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Athenaeum, IUPUI, IVY Tech, and more.

Former Indianapolis Mayors Bill Hudnut, Stephen Goldsmith, Bart Peterson and current Mayor Greg Ballard have supported our local sister city relationship and all of them visited Cologne while they were in office. Joining us for our 25th anniversary celebration will be Cologne Under Mayor Spizig, *Freundeskreis Köln-Indianapolis* president Volkmar Schultz, Lydia Kluetsch, from the Cologne office of International Affairs and Claudia Burger, the widow of late Lord Mayor Burger, will be on hand to help celebrate the silver jubilee of the partnership.

The Indianapolis-Cologne Sister City Partnership Committee is part of Sister Cities International, a tax-exempt, non-profit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. Its mission is to foster international understanding at all levels of the community on a continuing long-term basis. Since its founding in 1988, the focus of the local committee has remained the same -- to forge lasting person-to-person bonds between Indianapolis and Cologne. The sister city relationship grew out of the "people-to-people" exchanges initiated by President Eisenhower in response to the tragedies of World War II. Today more than three hundred American cities have one or more sister city relationships. Local level citizen's diplomacy, social service missions and government relationships have become additional strategies of sister city activities.

The committee meets once a month at the Athenaeum to discuss various activities concerning the ongoing relationship between Indianapolis and Cologne. Anyone interested is invited to attend meetings and events! Opportunities for volunteering include event planning and implementation, fundraising and outreach.

Please join us and participate in future events and projects!

Sincerely,

Martin Baier
President
Indianapolis-Cologne Sister-City Partnership Committee