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ANNUAL MEETING—JULY 21, 22 2017 IN AUSTIN, TEXAS MORE INFO COMING

To commemorate the centennial of U.S. entry into WWI, the conference theme chosen was the effect Wilson's WWI anti-dissent policy had on German-Texans. Presenters and their topics follow -

Dr. Tom Alter – will discuss the Meitzen family of Hallettsville, German-Texans prominent in the Agrarian Socialist movement. His dissertation was, "Dirt Farmer Internationalists: The Meitzen Family, Three Generations of Farmer-Labor Radicals, 1848-1932."

Dr. Matt Tippens – will present from his book, Turning Germans Into Texans, which provides the background of Wilson's anti-dissent policy and how it affected German-Americans in general and German-Texans specifically.

Dr. Walter Kamphoefner - "The 'Wochenblattmann' and the Great War: Reactions to World War I in W.A. Trenckmann's Memoirs and Newspaper." A discussion of how German-Texan newspaper publisher W. Trenckmann combated the anti-German hysteria created by Creel's pursuit of dissenters to the war.

Dr. Peter Buckingham – will present from his forthcoming book about “Red” Tom Hickey, prominent Agrarian Socialist activist who married into a German-Texan Freidenker family also prominent in the Agrarian Socialist movement.

Dr. Kyle Wilkison – will provide the background of the “radical” Agrarian Socialist movement and the ties German-Texans/Texans had with those in the worker rights' movement, nationally – Meitzen/Debs, Parsons/German Haymarket Anarchists. He will present from his book, Yeomen, Sharecroppers, and Socialist: Plain Folk Protest in TX, 1870-1914 and from his contribution to The TX Left, which Dr. Buckingham was also a contributor.

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See Order Form below for this wonderful 34" by 28" map—proceeds benefit the Texas German Dialect Project headed by Hans Boas at the University of Texas

German TEXAS

German immigrants and their descendants form the most significant European element in the history of the settlement of Texas. German immigration to Texas began in the early 1830s, when Texas was still part of Mexico. Organized immigration began with the *Adelsverein* in the 1840s and continued into the 1850s, after revolutions in Europe sent politically oppressed people fleeing the continent. After the German city-states and Prussia were unified in 1871, Texas saw a decrease in European immigration. For decades, Germans continued to form a distinctive group of Texans, but it became unpopular to be German following World War I, and Texans of German ancestry began to integrate more into American society.

German immigrants first settled around the town of Industry in Austin County, and along the wagon trail that stretched from the Gulf port of Indianola north to Fredericksburg. After the construction of the railroads made the interior of Texas more accessible, Germans moved north and west, settling towns like Muenster near the Red River and Marienfeld in the Great Plains.

Although German Texans have become integrated into American society to a large extent, areas around the original settlements still retain a distinctly German flavor, from the German names of major roads in northern San Antonio to the 8,000-10,000 people who still speak Texas German today.

Komm mit nach Texas!



The historic Luchwaser home in New Braunfels. Frederick Underberg (1805-1875) was a brewer, the first to distill much of native Texas flour, more than 30 varieties bear his name.

New Braunfels

The first German immigrants to settle New Braunfels were led by Nicholas Zink in March of 1845; they built the town where the Guadalupe River meets Conal Creek, on a site chosen by Adelsverein leader Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels. Within a few weeks, the prince had foundations laid for the Sappingburg which was meant to be the immigration society's headquarters. The town enjoyed a permanent water source and was located on the road between San Antonio and Austin, as well as on the main road that immigrants traveled inland from the Gulf. New Braunfels soon prospered, and by 1853, it was reported as the fourth largest town in Texas.

New Braunfels' *Neuzeitung*, the *Zitang*, was published in German from 1852 until 1957. Textiles, agriculture and the processing of flour were the town's main industries in earlier times, whereas today tourism is one of New Braunfels' most important sources of revenue. The city annually hosts the world famous *Wurstfest* and maintains a distinct German character.



The Weinschule (Wine School) in Fredericksburg.

Fredericksburg

Fredericksburg was founded on May 8, 1846 by John O. Meusebach when 120 settlers arrived from New Braunfels. He named it after Prince Frederick of Prussia, an influential member of the *Adelsverein* (see introduction). Surveyor Hermann Wilke laid out the town along the same lines as the German farming villages along the Rhine River. Fredericksburg was intended as a way station on the road from the Gulf of Mexico to the Adelsverein's land north of the Llano River. In reality it became the end of the road for many Germans heading into Texas.

Fredericksburg became one of the largest German towns in Texas. The first newspaper in town, the *Wochenblatt*, was established in 1873. Until 1896, almost all of the town's residents spoke Texas German. With the arrival of the rail system in 1913, the town became more cosmopolitan. Today, Fredericksburg, an important commercial center and tourism plays a large role in its economy.



The Fountain of Liberty monument in Comfort.

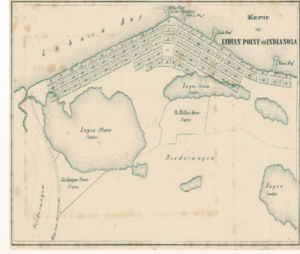
The Nueces Massacre

The Nueces Massacre took place on August 10, 1862. This violent confrontation between Confederate soldiers and Texas Germans occurred in Kinney County in southern Texas, when sixty-one pacifist German Texans fleeing to Mexico to avoid the Confederate army draft were overthrown by southern soldiers. Thirty-four Germans were killed. The *Frederick Union* monument in Comfort commemorates the event; it is the only Union Civil War monument in the south and is entirely in German.

Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels

Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels (1812-1875), founder of the town of New Braunfels, grew up in Germany and had royal lineage linking him to the royal families of England, Belgium, and Russia. He was a general in the Austrian Army, and in 1841 he was promoted to captain of Cavalry in the Austrian Imperial Army. He held assignments in Eastern Europe, Bohemia, and the Rheinland. While stationed at the garrison of Batsch, he read Charles Sebald's novel, *Strenks of Life in Texas*, and became enamored with the idea of German settlement in Texas. He took a year off from his army duties to direct German emigration to Texas as the commissioner of the *Adelsverein*.

Solms-Braunfels established *Colobania* as a port for German immigrants and named it after himself. He worked diligently to bring Germans to Texas and to shield them from what he viewed as the backwardness of the Republic's Anglo settlers. Subsequently, he founded New Braunfels, named after his ancestral hometown of Braunfels in Hesse, and returned to Germany in May 1846. In 1846 he published a state guide, *Texas*. Solms-Braunfels continued his military career in Europe, serving in the Austro-Prussian War, and retired as a general in 1866. He died in 1875, and he is still remembered for his tireless promotion of German immigration to Texas.



Map of Indianola in 1853. Courtesy of Texas State University.

Indianola

Sam White and William Cook founded Indian Point in 1846. Two years earlier, Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels had selected an adjacent area as the landing place for immigrants from Germany and named it *Carlshafen*. Briefly, the two places were distinct settlements, but in February of 1849, they jointly became known as Indianola. His name is preserved in two settlement names: Solms and New Braunfels.

Indianola developed into an important seaport and supplied German immigrants, US Army forts and Anglo farmers alike. Additionally, it was the closest Gulf port to San Diego, California, and became the eastern terminus of the shortest overland route to the Pacific Ocean. Indianola quickly became the second largest port in Texas after Galveston, and in the 1850s was selected as the terminus for Charles Morgan's steamship line. Indianola was so important in the Civil War that Union gunboats sailed west from New Orleans to occupy and loot the city in October of 1862. When results of a population numbering more than 5,000 in September of 1875, Indianola suffered a direct and catastrophic hit from a hurricane that killed much of the population and destroyed the city. It was rebuilt but then was again obliterated by a hurricane in 1886, and by 1890 the site of the city had been completely abandoned. It is remembered as an important site for Europeans who settled in Texas in the mid-19th century.

Bringing Music from Abroad

Though Germans' appreciation for music was common cultural knowledge, the immigrants' musical presence in their new home became noticeable relatively late. After the successful settling of the land by the *Adelsverein* in 1844, in the following years, singing and playing instruments in groups became popular. In 1853, the numerous organized German singing societies held a *Singerfest* (singer's festival) in New Braunfels and formed the *Texas State Singers' League* (singer's league), which consisted mainly of folk music. Also during this period, individuals and families often gathered around the piano at home to learn classical and operatic works. Among these were famous composers, musicians and teachers, including Julius Meiss of Searcy, who gave lessons to a young Scott Joplin in Texasiana.



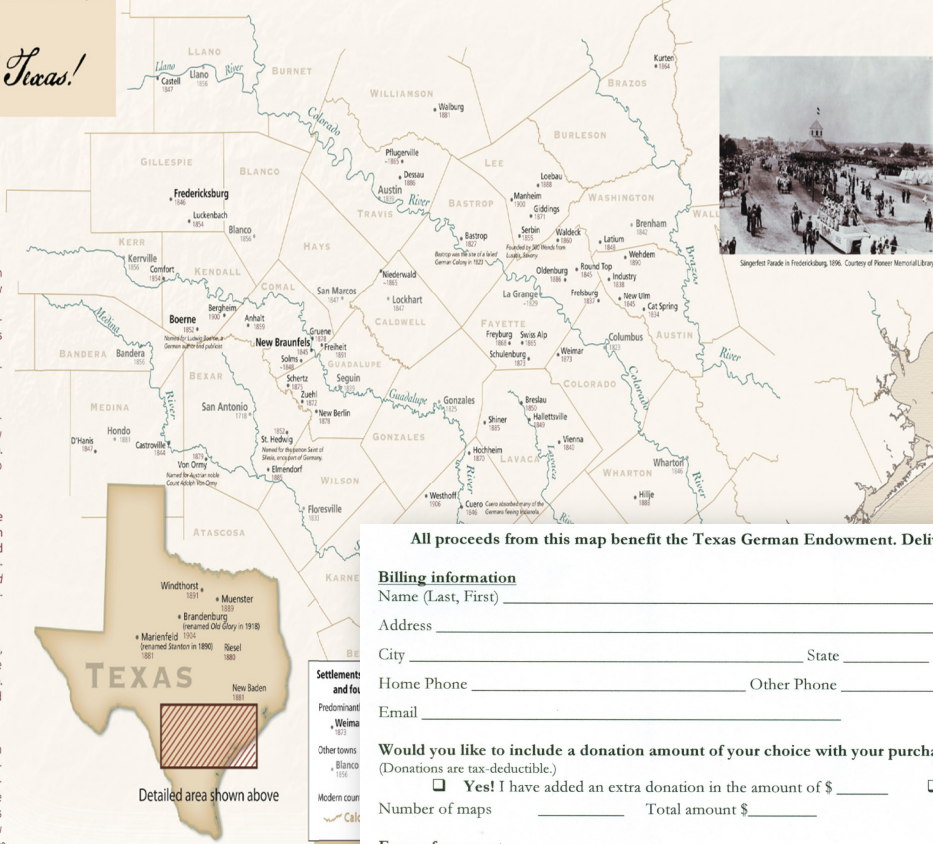
Singers' Festival in Fredericksburg, 1856. Courtesy of Pioneer Memorial Society.

German music became less popular in Texas around the time of the first World War, marked especially by the discontinuation of the statewide *Singerfest* after 1916. However, many of the local singing groups have survived and still give regular performances, especially at festivals. Like *Wurstfest*, *Mallert* and *Oktoberfest*, where dancers pack the floor for German folk tunes. Additionally, music of all sorts can still be heard at historic country dance halls sponsored by Germans, such as *Gaussen Hall*.

Texas German

Texas German, a group of dialects present in the state since immigration from Germany to the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico began in the 1840s, Texas German quickly became predominant in the area by the end of the 19th century. There were also many German language newspapers, schools, churches and social clubs at this time. However, German language and culture became unpopular with the advent of World War I, and today only an estimated 8,000-10,000 people speak Texas German.

English Texas German Std. German



All proceeds from this map benefit the Texas German Endowment. Delivery will take 2-3 weeks.

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Further questions? Contact the TGDP at (512) 279-2462

Timeline of German Texas

1831 Johann Friedrich Ernst received a land grant in the northwestern part of present-day Austin County from the Mexican government. He started farming and liked the area so much that he wrote glowing letters home to his native Oldenburg, Germany. Ernst's praises of Texas were soon published in the book *Reise nach Texas*, which had a stable effect on German opinions about Texas.

1832 = 1840 Inspired by Ernst and other publications detailing the abundances of Texas, a steady stream of German immigrants moved into the area. Most settled what are now Austin, Fayette, and Colorado Counties.

1836 Some Germans actively participated in the Texas Revolution, winning the state independence from Mexico. One of these, a Prussian surveyor named Herman Ehrenberg, was a survivor of the Goliad Massacre who wrote about his experiences in *With Milon and Fanning: The Adventures of a German Boy in Texas' Revolution*.

1838 Ernst established a settlement on his farm, which eventually became Industry. It is said the name was inspired by the hard working Germans in the area. Tobacco was an important crop; the town produced cigars and other goods.

1842 April A group of twenty-one noblemen in Germany set up the *Verein zum Schutz deutscher Einwanderer in Texas* (Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas) - also known as the *Adelsverein*. The major goal of the society were to acquire land in Texas for settlement and to create a German colony in the New World. They expected to make a profit as the land became populated and developed.

1842 Mai The *Adelsverein* sent two men, Counts Joseph Boos-Waldeck and Victor August von Leiningen-Westerburg-Altenleiningen to the Republic of Texas in order to purchase land for new settlements. The two men visited the coastal regions of Texas and navigated that the entire country was as it was there.

1844 Meanwhile, west of San Antonio, Henri Castro began settling his land with immigrants from Alsace. The town they founded, Castroville, was laid out like an European village. It soon became known as "Little Alsace."

1844 Juni The *Adelsverein* purchased rights to settle parts of the Fisher-Miller Grant in Central Texas. The mostly arid region between the Llano and Colorado Rivers and was never inspected by representatives of the organization, though it was touted as an advantageous investment. *Adelsverein* commissioner Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels began purchasing land and establishing the infrastructure necessary to transport settlers to Texas.

1844 Dezembere grants arrived in Carlshafen come by ship from Europe new communities in Texas.

1845 März Since settlement of the Fisher-Millers began building a town Braunfels named it after his of Neu Braunfels came into



Settlements and dialect regions:
 Predominant: Weimar
 Other towns: Blainco
 Modern court

THE JOURNAL OF
THE GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY
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Vielen Dank to these contributors

Rodney Koenig, Houston
Charles Thompson, Houston
Jim Johnson, Double Oak

Liz Hicks, Houston
Van Massirer, Crawford
Eddie Wolsch, Seymour

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As always, keep those cards and letters
a'comin'.....love hearing from you! Mary

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Helga von Schweinitz latest book
"More of Helga's Corner" is now
available.

The book is for sale at the Free School for \$10.

Or people can contact her at helgavs@aol.com or
512-990-3557

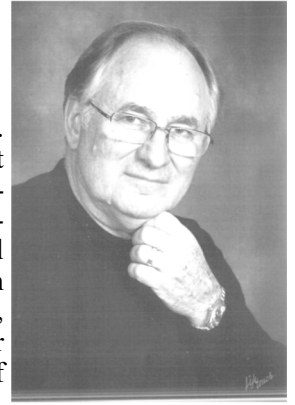
Helga's prior two books, "Helga's Corner" and
"German and Germans", are also still available for
\$10 each

President's Notes



LEAVE YOUR GERMAN MARK

By Rodney C. Koenig (past President of GTHS)



Recently the German Community in Texas lost a great friend. Our colleague and friend, Dr. Klaus L. Aurisch, former German Counsel General of the Federal Republic of Germany, died at home in Houston, Texas on November 9, 2016, the night of the recent presidential election. Klaus was born in Cologne, Germany on July 11, 1936. As a diplomat, he spent his career in the service of Germany on postings around the world, including as German Counsel General in Houston from 1991 to 1997. Upon his retirement in 2001, he returned to Houston with his family. He passed away unexpectedly but peacefully on Wednesday, November 9, 2016. <http://klaus.aurisch.muchloved.com/> He left surviving him his wife, Dr. Helga Kessler Aurisch, and his two daughters, Diana and Alexandra Aurisch. Helga is the very able curator of European Art at Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. Daughter Diana lives and works in London, while Alexandra is a lawyer living and working in Los Angeles, California.

A celebration of his life took place at a memorial service at 2 p.m. on Saturday, November 19, 2016, at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 2353 Rice Blvd, Houston, TX 77005. **The funeral itself was at the Melaten-Friedhof (Cemetery) in Cologne, Germany on Friday, January 20, 2017 at 1:30 p.m.** Klaus was originally from Cologne. His education includes a Doctor of Law degree from the University of Cologne as well as diplomas in political science, international relations, from the Bologna Center of the Johns Hopkins University, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, and from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris. Klaus participated at the Center for International Affairs at Harvard in 1988/89. Klaus also taught at the University level, often during his diplomatic posts. He taught at University of Cologne in the Sixties, and at University of Freiburg, Germany, as well as at Texas A & M and the University of Houston after his retirement from the diplomatic corps. He was fluent in German, English, French and Italian, with some knowledge of Latin, Greek, Croatian and Arabic.



He was a diplomat. Klaus served at quite a few different places on this globe and in a variety of functions. He had assignments to the embassies in Athens, Greece, Khartoum, Sudan, the multilateral missions to the United Nations in New York and Vienna, consulates in Zagreb, Yugoslavia, Los Angeles, Houston and Strasbourg, as well as posts at the foreign office dealing in particular, with political, NATO, science and environmental matters. Just prior to coming to Houston he served in Los Angeles, California. After the Houston post as Consul General and Dean of the Consular Corps here, he was posted to Strasbourg, France and served as Consul General for Eastern France in the Alsace-Lorraine region of France. Mary and I visited with Klaus and Helga while they served in eastern France and I recall a dinner party where all were speaking French, then shifting to German, and when the American couple, Mary and I, walked in, they all shifted to English, assuming we could not speak the other languages. Klaus always wanted to find out not only the “what” but more importantly also the “why” of problems, which made Klaus such an interesting friend to

listen to and to argue with. Klaus’ time as Consul General in Houston followed the German unification and the enormous task of rebuilding Eastern Germany. Klaus tirelessly worked to engage local people to assist in this process, and this is the true legacy of his term in Houston. He loved to ask frequently “cui bono.” Who stands to benefit or gain from a given transaction? Klaus L. Aurisch has indeed Left His German Mark on Houston, on Texas, and on the German Diplomatic Corps!

November 9 has been the date of several important events in German history. The term **Schicksalstag** (Day of Fate) has been occasionally used by historians and journalists since shortly after World War II. Hence Klaus’s day of passing, November 9, will stay in our memories as the “Day of German destiny”, which is easy to remember in light of various German events on such day. There are five notable events in German history that are connected to November 9: the execution of Robert Blum in 1848, the end of the monarchies in 1918, the Hitler putsch attempt in 1923, the Nazi anti-Semitic 1938 Kristallnacht (or *The Night of Broken Glass*) in 1938, and the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, all on November 9. In America, November 9, was the day we learned of the American Election results in 2016 and learned of Klaus’s death.

How will you Leave Your German Mark? Will you have a career of Diplomatic service involving German Speaking Countries, or serving a German Country? Will you donate your family homestead to a German related charity? Will you give scholarships, or help restore historic buildings as some have done? Will you take the time to review your will or life insurance beneficiary designation to include GTHS or the German Department of your University? Will you check your IRA, 401(k) or 403(b) plan to include a German Charity as a named beneficiary? Of course you should take care of your family, but do consider leaving 10% of your estate or a fixed dollar amount to support the GTHS Journal or the outreach efforts of your favorite German cultural group. For assistance in leaving your German Mark, please call me at 713-651-5333 or email me at Rodney.Koenig@NortonRoseFulbright.com. You may also call any of our officers or Board Members shown in the inside cover of the Journal. In any event you should **Leave Your German Mark**.

Genealogy Inquiries: Liz Hicks, Genealogy Editor

If you have information that will assist with the following queries, please respond to the submitter at the address given.

Do **YOU** have a genealogy question? Send it to Liz Hicks, Genealogy Editor, e-mail: erootrot@usa.net or 746 Edgebrook Dr., Houston, TX 77034-2030. We reserve the right to edit queries. Queries are printed as space permits at no charge.



Rev. Heinrich Haas - revisited

Mrs. Anne Stewart, e-mail: mikeyjoe37@gmail.com, would like to find the date and place of Death for Heinrich Haas, an Evangelical Lutheran pastor. Rev. Haas moved to Comfort, TX in 1908/1909, suffering from respiratory problems, consumption (TB). His last known place of residence was Longworth, Fisher County, TX. He had moved there to answer the Geminde's Congregation call to serve as their pastor circa 1910.

Reply: A check of the 1905-1910 Fisher County, Texas Tax lists for Rev. Heinrich Haas did not show him listed.

Mueller – Muller – Miller

Lisa Norwood, 301 Waring Welfare Rd., Boerne, Texas 78006, e-mail: lnorwood301@gmail.com Would like to find the maiden name and family of Rosalie Mueller (1825-1893), wife of Franz Joseph Mueller (1819-1893). Franz J. Mueller came from Germany on the s/s Riga, arriving 1846 in Galveston. I have exhausted all records on www.Ancestry.com. Franz J. Mueller lived in Austin Co., TX at some point.

Reply: The s/s Riga left Antwerp Nov. 11, 1845, arriving in Galveston, Aug. 1, 1846. A Franz Jos., age 27, single, from Rupertshofen, Germany is listed on the passenger list next to a Lorenz Mueller age 33 and wife from Goppertshofen; there is also a Peter Mueller, wife and three children from Goppertshofen, and a Matt. [Matthew] Mueller from Goppertshofen, 9 persons on the 1846 Riga. There also was the family of Haver Mueller/Miller 4 persons, who arrived in 1845 from Wuerttemberg, Germany.

It appears Franz J. Mueller lived in Austin County, TX most of his life. He is listed on the 1850 census as Franc J. Miller, 1860 census as F. Miller, 1870 census as Franz Mueller. He and his wife are buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery, in Flatonia, Fayette County, TX. His tombstone says "born Stuttgart". Their children: Karoline (1847-1863), Anna Hackbarth (1849-1934), William F. (1851-1917), Herman C. (1860-1931), James Franklin (1862-1904) and John Edward Mueller (1865-1893). I'm betting they went to live with one of their children who had moved from Austin Co. to Fayette Co. See if you can find one or more of their children on the 1880 or 1900 census of Fayette Co.

Since Franz and Rosalie's first child was born in 1847, and he came to Texas in 1846 as a single man, their marriage should have been in 1846, maybe 1847. A search of Austin County marriages show a Francis F. Mueller to a Rosalie Miller July 13, 1846 recorded in Book B, page 54. The only other Miller/Mueller/Muller marriage prior to 1855 with a bride named Rosalie was that of a Hermann Miller to Rosalia Schiral, Book C, pages 180-183, dated Nov. 30, 1855. It is very possible the Franz was angelized to Francis.

It appears from the Austin County, Texas marriages Rosalie Miller. Possibly, she was the daughter of one of the other Mueller families on the 1846 s/s Riga? Or she could have been the daughter of a Miller already living in Austin County? Use the Tax lists 1845-1847 to see what Miller/Mueller were living there. You should then look for deeds and probate records to see if Rosalie was deeded any land by her father, or mentioned in his probate file.

The Texas General Land Office, www.glo.Texas.gov, listed under the History tab, shows Fisher-Miller Colonists Land Grants for Franz J. Mueller and a Laurence Mueller. These Need to be investigated, but Franz J. Mueller sells his Land Grant located in Llano County, Texas to an Alfred Evans, who in turn sells to a Lorenz/Laurence Mueller. Possibly, the land in Llano County with Indians roaming around did not appeal to newly married Franz? Maybe Rosalie wanted to stay near her family of Millers in Austin County?

Last suggestions. Look for baptism records for Franz and Rosalie's children. The baptism record usually gives the Mother's maiden name, and sometimes, the place of her birth. For additional verification of Rosalie's maiden name, see if the death certificate of any of her children listed her maiden name.

The correction spelling for Rupertshofen, is Ruppertshofen. The Meyers Orts (gazetteer of Germany) is on Ancestry.com. Meyers Orts will tell you where the town or village is located, if it has a church or where the parish is, military district, etc. Do a google search for a better explanation of Meyers Orts Lexicon.

Helga's Corner

Freude

Joy! Pleasure! Happiness!

J. S. Bach, Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven and other composers created *Musik* with *Freude* in mind and in the title. If you had piano lessons, you must have hacked away at Bach's *An die Freude* or van Beethoven's version of a poem by Schiller: *fi-si-g-a-a-g-fi-s-e*, Tochter aus Elysium. I couldn't find Elysium on the globe, so it must be in outer space; maybe the *Tochter* called *Freude* is dancing with Jonathan Livingston Seagull. Nowadays, reality takes on a previously unimaginable, almost divine existence.



Psychiatrists advise us to always have something we look forward to like in: *Ich freue mich auf das Abendessen*. That is easy for me, a daily *Freude*, because I am always looking forward to the next meal or snack. Might that be the reason why I am considered to be a happy person? It certainly is the cause of the twenty extra pounds of me that need not be there. It's probably a well designed trade-off. It is still polite to say to somebody you just met: *Es hat mich gefreut, Sie kennengelernt zu haben*. Usually you shake hands when saying that.

There are houses in Germany that are legal houses of prostitution. They are referred to by many different names I can't mention here, but one acceptable name is *Freudenhaus*. The employees pay income tax and have very frequent medical exams.

On a trip to Japan with a group of Austin, Texas, "Friendship Force" club members, our hosts - Japanese local dignitaries - asked us to sing for a special treat the "Freude" song in van Beethoven's native language. Only two of our Austin group knew German, but to the Japanese we all looked alike, typical Caucasians, so we must all know German, of course. They were polite enough to provide each of us with the German text. Except for two of us, the group had no clue about how to pronounce the words, but the same was true for the Japanese listeners. Everybody smiled, and *Freude* was the atmosphere in the banquet hall.

When the Berlin Wall came down, many folks broke out in a song, but they replaced the word *Freude* with *Frieden*, which means peace. So they sang: "Friede, schöner Götterfunken.....", peace, sparkles of the Gods...

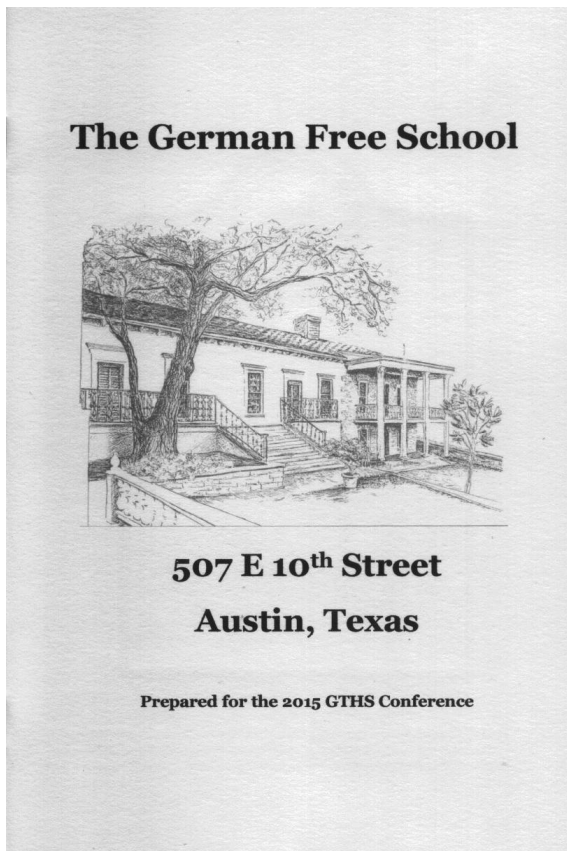
Kids' Korner (Kinderecke)

As with any other organization, encouraging the next generation to join and participate in the organization is important to maintain longevity of the organization. As such, Kids' Korner is being introduced to the Journal as an attempt to pique the interest of the next generation of German-Texans in their heritage. The intent is to regularly offer games, crossword puzzles, book suggestions, and other kid friendly activities, to stimulate children's interest in their German-Texan heritage. Hopefully, Grossmutter und Grossvater will share these activities with their grandchildren as well as offer suggestions for additional resources kids' would enjoy while learning about their heritage. Stories about the German-Texan life of a kid from a by-gone era, commentaries on German-Texan customs, poems, songs, recipes, and other memories from an earlier generation would be welcome. Not only would the sharing of these traditions, memories, and activities, hopefully stimulate the next generation's interest in our heritage, but would also serve as a way to document those traditions – as well as attract younger GTHS members. In the fast-paced, electronically connected world of youngsters today, it is next to impossible for them to comprehend what life was like on a farm or small community even a generation ago. Listening to Opa und Oma tell how they butchered a hog, lived without running water or electricity, or shared as a community an annual dove fry or church picnic, will give their grandchildren a greater appreciation for what they have and for what life was like for their grandparents. Please forward your contributions to Mary Whigham, Journal editor mjwhig@gmail.com – . If contributions are received they will be published in the following Journal.

The first submission for Kinderecke follows –

In celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the following site offers resources to teach children about the Reformation - <http://lutheranreformation.org/resources/for-teachers/>. The site has multiple links for teachers for curriculum materials, DVDs, books, and a YouTube video with lyrics for children to learn the basics of the Reformation. While the site is sponsored in part by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) and thus was designed to teach Lutheran theology from an LCMS perspective, it nevertheless offers historical facts about the Reformation – the timeline of events, etc. Teachers of any faith, or of none, can incorporate some of the information provided about the events themselves, without the theology if so desired, into lessons about the history of the Reformation. The link above is found at <http://lutheranreformation.org/history/>, a site devoted to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Because religious faith and its preservation was an important element in the lives of early German-Texans – Old Order Lutherans who joined LCMS, other Protestant denominations, Catholics, and Jewish-Germans - and because of the importance the Reformation had on Western Civilization, it is an important part of our German-Texan heritage, regardless of religious background, or the lack thereof.



Built in 1857, the German Free School is one of the “Hidden Gems of Downtown Austin.”

This booklet details the History of the School and Building as well as information on the Teachers, Trustees and students.

Originally printed to commemorate the dedication of the Texas Historical Marker in 2002, this reprint with additions was made for the 2015 GTHS Conference in Austin.

We currently have a few still available and one can be obtained by sending \$10.00 (Checks only)
(shipping & handling included).

Let us know if you are a descendant of a Trustee, Teacher or Student, and we will include a free ribbon identifying you as a descendant of the historic GFS.

Please make Checks payable to GTHS and mail to:

GTHS
c/o Liz Hicks
746 Edgebrook Dr.
Houston, Tx 77034-2030

Bulletin Board

Texas Folklife Presents Cowboys: East Germany Exhibition

by Kristin Brown • January 11, 2017

On January 12, the exhibition *Cowboys: East Germany* opens in Austin, featuring photographs from Eric O’Connell that showcase Texas and the American West reimagined in the former East Germany.

Texas Folklife is teaming up with photographer [Eric O’Connell](#) to feature portraits of individuals from the former East Germany who have adopted traditions of the American West’s cowboy persona in their identity.

O’Connell, an assistant professor of photography and photojournalism at Northern Arizona University, spent more than 10 years traveling to Germany in order to capture the self-constructed cowboys and cowgirls. The photos encapsulate everything from gatherings at rodeos and dance halls to self-portraits at saloons and saddleries.



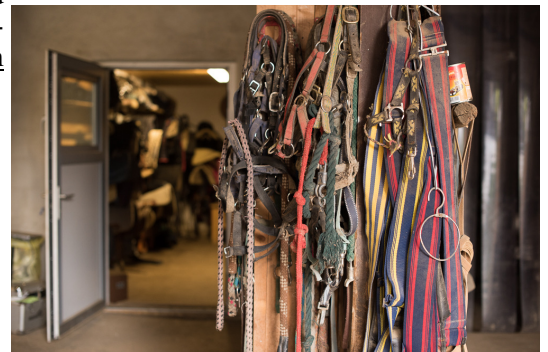
Submitted by Liz Hicks, Houston



Even after the Berlin Wall

separating East and West Germany was destroyed, communism was replaced by capitalism, and East and West Germany were united, the cowboy and the West continued to represent freedom and individualism and remained an iconic symbol of rural life and attachment to the land.

Cowboys: East Germany will be in view at Texas Folklife in Austin, Texas, from January 12 to April 14. The exhibit will display 50 to 60 photographs along with a short documentary film. [Texas Folklife](#) is a nonprofit cultural organization dedicated to presenting and preserving the diverse cultures and living heritage of the Lone Star State. Other popular programs they hold are the [House Concert Series](#) and the award-winning youth radio program [Stories from Deep In The Heart](#).



CRAWFORD WILL OBSERVE ITS 150TH BIRTHDAY WITH A BIG CELEBRATION IN OCTOBER. WE ARE HAVING A FUNDRAISER TO HELP PAY FOR THE CELEBRATION ON FEBRUARY 19TH.



Crawford Celebrates 150 Years

1867 ~ 2017

October 21 & 22, 2017

Upcoming Fundraiser Event:

HAMBURGER COOKOUT

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2017

*Served 12 noon to 2:00 p.m. at the
Crawford High School Cafeteria*

Free Will Meal!

Hamburgers, Chips, and a Beverage

Community Events

Bethlehem Lutheran Sesquicentennial Celebration

The Fayette County Record, October 28, 2016

One hundred and fifty years of faith and fellowship was celebrated on Sunday, Oct. 23, in the tiny Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Round Top. The small congregation was joined by many friends and visitors from around the country as it rededicated its ministry and mission and celebrated this important milestone.

At 8 a.m. on a beautiful Sunday morning, the celebration began with an intimate service in the historic sanctuary. Mike Rinehart, Bishop of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America presided over a service re-dedicating the ministry and mission of Bethlehem Lutheran. The historic Wandke organ was played throughout the morning, providing a rich and melodic backdrop. The service concluded with a haunting trumpet solo of "Onward Christian Soldiers," performed by Ronny Sacks of Round Top. It marked the third time he had performed this traditional anthem for an anniversary celebration, having played it at the 100th, 125th and now the 150th anniversary.

At 9:30 a.m., the celebration moved to the larger Round Top Rifle Association Hall. Four hundred members and friends attended a rousing community worship service, with polka hymns sung to brass band music played by talented local musicians. Bishop Rinehart presided again, assisted by Pastor John David Nedbalek, the current pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran and the Rev. Ron Haseley, who served Bethlehem from 1967 - 1975.

Following the service, a delicious country fried pork steak and sausage meal was served and the community enjoyed fellowship and fun. Commemorative keepsakes, such as a Christmas ornament, coffee mugs, cookbooks, history book-lets and photos were available.

This special day culminates a yearlong commemoration of the important milestone for the church. It will be pre-



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Photo by Larry Walther

served for future generations with an updated church directory and the publication of a DVD containing the many history and memory moments shared by members throughout the year.

For more information about the celebration, keepsakes, or the DVD, readers can contact the church at (979) 249-3686 or blc@cvctx.com.

Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston

Historic Bethlehem Lutheran Church: 150 Years of History

The Fayette County Record, July 29, 2016

The tiny Lutheran Church, Round Top Texas is celebrating a very big milestone. In October of this year, the church congregation will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the dedication of Bethlehem Lutheran Church by early German settlers. In recognition of this special event, a series of special services and activities is underway throughout 2016 - celebrating the church's history, memories of the congregation's families and 150 years of faith and fellowship.

The Bethlehem Lutheran congregation was first organized in 1861, served by Pastor Adam Neuthard

who had just arrived from Germany. Property for the church was purchased in 1865 and the cornerstone laid in May of 1866. The church was formally dedicated on October 28, 1866. The building of the church was directed by Carl Siegismund Bauer using native stone, at a cost of \$2,400. The funds were raised through free will donations and the debt retired with a few years. The church was repaired and restored over the years. Concerns over the stability of the slope below the church led to the installation of the large buttresses on the southwestern wall of the church. A cedar floor was installed in the church in 1894. In 1990, a major

renovation of the church was undertaken in preparation for its 125th anniversary.

A small peaceful cemetery is located next to the church. In the springtime, lush bluebonnets and Indian paintbrushes adorn the 300 plus graves dating back as far as 1864. Many grave-stones' engraved names and dates are illegible but thankfully, church leaders over the years, have made an effort to keep records of the congregation and community members who are buried there. A book published in 1966, titled *Our God Is Marching On*, documented the church's history and the cemetery records. Even so, today it takes a combination of cemetery walking, records reading, and genealogical research on the Internet to comprehend and appreciate the complete story. One heartbreaking aspect of the story is that almost a third of the graves in the cemetery are children's graves, reflecting the hard circumstances and disease that challenged our early forefathers.

A true treasure sits quietly in the church's balcony; quiet except during many church services when the lilting tones of a 150 year-old, handmade cedar pipe organ fill the church. Built over a period of three years and donated in 1867 by German craftsman Johann Traugott Wandke, the organ's 408 pipes are made of hand-turned native cedar. Wandke built seven organs over the years; only three are still in existence and only the Bethlehem Lutheran Wandke organ is still played regularly.

As the 150th anniversary year approached, congregation members began to plan for activities to commemorate the rich history of the church. Rather than concentrate events only during the anniversary month of October, a decision was made to hold a year of celebration. Activities were kicked off in October 2015 with the publication of a church cookbook, containing over 500 recipes from congregation members and friends.

A series of special worship services began in January 2016. Almost every month since then, there has been a service with special music, history moments, memories shared by long-time congregation families, and the Lord's Prayer in German. In July, an overflow crowd in the small church enjoyed an uplifting special pipe organ service. All three musical instruments (Wandke pipe organ, Allen electronic organ, and the Yamaha keyboard) in the church were played by talented local musicians, highlighting traditional hymns. The church was truly filled with joyful noise as more than 130 voices were raised in song. Highlights of the special services are being recorded to be released on a DVD at the end of the anniversary year.

Galveston's Immigration Station

Hundreds of thousands of newcomers passed through the "Ellis Island of Texas"

By Martha Deeringer *Texas Co-op Power*, December 2016

THE WINDSWEPT SHORES OF GALVESTON Island greeted an estimated 750,000 immigrants from all over the world between 1839 and 1920. "Here in Galveston," wrote novelist Edna Ferber in *A Kind of Magic* (Doubleday, 1963), "the humidity was like a clammy hand held over your face. Yet the city had a ghostly charm."

Many new arrivals must have agreed. During the second half of the 19th century, Galveston transformed itself into the commercial and shipping center of Texas, yet many newcomers were not allowed to see the city until after a period of quarantine. In 1839, Galveston instituted the first maritime quarantine system in the Republic of Texas. Officials believed that the influx of immigrants contributed to the spread of contagious diseases, partic-

ularly yellow fever, which caused more than 1,100 deaths in 1867 alone. How mosquitoes transmit yellow fever was not yet understood, and businesses complained that quarantines disrupted travel and commerce.

The celebration will continue on August 21st with additional history and memories shared. A special Country and Western music service with all the trimmings will be held at the church on September 18th. Then, on October 23, 2016, Bethlehem Lutheran Church will hold a grand celebration marking the 150th anniversary. Bishop Mike Rinehart, of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will preside over several special events. A brief rededication service will be held at 8:00 a.m. in the sanctuary of the church located at 412 S. White Street in Round Top. The historic Wandke pipe organ will provide a musical backdrop for that service. At 9:30 a.m., activities will move to the Round Top Rifle Association Hall (710 FM 1457) where a large community worship service will be held, complete with rousing brass band praise music. Following that service, a community meal and a raffle will be offered. Commemorative items, such as Christmas ornaments, coffee mugs, a history publication, the church cookbooks, and beautiful photographic images of the church property will be available for purchase.

The congregation hopes that their neighbors throughout the community will join them at all of the upcoming celebratory services. The 150th year of celebration will culminate at year-end 2016, with the publication of a new church directory and a DVD of anniversary year highlights. While the Bethlehem Lutheran Church and its congregation may be small in comparison to other churches, its history is rich and its legacy is treasured by the families that call it home. Some families have names that go back to the 1860's and can be found on gravestones in the old cemetery. Some families are new to the Round Top area and have been warmly welcomed to join this very special congregation. Together they will celebrate this important milestone and work together to take the congregation forward for many more years.

Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston

ularly yellow fever, which caused more than 1,100 deaths in 1867 alone. How mosquitoes transmit yellow fever was not yet understood, and businesses complained that quarantines disrupted travel and commerce.

Galveston built its first quarantine station on the eastern tip of Galveston Island in 1853. Ships suspected of contamination were not allowed to enter the port until the quarantine officer inspected the vessel. If the officer discovered any infection among passengers, or if the ship had traveled from an infected port, a 20-day quarantine was imposed. A larger quarantine station, built by the city in 1870, was severely damaged by hurricane winds and replaced by new facilities in 1879 and again in 1885 when the

state took over quarantine operations. These stations were at Fort Point on the south side of the entrance to Galveston Bay.

Locations for the centers changed slightly over the years. One was built on Pelican Spit, and, in 1902, another was built at the site of the original 1853 station. In 1919, the city's station merged with federal operations at a facility on Pelican Island, which continued to operate until 1950.

The first large groups of Europeans to arrive in Galveston were Germans drawn to Texas by the promise of cheap land and religious freedom. The 1850 census showed that more than 40 percent of the city's population had German surnames.

"My mother, Anna Klasek, and her family arrived in Galveston in July 1914, on the ship Neckar," says Robert Johnson of Brenham, a member of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative. "She was 4 years old and the second youngest of seven sisters. They were from Austria, and I understand that they were aboard the last ship of immigrants to leave the German port of Bremen before war was declared."

When a ship arrived and was safely anchored offshore, the master of the vessel signaled the quarantine station so a surgeon could sail out aboard the station's launch, Seaway. The surgeon and his nurses checked for contagious diseases and examined the ship's papers to ensure that a clean bill of health had been issued at the last port. Anyone who showed signs of disease was removed to the quarantine station. If the surgeon found no



Quarantine station on Pelican Island, circa 1910

sign of disease, the ship could proceed to port.

"My great aunt, Jessie Flowers Naylor, worked as a nurse at the Galveston Quarantine Station while she was taking her training at John Sealy Hospital in Galveston in 1917," says Julia Newbury of Belton. "She boarded ships with the rest of the medical team to examine people who

wanted to go ashore. It must have taken courage for her to go aboard foreign ships and deal with illnesses and all kinds of personalities and languages."

Immigration through Galveston slowed after World War I when U.S. laws set strict quotas for each immigrant group. By the middle of the 20th century, the need for maritime quarantine lessened. The last Galveston quarantine station was demolished in 1972, and the site is now the home of Pelican Island's Sea-wolf Park.

In his book *The Galveston Immigration and Quarantine Stations* (University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, 1994), author Harrold K. Henck Jr. notes the impact of the port. "The legacy of Galveston's immigrants not only influenced the growth of the city but drove a wedge of European culture through the heart of Texas."

Martha Deeringer, a member of Heart of Texas EC, lives near McGregor.

Submitted by Rodney Koenig & Charles Thompson,

Crystal City Internment Camp

A recent article in the TX Observer and reviews in The New York Times and TX Monthly of [The Train to Crystal City](#) by Jan Jarboe Russell, examined a little known episode in WWII, that of the internment of German and German-American "enemy aliens." Overshadowed by the attention received by the more numerous Japanese-American internees, German-American and Italian-American internees were also forcibly relocated to internment camps. Latin-Americans of German extraction were also forcibly uprooted and interned at camps in the U.S. One such camp was in Crystal City, southwest of San Antonio, about 50 miles from the Mexican border. One could argue that today's call by Trump and many of his supporters for restrictions on immigration of ethnicities normally associated with Islam and for heightened official "observation" of their activities, are eerily reminiscent of the WWII internee program.

As the book pointed out, the power of the state was used to surveil those of "questionable" patriotism well before U.S. entry into the war with FDR in 1936 ordering J. Edgar Hoover's FBI to develop a list of those Hoover deemed might pose a security risk. Development of this list first necessitated a definition of patriotism as determined by government officials, irrespective of citizenship. FBI agents, then armed with search warrants based on this definition, subsequently searched homes for evidence to support their pre-ordained conclusion that recent immigrants of German extraction were security risks. Evidence confiscated to support this conclusion were letters, books, and other materials written in German, with memberships in cultural organizations and the like also considered as subversive. Following Wilson's WWI anti-German-American policy followed shortly thereafter by the

House Un-American Activities Committee, FDR's WWII internee policy was only one incident in a continuum of anti-immigrant fervor and fear of the "Other," be it non-Anglo or non-conformist in our nation's past – and present. With time, one could possibly find a German-Texan family which experienced the Nueces Massacre and Haengerbaende, federal WWI and II anti-German deprivation of civil liberties, and recipients of Patriot Act "observations."

Similar in some respects to the current controversy over the current Administration's promotion of amnesty for parents who are here illegally but with children born in the U.S., the book presented the case of one such child, born in the U.S. to German parents who were legal aliens. In an effort to "cleanse" America of undesirable foreign influences such as those of the same ethnicity as Hitler, although here legally, the plight of one family – including the child who was a U.S. citizen - was detailed as it was forcibly repatriated to war-torn Germany.

The reviewers made the point, which students of German Texan history already knew, that the trickle-down effect of federal policy and pronouncements from those in high office or running for it, and actions pursuant thereto at the local level, have consequences. Well-written and very readable, The Train to Crystal City complements Will's War by Janice Woods Windle, an account (fictionalized but based on court documents) of her German immigrant grandfather's ordeal as a farm labor organizer in WWI-era Haskell County; Turning Germans into Texans by Matt Tippens; and work by Dr. Peter Buckingham on "Red" Tom Hickey. Prominent in the Agrarian Socialist movement in TX and OK he married into the Freidenker Wolfe/Booer clan of Stonewall County in the early 20th century and was caught in the sweep of WWI-era labor activists, as was Windle's grandfather.

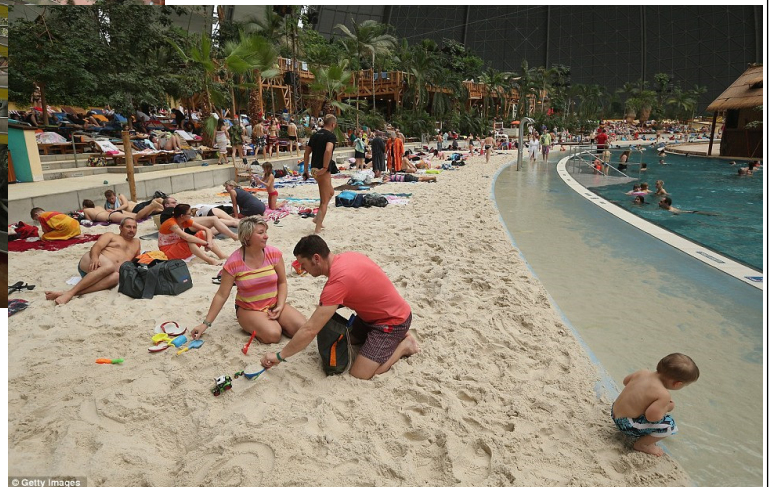
Submitted by Eddie Wolsch, Seymour

Winter At the Beach (Germany)

No chance of a tropical storm here. Incredible pictures show a luxury resort complete with sandy beaches, palm trees and clear blue water inside enormous German hangar surrounded by snow. With sandy beaches, clear blue water and palm trees, this looks like a spectacular and luxurious sun-kissed resort. Holidaymakers can be seen relaxing in swimming shorts and bikinis. Even the occasional flamingo can be spotted.



Fun: Despite appearances, not everything is as it seems at Tropical Islands



The 'resort' is actually located on the site of a former Soviet military air base in Krausnick, Germany, inside a hangar built originally to house airships

designed to haul long-distance cargo. And despite it looking like temperatures are through the roof - outside the giant hanger it is actually snowing.

Cold: Snow surrounds the giant hangar which houses Tropical Islands. As these incredible pictures show, the resort contains a beach, a lagoon, and water slide and adventure park. Guests can enjoy numerous restaurants, evening shows and can also relax in a sauna. A range of options are available for stays, from the basic to luxury. Accommodation includes quaint looking cottages and even beach tents. As well as flamingos, free-flying canaries also fly around the site. It is believed that the hall which Tropical Islands is located in is the biggest free-standing hall in the world.



It is believed that the hall which Tropical Islands is located in is the biggest free-standing hall in the world.

Popular: Tropical Islands attracts up to **6,000 visitors a day** and in its first year attracted 975,000 visitors.



Incredibly, the hangar, which is 360 metres long, 210 metres wide and 107 metres high, is **tall enough to enclose the Statue of Liberty.**



Submitted by Van Massirer via Liz Hicks, Crawford

People

Trump ancestor tried to Return to Germany-

By Zeke Turner *The Wall Street Journal*

BERLIN—An impassioned 111-year-old letter written by Donald Trump's grandfather appealing his expulsion from his German homeland has turned up in German archives.

In the letter signed by Friedrich Trump, then a newly minted U.S. citizen, he urged the "well-loved, noble, wise and just" Prince Regent Luitpold of Bavaria to grant his "most subservient request" to remain in the Kingdom of Bavaria with his wife.

The letter, a copy of which was obtained by *The Wall Street Journal*, was unearthed in the state archives of Rhineland-Palatinate by a local historian. The mass-market *Bild* tabloid first printed excerpts from the letter on Monday.

While it was well-known that Mr. Trump's grandfather had sought to turn his back on the U.S. almost 20 years after he arrived, this is the first time his actual appeal to permanently return to Germany has emerged.

Had that bid succeeded, Friedrich's time in the U.S. might have remained a footnote in his biography. Instead, the banished patriarch made his way back to America, entered the real-estate business, and put in motion the chain of events that made possible his grandson's election as the 45th U.S. president.

His appeal to remain in Germany might not have fallen on deaf ears had Friedrich not left for the U.S. in 1885 at the age of 16 without leaving behind a security deposit with the government to ensure he would return: for compulsory military service, historian Roland Paul said.

When he later returned to Germany to live with his wife, he was discovered to be a scofflaw by local authorities and ordered out.

More than a century after his grandfather's ousting, Mr. Trump has emerged as a withering critic of his ancestral home, lambasting German Chancellor Angela Merkel for her pro-immigrant policies. His side-swipes have left officials in Kallstadt debating whether to congratulate him.

Friedrich Trump set off for America because he couldn't get a paying job at home as a barber, he told officials from the Kingdom of Bavaria who were investigating his service-dodging in 1905.

He picked the profession "because I was frail by nature and my mother and I thought that I couldn't withstand agricultural work," he said.

Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston

***All Güt Things*: Documentary movie on Texas German language, culture, and history**

TEXAS GERMAN DIALECT PROJECT (TGDP) , ISSUE 9

In 2014, Chase Honaker of Hack Studios in Austin contacted Hans Boas and Jim Kearney about interviewing them about Texas German language, culture, and history. Together with some of his colleagues, Mr. Honaker participated in the "Fusion Five Day Doc Challenge", a limited five day period during which film teams could concept, film, edit, and produce short documentaries in order to submit their work to a film competition.

The short documentary *All Güt Things* was a big hit and Mr. Honaker and his team are now in the process of producing a full length feature film on Texas German.

The *All Güt Things* film documents the story of German (and other central European) immigrants, who came to Texas in the 1800s. It provides insights into the motivations, fears, and dreams of German settlers in Texas and covers issues such as immigration, education, religious freedom, and patriotism, which continue to be relevant in today's society.



The crew behind *All Güt Things* has been busy over the past year and a half filming across central Texas, and are now in the final stretch. They have started an online fundraising effort to raise \$20,000 to finish the documentary movie.

Submitted by Liz Hicks, Houston

A German geared up to help cars run right in Houston

By Chris Tomlinson, *Houston Chronicle*, December 2016

Hans Richter grew up in a small German town just across the Rhine from Basel, Switzerland. He was raised on a farm, but he earned a master's degree in mechanics, taught auto mechanics in Africa and eventually managed the service department at a Mercedes-Benz dealership.

There he met a German living in Houston who spent six years trying to convince Richter to open a repair shop with him. After visiting Houston twice—never in the summer—Richter came to the U.S. in 1992, speaking very little English but with big dreams. With the help of immigration attorney Charles Foster, Richter received a green card, in 14 months, bought an empty lot, built a shop and in 1994 opened Texas-German Autohaus on Edloe Street with a German winetasting party catered by Spec's. In this edited interview, he talks about his business.

Q: How did you come to Houston?

A: I was in my very early 40's, and my adventurous inner self said: "If you're going to change your life again, you need to change it now." I bought a ZIP code list from a business in Austin that had the number of Mercedes and BMWs registered in each ZIP code. I made a map and right in the middle is where we had to be. I chose an area where we would be within an 8- to 10-mile radius of 58 percent of the Mercedes and BMWs registered in Houston. We had no parts on the shelf and no credit, but we wrote checks for every 30-cent gasket. We built a parts room over a few months. It was very exciting for me.

Q: Were there times when you thought about going back to Germany?

A: Oh, many times! It was not always easy. We lost a lot of money in the beginning. We were too big for the number of cars we had. We had spent a lot on advertising, and we had printed a newsletter. We bought addresses and pushed ourselves into the market. It took 13 years before we took a penny out.

Q: Has the slower economy this year hurt your business?

A: Yes, I think this year was the first year we didn't grow. I talk to customers; they are the perfect advisory board. They are teachers, lawyers, engineers, everybody. I have seen a lot of them lose their jobs, and they are struggling right now. Some are in their mid- to late 50's, and I'm not sure they are going to start over again. Most of the German auto shops help each other and we talk. I'd say we have 8 percent to 10 percent less in sales this year. I can downsize a little bit, but not too much. I need 1.5 parts men, but there is no such thing, so we have two. We need 1.5 service advisers, so we have two. So we're high in overhead, but I have wonderful employees, so I'm good.

Q: Are American car owners different from European car owners?

A: In my old dealership, they would bring in their

car, you do what's needed and they pay the bill. It's an honest, straight-forward system. Here, you have to call. You have to explain what needs to be done. And you have to give options. That's a good thing. I'm an advocate of giving my customers the big picture every time they are here. Over there, they blow-out their engines much more. That's unheard-of here, unless the owner does something unusual like drive without oil or overheat it too much. In Germany they blow their motor on the autobahn going 150 miles per hour!

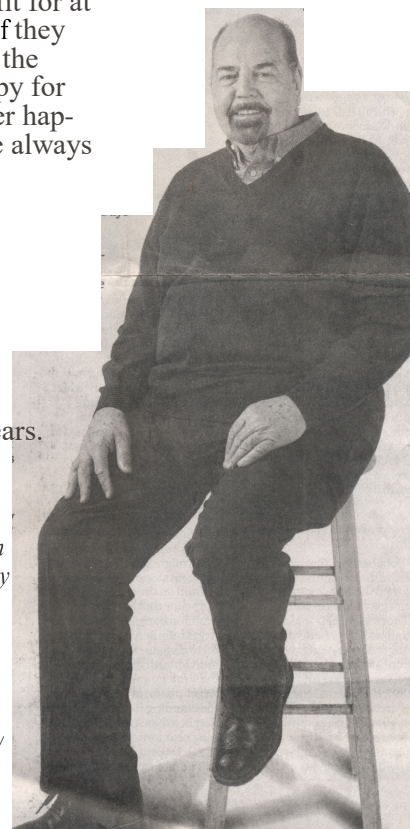
Q: What's the biggest challenge in doing business in Houston?

A: It's finding good people, which I'm blessed with. There's no training system like an apprenticeship here that teaches the basics. Guys here learn hands-on while working on cars. But cars are a nice piece of engineering, and you should understand that engineering. There's a chemical process in the combustion. The mixture needs to be right. There is physical load, there is leverage, and electronics now.

Q: What advice do you have for someone who wants to start a business?

A: People who start businesses are the risk-takers in the modern world. They take risks with finances, they take a risk with the people they employ. They need capital to survive without a profit for at least three years. If they make money from the first day, I am happy for them, but that never happens. The costs are always more than you think. I think Houston is one of the best places to do business. The city is growing, and we have been growing for 20 years.

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Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston

William A. Anders - Apollo Astronaut Who Once Lived In La Grange, *The Fayette County Record*, December 2016

By CAROLYN HEINSOHN

La Grange has the distinction of being the home of one of the Apollo astronauts for several years. Air Force Captain William Alison (Bill) Anders, the son of Cdr. and Mrs. Arthur F. (Tex) Anders (USN Retired) and nephew of E.F. (Smiles) Anders of La Grange, was one of three astronauts who were the first to circle the moon on Christmas Eve, 1968. Anders was born in Hong Kong on October 17, 1933 while his father was stationed in the Far East. After his father's retirement from the military, the family moved to La Grange, where they lived from 1946 to 1950.

Footprints Of Fayette

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The two Anders brothers, Arthur and E.F., bought the Hermes Drug Store and operated it as a partnership.

It was during this time that Bill Anders attended the local public schools, beginning in the

eighth grade and continuing through his junior year of high school. He always remembered his academic training in La Grange, having written his uncle several times about how he valued his schooling here and especially singled out Superintendent Charles A. Lemmons for his counsel and guidance.

The Anders family returned to California where Anders graduated from Grossmont High School in La Mesa in 1951. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from the United States Naval Academy in 1955. Following his graduation, Anders took his commission with the U.S. Air Force and received his pilot wings in 1956. He served as a fighter pilot for the Air Defense Command in California and Iceland, logging more than 8,000 hours of flight time. He also earned a Master of Science degree in Nuclear Engineering from the U.S. Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, in 1962.

In 1963, Anders was selected by NASA in the third group of astronauts and was the backup pilot for the Gemini 11 mission. In 1968, he was chosen to accompany Frank Borman and James A. Lovell, Jr. for the Apollo 8 mission, the first mission where humans traveled beyond Low Earth orbit. This historic manned space flight orbited the moon for ten revolutions. Anders also served as the back-up Command Module pilot for the Apollo 11 mission, before accepting an assignment as Executive Secretary for the National Aeronautics and Space Council from 1969 to 1973. On April 19, 1969, La Grange honored one of its own with "Bill Anders Day". Anders and his family attended the event, which included a parade, reception, barbecue and a program of film and slides on his space flight. In 1973, Anders was appointed to the five-member Atomic Energy Commission and was also named as U.S. Chairman of the joint U.S./USSR

technolog exchange program for fission and fusion power. President Ford then named Anders to become the first chairman of the newly established Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which was followed by an appointment to serve as Ambassador to Norway until 1977. At that time, he ended his career with the federal government after 26 years and began work in the private sector. He joined the General Electric Company as general manager and became a senior executive of its nuclear energy products and aircraft equipment divisions. He later joined Textron Inc. in Rhode Island as its senior executive vice president for operations, a position he held for five years.

In 1990, Anders became the chairman and CEO of General Dynamics, a large military supplier and parent company of Electric Boat, that employed over 100,000 people at the time. He retired in 1993, but continued to serve as president of the William A. Anders Foundation, a philanthropic organization dedicated to supporting educational and environmental issues. He received a number of awards and honors, including being inducted into the International Space Hall of Fame and having a crater on the moon named after him.

Anders married Valerie Hoard in 1955; they have four sons and two daughters and presently live in Washington State. He has a legacy of notable achievements and took part in the making of history during our time. We are definitely proud that he called La Grange home for a short while.

Sources: *Meiners, Carolyn. "Anders, William A.", Fayette County, Texas Heritage, Vol n. Curtis Media, 1996*

Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston



Christian Ernst Soergel by Neale Rabensburg, *The Fayette County Record*, January 24, 2017

Ernst Soergel, a 40-year-old Prussian immigrant, who settled in the northeastern reaches of Fayette County in the latter part of 1846 was a free thinker, an intellect and a theologian. Less attractive qualities were his withdrawn manner and a rough exterior appearance. He took employment with the Adelsverein (the German Emigration Company) as an assistant overseer of Nassau Plantation located in the Jack League.

Ernst's cousin, Alwin Soergel, who had arrived earlier that same year, purchased a 100-acre property in the Winn League, which was adjacent to Nassau Plantation. This 100-acre tract included the landmark facility known as the Round Top House, which had been built earlier by Captain John York, a war hero for the Republic of Texas. The Round Top House was designed as a way station and initially served teamster traffic, bringing provisions from the coast into the central Texas region. Alwin,

who attempted farming on his 100 acres for only a few months, soon took employment with the Adelsverein and continued with his writings and sojourn across Texas. When he received news of his brother's illness, Alwin made the decision to return to his homeland of Prussia in September 1847. He placed his cousin Ernst Soergel in charge of the Round Top House and the 100 acres. Ernst continued to manage this property for the next 28 years.

In December 1846, the Round Top House became the regional post office for northeastern Fayette County. Ernst Soergel may have been part of the negotiations with US postal officials for its relocation. In October 1847, one month following the departure of his cousin Alwin, Ernst Soergel was unfortunately a party to a gun battle at Nassau Plantation. Two men were killed, and Ernst was arrested, indicted for murder, but later acquitted. The repercussions from the ensuing trial, which lasted well into 1848, were felt not only in Fayette County, but at the State and international levels as well. The exposure of the trial placed the reputation of the Adelsverein into a freefall, and in Europe, the Society's directors and financial backers, who were the Prussian noblemen, were overwhelmed and dismayed. Nassau Plantation, the Society's only tangible asset in Texas, was soon lost to a creditor, Otto von Roeder, and the Adelsverein continued its decline until its final demise in 1853.

The arrest of Ernst Soergel, the murder charges against him and the trial which followed most likely led to the loss of postal operations for the Round Top House during the summer of 1848. Ernst, as the manager of the Round Top House, made an error in judgment when he allowed this facility, a

United States regional postal center, to be used as the staging ground for the early morning assault on nearby Nassau Plantation in October 1847. John Shults, a local land speculator, recognized the economic benefits of securing postal operations and solicited US officials for the role of postmaster. Shults was successful with that effort and was thus able to rustle postal services to his home property located about 1-1/2 miles to the

south near Cummins Creek. He renamed the post office after himself and placed postal services within his company store. Shults later moved his store and post office a short distance to the west into the emerging village that would develop into "new" Round Top on Cummins Creek. The former name of "Round Top Post Office" was restored at the request of postal officials; however, the change of name appears to have happened as late as 1851 as per von Rosenberg and Meerscheidt family correspondence.

In 1875, Ernst and Auguste Soergel moved into the town of Round Top on Cummins Creek to live with their adopted daughter, who was married to Walter von Rosenberg. The von Rosenberg home was a two-story structure located near the banks of Boggy Creek. Ernst died there in 1880 with pneumonia. The von Rosenberg family contends that he was buried in the Soergel Hill Cemetery (now Rich- ters Cemetery) close to the grave site of his sister-in-law, Amanda Fallier von Rosenberg. Notice in the May 12, 1880 issue of the *La Grange Journal* newspaper said that Ernst Soergel, who was 74 years of age, died at the residence of Walter von Rosenberg on April 26, 1880. The article also mentioned that the "number of weepers at the funeral was large. The loss of deceased is very much regretted by the people of the community (Round Top). He was one of the early settlers of Fayette County."

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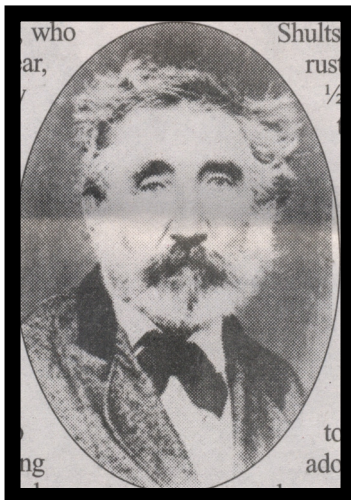
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Submitted by Rodney Koenig, Houston



Footprints Of Fayette

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Volksdeutsche by the Dozen, Part Six:

After Yugoslavia, Wandering through Europe: Jakob & Katarina Webel Family, Fleeing to Germany

James J. S. Johnson

In this *sixth episode* of the “**Volksdeutsche by the Dozen**” family history series, the ethnic-German family of **Jakob and Katarina Webel**, having evacuated from their former home in what is today Croatia, strive to survive as refugees, during the latter part of World War II, having left the broken-apart country of Yugoslavia in a train – traveling through places like **Prague** (in present-day Czech Republic), eventually to reach Germany.



Refugee traffic near Passau, Bavaria, AD1945]
Photo credit: <http://www.lonesentry.com/S8/>

But it is obvious that Communists are gaining control of what was Yugoslavia (and will nail that control tight as the war concludes) -- including Croatia -- and the Webel family rightly fears and is fleeing the intolerable cruelty of the Communists. The country of Yugoslavia (then Croatia, later Yugoslavia, then again later Croatia), their original homeland before World War II, has ceased to be a safe-to-live-at “home”, so the Webel family has emigrated – facing a very uncertain and unpredictable future in other countries -- leaving behind extended family members (such as Jakob’s father). Masses of displaced families on the move, but to where?



Refugees in Bavaria, using horse-drawn wagons (AD1945)
Photo credit: <http://www.lonesentry.com/S8/>

But what is next? Where will the trains take them as a family? Can they succeed in staying together as a family? Where should be their new home in post-WWII Europe? Where will the trains take them? What about food and hygiene?

[This part of the interview quotes from **pages 57-116** of Rosie's record.]

* * * * *

DAUGHTER: **So approximately how long were you in this train?**

DAD: Maybe 2 weeks, huh, Mom?

MOM: *Long enough, long enough.*

DAUGHTER: **About 2 weeks.**

DAD: Many times nothing to eat for a day or two.

MOM: *Yeah, and once they had to-*

DAD: But we had that sausage in the -- you know, you are not allowed to open. Nobody is allowed to know, even not the children. Because when the children know it's here, they would ask, and if one person know beside you, then everybody knows. So we just scarcely opened it, cut little bit off.

MOM: *Get something in your stomach, this was all we had, never filled up.*

DAD: Then we came there and unload from the train in **Germany**.

MOM: *Many days on this train, then the transport was, they say, now 4:00 we arrive over there in **Prague** or somewhere where we was, we will have a good meal, we can go there with our dish, we get good meal and all the people will be fed. Yeah, was not so. We don't arrive this night and this foods have to stay overnight and the next day this time almost, and when Dad brought this food in the wagon. I was not feeling food, this was stinky, I said, no, I would not eat this, stinks this food, And Dad told me 'how you can say this before the children, this food stinks.' Now, we had finally something to give them and all they look at me. I will not eat, I will not eat. And he forced some dish, they have to eat, and I'm not hungry and the other said, I'm not hungry, And Dad start eating, okay. I cannot eat, rather I die. I cannot eat. This stink this food, you know, this was just couple hours, they threw up. They was so sick, all, the whole transport was sick from this food, they had them keep this food overnight in these big kettles for over thousand people.*

DAUGHTER: **There was over 1,000 on the train?**

MOM: *Yeah, and was noodles and beans all mixed together, was a kind of pig food. what you feed the pigs Just when I smell it, Dad says you find nice. He was throwing up, all others.*

DAUGHTER: **So who all got sick? Dad?**

MOM: *Oh, Dad was very sick.*

DAUGHTER: **Did the kids eat?**

MOM: *No, they was sick, you have to eat, they were sick, very sick. Very sick. They threw up, there was no end to throwing up, the whole stomach was sick. Then finally when we came off this train...my, my....*

[The audiotape was stopped after a discussion about how late the time was.]

* * * * *

[When the interview resumes there was a digression of topics, returning to earlier events, when Dad first saw and heard Mom, as she sang in church, when Dad was scouting for a girl who would make the right kind of wife.]

DAD: I was not a tall boy, never, and I did not like to have a wife taller than I am. So that's nothing, so when she stood there....

DAUGHTER: **But she's not taller than you, is she?**

DAD: No, she's not, there she was, was singing somewhere, she was standing anyplace, then I remember how tall she is. Let's see on that... so I remember, about an inch lower than that. Then, later on, I go there and stand there and stand to my body, and see, am I taller than that or not.

DAUGHTER: **Why did you pick mom out of all the other girls?**

DAD: Why? Well, why?

DAUGHTER: **She had a nice beautiful voice? Cute?**

DAD: One thing, she was a nice looking girl, and one thing, she had a good voice, and I know I cannot sing and it is very important for a believing family if they can sing. And if a mom can sing, then she can teach the children, not so teach, then that inherited by the children, they can usually. And I like to sing, I know cannot, maybe if I would grow up in a church where there are good singers, maybe I could train myself because I know the notes, I know very good the notes, I meant not only the name of notes, I know which is which. But I have not hearing to decide to know am I following ever now a little bit higher or lower than you are. But that could be trained if you...-

MOM: *I thought so w* [interruption when audiotape stops]

DAD: The train finally arrived in the -- that's **almost Eastern Germany, but now is a Polish territory** -- and from the train we are transferred all in a big some kind of like a dance hall or something like that.

DAUGHTER: **What's a 'dance hall'?**

MOM: *Dance hall.*

DAUGHTER: **Oh, like a big building.**

DAD: Big building, yes, but I don't think it was upstairs but a big building and I think we had about 30 beds there, make up beds, but on 2, 3 floor, the beds, (bunk), somebody is here on the top, and the beds were wide easy for 2 persons. So we were all that and just a little room to walk in-between.

MOM: *Was 93 person in one room, and in other was over 100, there was just 2 big sitting -- not halls, was like halls for dancing halls.*

DAD: And we did... The food, we get all from the same place but whatever we did have, put under the pillows or under your bed and so hide how you know, and one lady was with, she had sugar, whole box, about 100 lb. . . . Not crystals, but pieces. How you call this?

DAUGHTER: **Cubes.**

DAD: Yeah, and the children had always sugar to eat and they had stuff: meat, was winter time, they put, hang on the window outside overnight to keep it cool, in the morning would disappear, nobody is there because there are 100 people, you never know who. And there is everybody hungry, it's, the food is, here you get food, but that food is no good, you could think that the war is almost to the end. The war is prolonged 4 or 5 years and nothing came in, nothing grow, nothing is there, everybody is poor.

MOM: *I had never eat such food what they cook.*

DAD: Everybody is poor, so everybody's hungry.

DAUGHTER: **The food that you took from your father when you went on the train.**

DAD: We did have it.

DAUGHTER: **You still have some of that left?**

DAD: We went with much, we still had much but we slept on it in that time.

MOM: *We hid it because of the people.*

DAD: We hid it.

DAUGHTER: **It was hidden?**



DAD: Yeah.

DAUGHTER: **You were hiding it.**

DAD: Hiding it, but how could you hide? There where you sleep.

MOM: *Well, was not long like this. Tell them a little farther what I did. I went to a lady, get known was Major's wife.*

DAD: And then in that big room was a little corner, have there some more nurses, the nurses who take care of us, and mom went there to the nurses and asked permission to make something-

MOM: *On their stove that was there, was cold.*

DAD: They had a little stove, to make something for us especially, and they allowed, you know. And sure mom take, give it, them a little bit. And they didn't have it something, and so little by little Mom and Aunt Anne's mom get in the city, get acquainted with a lady

MOM: *No, was not Anne's mom, this was Anne's sister, Eva Brasenkovich.*

DAUGHTER: **Okay. You were not held captive there. That's just where you were, where you slept, where you lived?**

DAD: You were there like refuge. And they take care of us, but they didn't have any, they themselves had nothing so, and mom get acquainted with the lady, she happened to be the Major's wife. And they lived in an apartment, in a big building apartment, they had about maybe 4 or 5 persons with families there, and Mom asked to give the permission to take a bath, the children.

MOM: *Give the children the bath over there and wash the stuff and-*

DAUGHTER: And so, little by little, we washed, bathed the children there, and washed our clothes and washed their clothes too for nothing.

MOM: *Oh, this was something....*

DAD: And sure, how we make out the soap, probably she giveth the soap because everything was a ration card. Right away when we get there we get ration card, but you can buy nothing and so Mom asked there to hide our bacon and our hams and our sausage, and we hid in the attic, like attic here, just you could walk in.

MOM: *Storage, storage, there stuff and. . .*

DAD: And every apartment has little bit fenced in.

MOM: *Was fenced in.*

DAD: But so you could see through, so they could dry their clothes there in winter, could lock up there part.

MOM: *Each one was locked.*

DAD: So you could put here, they put paper, from outside could nobody see it, and hang there, and so they hang our stuff there and whenever mom goes to bring a slice, she give her a slice, little bit.

MOM: *And I gave to her a slice, to this lady. Oh, she says, my husband would just love, this noon we will have a lunch what's we have not for 3, 4, 5 years. So one slice of ham, Nice dry ham sliced like a finger thick or so, nice slice.*

DAUGHTER: **How would you do that? Would you cook that or fry it or what would you do? Add water to it?**

MOM: *Eat in raw, no, eat in secret, beside our little bed, no good food then, you get some kind of bread, corn-bread and this little bit **sungka** or how you say, ham, dry ham, or what is on the bottom, is bacon like this and the others all...*

DAD: When she was able to have some potatoes from somewhere, then she go to that nurses to cook there and then she cook with our **sausage**, a little bit in there, in the potatoes too, and sure is just little bit sausage, the sausage have to disappear not to see, nobody, but you give little bit the nurse if it is only that much.

MOM: *Oh, I cut them right away in little slices in round circles.*

DAD: So there is something to the food we get or

MOM: *I cook their beans and make the noodles.*

DAUGHTER: **How did you buy the potatoes?**

MOM: *The farmers I go and beg.*

DAD: If you cannot buy, you could beg.

MOM: *I go and beg for one potato over there, one over there, and they give it.*

DAUGHTER: **And what were we doing, us kids?**

MOM: *You was home. With Dad in this....*

DAD: And over there, the people, came, them give us puzzles, give us that and that.

DAUGHTER: **Give you what?**

DAD: The puzzle for doing

MOM: *A puzzle.*

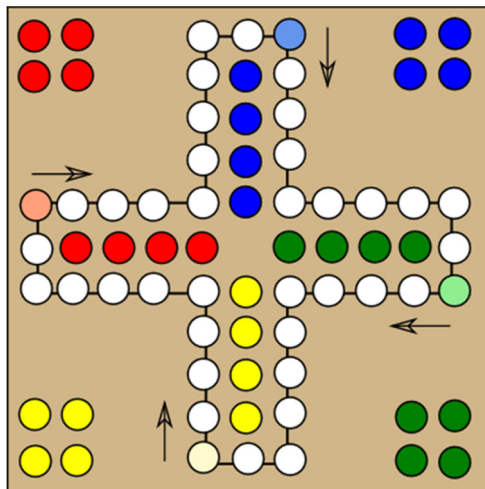
DAD: So something like that.

DAUGHTER: **To occupy your time?**

DAD: Occupy

MOM: *The children.*

DAD: And many time I did play with the children, puzzles or [the board game] *'Mensch ürgere Dich nicht'* something to get the children quiet down.



Mensch ürgere Dich nicht [board game, somewhat like *Parcheesi*]

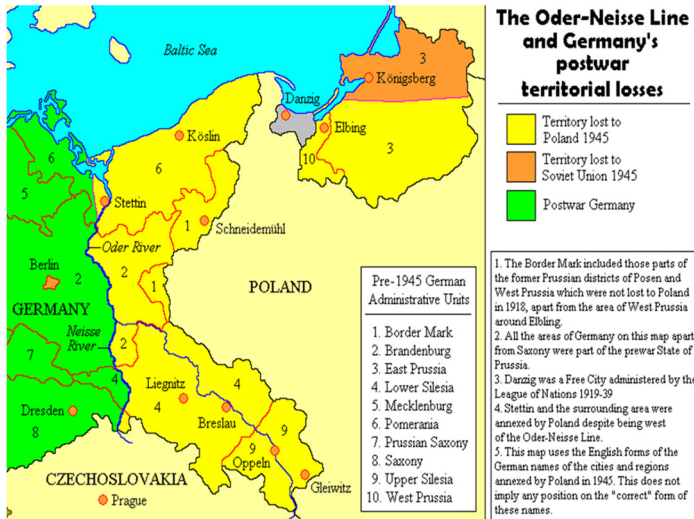
DAUGHTER: **Did they have no work for any of the men to do?**

DAD: No, not -- in that time was nothing. This was not long. And then, little by little, they find a quarters, apartment somewhere, that family, that family, and so finally we get somewhere out from there.

MOM: *They find for us an apartment somewhere big room for all. They have to empty this farmer and have to have one family and they took us. So we finally, and then all*

DAUGHTER: **Where did you get sent to? Where was your apartment? In the same city?**

MOM: *Oh yeah*



DAUGHTER: **What was the name of this city?**

DAD: That's [a town] by *Brisnow* [did Dad say "**Breslau**"?]¹, that is **a big city now in Poland** -- but that was a small town, and I do not recall the name.

DAUGHTER: **In occupied Poland now.**

DAD: Yes, it is now. And that not happen for along . . . maybe a week or two.

DAUGHTER: **How long were you in this big quarters? About 2 weeks?**



Breslau (a/k/a Wroclaw) shown in pink (German land transferred to Poland)

MOM: *We was very . . . the children was all sick there, all the yellow jaundice from this bad food in this, there was no food enough. Was this food was not for eating, just what I make once....*

DAUGHTER: **Okay. Was in this same city you found an apartment? At that point . . .**

¹If Dad said "**Breslau**", that is the German name for the major once-German city that the Poles call "Wrocław" (and the Czechs call "*Vratislav*"), city which became part of post-WWII Poland in late AD1945 (due to the Potsdam Conference), when the "Oder-Neisse Line" redefined the border between East Germany and Poland, moving that border west. Because Breslau is located on the Oder River east of the Neisse River (its northeasterly-flowing tributary), Breslau was transferred to Poland. Previously, Breslau had served as the capital of Silesia (and Lower Silesia), and have variously belonged to (at different times) to Bohemia, Hungary, imperial Austria, Prussia, and Germany. Today it is the 4th-largest city in Poland.

DAD: Not we found, they found for us apartment.

MOM: *They get (?) closer and closer.*

DAUGHTER: **Then were you supposedly self-sufficient at that point?**

DAD: Self-sufficient. ... our ration card to eat, buy what you can, and eat what you could . . .

DAUGHTER: **Then what did you do to live?**

DAD: We had from our home money and we use that.

DAUGHTER: **Did you have these people live with you?**

DAD: No.

DAUGHTER: **Just your family.**

DAD: When we arrived there, then everybody who had relationship in America, in Germany, they could apply to go there, and Pfeifer they had a sister some children (Robert) somewhere in Bavaria, and they are transferred there.

MOM: *In Salzburg.*

DAUGHTER: **And then they were transferred there.**

DAD: So they were transferred there immediately. So we was there and then after period of time and we were there, but that not take long, the war get closer and closer. The Russian army came from North and we heard all day the cannons and bombs there

MOM: *All night long.*

DAD: and the planes, running over, the German was retreating and then we saw man go with a wagon, a woman, the whole family, little bit have left food, some take their belongings and go South, go South, go South.

MOM: *Hundreds and hundreds of people.*

DAD: From morning till night you can see that from our window. And even you can see a child die, left them there in a ditch, just go farther along, go farther, go farther.

DAUGHTER: **The snows were deep that this time in this place?**

MOM: *Yeah.*

DAD: The people, we, mom, have to go to shovel the snow, to help the traffic go.

MOM: *Army just looking.*

DAD: And little by little even the army go by, not the regular army, but when you are retreating, there's no regular, just bunches, of people, and then in the town where we are have to be . . .



**ethnic Germans expelled
from Poland (winter
AD1945)**

Photo credit: pinterest.com

MOM: *How many months we have people the whole room full laying on the floor. We got much people was there.*

DAUGHTER: **Where from?**

DAD: The people from more North where already the Russian army was.

DAUGHTER: **You invited them to come in?**

DAD: No. They come from outside far and the night is here, they slept wherever. We could not walk all ways, all ways, all ways. So they said we are here, there's 20 more here, or 30 more here sleeping. In the morning they go farther.

MOM: *The whole barn full by this farmer, the whole yard full, you cannot believe.*

DAUGHTER: **Where did you live? In an apartment by a farmer?**

DAD: It was not an apartment, it was in his house, just a big room.

DAUGHTER: **In his house. In the barn.**

MOM: *Yeah, in the barn.*

DAD: And then came the time they said we have to leave, not we, the whole city, only the men have to stay there, to fight. The men had to stay there to, for a war purpose, then here, before that, they want me to go to enlist to defend, Every man who is in that age have to go in the war, regardless, and I could not go. And because... I could not go... one thing, I would not take arms, the next thing, I would not leave the family and they came, the women and the children had to go away and the men had to stay behind. And I don't want to, I will take our sack, and that wooden suitcase that we got, for plywood, we bought them because we didn't have them from Yugoslavia. We bought them and packed everything, packed everything and other farmer, they took us to the railroad depot to go, when we came there, we stay all night then the farmer went back and then once went back to the farmer again.

MOM: *No we was all day and all night was no train, no room, no train, nothing. We can sit there but people all over. Cannot imagine.*

DAD: And so the next day we went again and-

MOM: *Farmer took us back and he brought us again other day .*

DAD: Oh, then the bathroom flooded, the mud everywhere, was in winter.... Flood, but the children, sleeping on the table.

MOM: *Could not put them on the floor, it's all water.*

DAD: After midnight it already quiet. I went out and found a buggy where they-, the railroad, a small railroad they had a big buggy with 2 wheels, you could put packed much packed, and 2 wheels and is balanced you could push it. And I put all our stuff on that that one buggy and when they arrive at train, all the people around there, there's still not a train.

MOM: *Even Pfeiffer's stuff, he put all our stuff and each one had to watch one hour during the night, it was frozen cold. Hard, you get cold feet, cannot stand, and then another go out.*

DAUGHTER: **You took turns guarding your supplies or your stuff.**

MOM: *Yeah, all together.*

DAD: And when the train came, go away, somehow mom and the children went in, and I am not there with my stuff, could not get through it, through that window the children get in.

MOM: *I put the children through the window. One lady says, give me that little child, here I carry it in and I was afraid to leave it 'cause I can never go through the door, we have to crawl out somehow, and I give the little ones through the window, they help me, they open wide the window, and the husbands, they get the children and when all of them in, now I have to-, dad is not here, nobody's here, how can I go in the train. Where they go. They are alone. The train goes.*

DAD: And behind, with that train was a boxcar where you put the stuff in, and I get somehow our stuff in. Now I have no room in the train but, I don't know, how they managed to get me in

MOM: *Yeah, yeah, you crawled in, they help you.*

DAUGHTER: **In the same car where mom was.**

MOM: *Yeah, I told there, there's my husband and the children are all now in, and this people what took me first in, I said that's my husband, he has to go with the train. They said, we will push him in how somehow. No, no, you cannot go through the door or through the steps, you have to crawl through the window, somebody has to pull you up, and they did so. So he was in.*

DAUGHTER: **What were these trains like? Did they have seats dad?**

MOM: *Yeah, yeah, dad can tell you how many people was in this small*

DAD: The train is divided, 2 seats sit, see each other against the wall. In the two seats, there may be room for a four maybe five but this is that way and the children are here and children are here

MOM: *He faces them.*

DAD: And I don't think we were less than 20, were maybe 30 people in that room, crowded.

MOM: *You never get up or put down.*

DAD: In that time

MOM: *We were all stinky.*

DAD: When you want to get up, stiff, you could hardly move, but that's it.

DAUGHTER: **Where did you go? How long were you on the train?**

DAD: How long we are on the train is hard to tell you exactly, but at least 5, 6 days.

DAUGHTER: **How did you eat?**

MOM: *Ten days, Dad.*

DAD: I said at least but will be....

MOM: *How you get.. huh...*

DAD: They know the train is coming there, they prepared the food, but there are again not German airplane, but American, and they bombed there, the bridge so you could not go, so that -

MOM: *So the food you can never get.*

DAD: Never get to the food. But the locomotive, hitch up here and there and go the other way. And so it takes more longer. Then we get to where we get, and once we get to **the capital city from that Czechoslovakia, Prague** is the name... And there, oh, we were supposed to get something, and we did, but but it's okay.

DAUGHTER: **Now what was it?**

MOM: *I will tell you before this, we want, Dad was saying. Dad went out, right away out of the train, and look for some food. Find some food, make no difference what, and he saw a line. And he went in this line and finally come, he was a long time gone, he's not coming when he can, he brought **schnitzel**, on how many he has ration cards, he get so many schnitzel for his child, one. Then they didn't come back while here are more children here.*

DAD: And more people.

MOM: *And more people and they are all the same way and they are so hungry.*

DAD: We are

DAUGHTER: **What is a schnitzel? Is that like a roll?**

MOM: *Yeah, a roll.*

DAD: We are 8 people with the children and here are about 20 in here. And everybody want to eat, everybody's hunger so we divide that because you could not eat that we took out of the mouth.

MOM: *Some people, they took us in in this train, this people, and they helped people that was like us, all of them did. And then Dad broke it in pieces and it was a mouthful.*

DAUGHTER: **Each one gets just a little mouthful.**

MOM: *Don't matter. And then they sent their mother, their mother, she wants to go, she has just 2 children, for her husband is in the war. She don't even know where he [is], and she went, the mother, and left the little boy and girl with us. And the train start running, and the mother was not therewith; the children start screaming and crying! When Dad saw her running, toward the end of the train where her wagon, he grabbed her -- he just grabbed her and pulled her up, how was the train gone. She said she would never leave her children anymore for any food, they go all together hungry or so*

DAD: In that time you know what that means. When you are hungry or your neighbor, people you never saw, never meet before, you divide with them the last drop or that crumb bread. But don't forget we hid our package behind, there we got sausage, there we got lard, there we got bacon, but we could not get there and we don't have nothing from it. So we leave it. Some day we eat a little bit more, some day almost nothing and

MOM: *Dad always was when, he went out he said, I will be very careful what I do, how far I go, and he once say he have a ration card for tobacco and finds somewhere a very rotten apple, he gives this ration card for this apple, he brought this apple that comes so handy, you cannot believe. You cannot eat the ration card for tobacco. Apple, that's something for all these children. And one young mother, she has a child 8 days old, and she has it in the middle of-*

DAUGHTER: **In this same little room?**

DAD: In that room we had 2 girls, they had somewhere found a child, abandoned, they took it with themselves, they want, not young girls, maybe only 25 or 30 year old, but they took that girl and that child for themselves and here you can get milk for the ration card. They need to run there to get it and because of this line, there is a big line already, and you get them, drink for them too, and nothing new when the diaper, newspaper diaper, rag, whatever use for a diaper, and we go out and again, when the train goes, when it stop, and run there to the locomotive, beg for water, hot water to

MOM: *You have to beg for the food, have to beg for diaper, sometimes you beg for outfit.*

DAUGHTER: **Now who was-, the last one born here was Robert. Rosie was not born yet.**

MOM: *No, Rosie was not born.*

DAD: Just was Robert.

How old was he at this time?

DAD: Robert was at this time a year and a half.

DAUGHTER: **(January, February.) And you were pregnant then with Rosie.**

MOM: *Yeah, sure.*

DAUGHTER: **Because Rosie was born in June.**

DAD: Yeah, but Robert, he was a little fellow, he know when he want to go to the bathroom, he ask. And I take him out, hold myself on the . . . on the train you got like a bar and holds on the bar and hold him out, the running board. Then he . . . 'I have to go.' No, you don't; no, you don't have to.

MOM: *No, you don't have. 'Yeah, I have to go'.*

DAD: But sometimes you have to... [Dad is noting the difficult logistics involved], . . . you know. No, no.

MOM: *He was very good, that so many days and so many nights.*

DAD: But he like that, the wind from the train running(laughter). And mom holds me

MOM: *I hold him in the back. You know that air is very sharp when you open that train door. And him you have to hold until he's done and he holds him from the back.*

DAD: And we had a lady there, she had a buggy with a child, and this, she never take care of the baby, left him in the buggy. He was stinking, he was everything in the buggy, everything.

MOM: *He made the sickness, he was older than Robert. He was older and he start and get fever, this little child. And the grandma just hide this the little baby in that buggy. 'He catch a cold, you can't open the door. Mister, you shouldn't. Don't do this', she says. And our child is already sick, well, we have to open the door here, you got the stink, it's stuffy. You know, he made all this mess in his diapers and he lives in buggy.*

DAD: Till we finally could get to the nurses to take the child out, he's sick, and then. . . .

MOM: *We have to get the signal, here is a child sick in that [buggy] -- and then on the first big stop where they can take this child out from a big city. They took this mother and father, no, was not the father, the mother and the grandma and grandpa, with this little baby, they took her out. We have such a relief, we had such a relief, can hardly stand them anymore.*

DAD: One thing is, 4 people less, 3 grown-up people and that buggy, and more than that, they were-, the people were afraid the child...

MOM: *They took him out to the doctor, and they said he had pneumonia. Well, he was so thirsty for coffee, all day long he was yelling for coffee, this child. 'Coffee, coffee, coffee.' Like teeny voice. When he start asking, he was not quiet till he was drinking coffee.*

DAD: Probably so...

DAUGHTER: **So this train when to Prague, Czechoslovakia. What happened there?**

DAD: And then we came to there through **Bavaria**, close by **Aregansborg** [spelling?], big city, and in that city we make a halt in there and that train was full with people, from German people from Northern parts and with us it was nobody from Yugoslavia to our knowledge. Just the people from Germany. And they divided us among the houses, farmers here and there, and so we got in a city, they call it, is a small city, they call it Winsor, like Winsor, Winsor, and the house where we got our apartment, for a 2-story house, our part was a second story, I think it was a little small, maybe 2 rooms or 3 rooms we had, something like that, but not a bigger one.

MOM: *It was a very nice room.*

DAD: Yeah, and the backyard was **Danube River**.

MOM: *Across the street was the store, across the street was the court house and all the main.*

DAD: And now we again live on our own. Now we got our packages, everything, and we get a ration card.

DAUGHTER: **How did you manage to find your packages? You just threw stuff on, who's to stop anybody from taking them?**

DAD: When the train stops, you will over here unload and everybody looks for his own, nobody looks for somebody else because-

MOM: *They're all....*

DAUGHTER: **Nobody really cares about anybody else's.**

MOM: *You don't know, will you live tomorrow. This was not a nice like living like now.*

DAD: And then usually get the noise round, tomorrow will be the store and they have butter. But on the ration, nothing without the ration, on the ration card you have butter, but they know it's about, I say about 1,000 people here and they got butter for 300.

DAUGHTER: **Dad, where was the ration card distributed from? Where did you get them?**

DAD: Like for every city, go for the court house, they distribute for every person who lives here, every week.

DAUGHTER: **You had to go and get them.**

DAD: You had to get them.

DAUGHTER: **They were given to you according to how many you had in your family?**

DAD: Yes. Yes.

MOM: *Yeah, had to put down a name.*

DAD: But different is the ration cards for the grown-up people, different for the mother, different for the children up to 10 year, and even for the small children.

MOM: *And the babies. The baby get one, when I get one too.*

DAD: So the people know tomorrow will be something. In the morning about 4:00, the people are already standing there.

MOM: *Standing.*

DAD: When the store open, is a line, big line waiting, and when they open the doors, they let in about 10 people, then they got served, then they get out and the other people

MOM: *Otherwise they would step on people.*

DAD: So the first people gets, the last get nothing, no nothing, is sold out. But they got everything, but again, we-, how should I say it, not to be smart, but everyone takes care of first of himself, and so when is nobody more there, and it's sold out, that is the owner, whosoever it is, old lady or young lady, mom goes there, and talks to them and they get acquainted to them and-

MOM: *An old woman, she was a very nice person.*

DAD: And we had so and so many children, we had 6 children and we are from there and there and we had a store there, you know what's to mean the store get them, and we do have that stuff with us and that stuff with us and that stuff with us so we could give you something, a little black pepper.

MOM: *I told her we had the ration cards for coffee, nobody we cannot afford to buy coffee.*

DAD: Yeah, yeah, we would not buy coffee. And coffee, the people would pay for the ration card to get coffee. We would give you the coffee ration card and you give us a little bit of something, and so we never had to stay in the line.

MOM: *Save for us.*

DAD: When they got the butter tomorrow, then for our butter, it all ready before they open the door.

MOM: *She make this ready before even...*

DAD: And so everything.

MOM: *Cabbage, was big cabbage, from a whole truck full, but is not enough for everybody.*

DAD: But on the ration card.

MOM: *On the ration card, each one gets a little head. All kinds of things.*

DAD: And mom gets a big... And the bread is very coarse, made from corn, of corn and very coarse, and mom cannot get sick from this. So she goes, maybe not in that town, but she goes to the bakery, and when there is no customer there, she goes with the baker lady in the kitchen and she want to talk with her. And then she told her, I am ..say, who we are, introduce ourselves, and then what we want, but you have to introduce yourself. And then we want, I want light bread, 1 loaf, 1 pound light bread every second day or every week, and I would give you that.

DAUGHTER: **And you were with the children the whole time?**

DAD: Sure, sure.

MOM: *Oh, yeah.*

DAD: Mom was the most that.

MOM: *I had to go make something for the family, it was not-*

DAD: If a man goes, he will not get. And most of men are in the army, the home men are in the army or in the prisoners of war. And women run the business, run the store, run everything, so if a wife goes there, it's very different thing than if man goes there. And beside that, I was always more or less behind, the people would say, how is that young man not in the war, our men is in the war, so you have to be very careful for everything.

MOM: *He's home. He never goes out. I had to go for everything.*

DAD: Not much.

DAUGHTER: **You were afraid to show your face in the town.**

MOM: *Yeah.*

DAD: So Mom get that stuff here, and that stuff there, and that stuff there.

DAUGHTER: **Let's get these times right. You said that happened about in February sometime.**

DAD: February to March, and then came already the American from the other side where are not the Russian is far behind, but American came.

DAUGHTER: **Up the Danube River way, south way.**

DAD: Yes, they came. And on our side, where we are, came the American, and German, is no soldier more there. But the civilian have to defend, and most places get winter damage, not let them in, and the wind destroy the bridges, not let them in, but before they came, the German, the government they had here a big stock house, and there a stock house, filled with stuff because they never know how long will take the war so our mayor, the Russian, the American is here, tomorrow, even tomorrow, every day they will be here.

MOM: *Every day, every*

DAD: So he proclaim everybody should get there with a ration card and according to ration card we will get whatsoever they get. So we got ration card for 8 persons, we got a big, maybe 100, maybe 200 pounds of rice. Some people have no place to put it but in the pillowcases, put in pillowcases.

MOM: *Put in the pillowcases, the rice*

DAD: (I talk, not you). So it was ever, so then we got for food is that the main thing. But then children's shirts and some different things you want, regardless big and small, every ration card gets so much. So we get this and that. And, oh, like when is war times. Everything is no order so the-, you know what's kepper but these I don't know. Ribbon that small, rolled on a big, big roll to sell it, and that was no place to buy it, but somewhere in a storehouse, was some pile and pile, and the children play with that, throw them round, over the house, and in the river, and everywhere. And pacifier, the streets full, everywhere and the most that the people back up, children play. And we gathered them, good pacifier, children go get, so we got lots of pacifier and that pants too.

MOM: *The rubber . . .*

DAUGHTER: **Rubber bands?**

MOM: *No, the pacifier, not the pacifier, what go over the bottles, the other.*

DAUGHTER: **The nipple?**

MOM: *The nipples, that was the same thing.*

DAD: So we gathered them again. Like a businessman, oh, boy, I could use that, not we

DAUGHTER: **But somehow . . .**

[Break in the audiotape recording]

DAD: No war, they came, but when they came to our place, everybody out, everybody out. We just start to eat supper, everybody out, everybody out. We had to go. where go? Go, go, go, go, go with the children, nothing with

you. So we go and if on the way we see somebody throw a pitcher over there, in the grass, and we came at the end somewhere and was a farmer, we'll get over night.

DAUGHTER: **Wait a minute? You mean you had to leave all your things?**

DAD: Everything.

MOM: *Everything. Not one meal to cook.*

DAD: Nothing. Just the children and go. Even our food we sat to eat, let it. And American soldier eat there, they put the cover up the window, whatsoever they find they turn up, cut off the windows because other side over the Danube is still German and once in a while they shoot cannons, the American, but was no the war between them. And in the morning everything is quiet, we try to go back on our place and by going back I say 'Reini, go [get] that'. He look for that pitcher.

DAUGHTER: **Oh, you sent him to get that pitcher that someone had thrown away.**

DAD: Yeah. And we for long time had that pitcher. That was a

DAUGHTER: **What kind of pitcher?**

DAD: For drinking. For water, for, like a beer, they used to have a

DAUGHTER: **A beer stein?**

DAD: Yeah, yeah.

DAUGHTER: **You still have it?**

DAD: No.

MOM: *It was somewhere broken.*

DAD: And then we get back in our home.

MOM: *We had no glass or a...*

DAD: Our home, oh, there is a pile of garbage, no soldiers anymore. Right away they come, hide the bread, better we pick it, because American soldier eat, what they throw away. Pick them out, we eat what was good, and whatsoever² was good to eat. And so. . . .

DAUGHTER: **In other words, you're saying they were wasteful with the food that you had there. *Did they get into your stuff there?***

MOM: *No, no.*

DAD: No. They were

MOM: *No, you ate their food.*

DAUGHTER: **No, no, no, they were interrupted during their mealtime and they were not allowed to finish their meal.**

MOM: . . . *they didn't eat their food. I know, but they left American food there.*

DAD: They left it, yes. They left it.

MOM: *Yeah, see, they were eating American food.*

²Notice that "whatsoever" is King James English --- **this is because Mr. and Mrs. Webel learned English, in America, from reading the King James Bible. By comparing a Scripture text** in a Bible translation of an already-known language (such as a German Bible translation), to the same text in the King James Bible, **the Webels could learn how to say the same thing in English.** Thus, the King James English version of the Holy Bible provided a **convenient source of English vocabulary** (i.e., serving as a bilingual dictionary/lexicon) by which the Webels could enhance/expand their English vocabulary, as immigrants who came to America not knowing English.

DAD: Yeah. They left American food, what they had eaten there, the military food what they had was they threw out in the garbage like they do. And we will go through, that is good bread, that is good that, that is good that. We could even-, we eat that. And our food what was it?

MOM: *Baked potatoes, without anything.*

DAD: Yeah, was . . . she had on the table. They was not hungry on our food.

MOM: *Mashed potatoes was on table too.*

DAUGHTER: **No butter, huh, mom?**

MOM: *Oh, no.*

DAD: And there we... Robert, our Robert, He had a pacifier. And there we take the pacifier away, no more pacifier, and when.... 'See, the soldier take it.' No, no soldier would take that. The soldier took it.

MOM: *He always understand soldier take it. And he will, too, with the hands. "No, no, soldier, you took my pacifier!"*

DAUGHTER: **So he's almost 2 years old by now.**

MOM: *Yeah.*

DAD: Almost, yeah.

DAUGHTER: **Now was Rosie born?**

MOM: *No, not born yet.*

DAD: And then is the war at an end. Now the war is end. There are no German soldier or to end. But here are some prisoner of war, Yugoslav men, and here and there working by the farmer, and they, you can talk with them, you could . . . they are ready to go home. They could not how to go home, they will go with the **Danube River**. And how they got, not a ship, but where you put the grain in and a ship pulls them. How you call that?

DAUGHTER: **Barge.**

DAD: Oh, barge, that's the same then, because "barga," that's the same as barge. In this barge, we in the barge and that goes, the river goes that way so we goes with the river, so they will go and one family from **Czechoslovakia** will go with us and we go, we too.

MOM: *Takes the men.*

DAUGHTER: **Your object was to get back to Yugoslavia.**

DAD: Yeah, anxious to go back, our business, our... everything we have is there. And we have the war is ended, we have nothing to lose, we have to go back home. In **Germany**, nobody wants you, you are they have almost nothing to eat and where, they have to share with us.

MOM: *And every day the same thing.*

DAD: And when we get in the store, our, you gypsy, you have that and I have not.

MOM: *They call us gypsies.*

DAD: They are, they don't realize or didn't think equal, we are not equal with them. They are at home here and we eat their bread. How could you feel equal? No! It's so we are

MOM: *They thought the food should....*

DAD: And beside that, our people from Yugoslavia or from everywhere, and they are hungry more than the people who live at home. And they got, stealing, they got that and that.

DAUGHTER: **Now you went on this barge.**

DAD: So we will go home. We packed our stuff, we bought a stove and everything we go.

DAUGHTER: **This happened in March?**

MOM: *Yeah.*

DAD: Second part of March, maybe April.

MOM: *April, April. That was, yeah, it was. I knows it was.*

DAD: Already would be April. Maybe even May.

MOM: *Yeah, it was warm.*

DAD: Could be even May because was no more cold. So we go that way with . . . down the river. But we could not go far away here. Through the war, we came to **Regensburg** [*spelling?*] and here through the war, the bridges are crashed in the river because of war. And here the American made pontoon bridges, we could not go farther. So we stopped then, wait, wait till finally the American open and let us go through and we went through it now, is that now is that bridge, Isle bridge. Isle Bridge does not hold up the water, the water goes, runs around this and the post and so on, and here we go through, but not slow like a current.

MOM: *The water is boiling like in a bug pot.*

DAD: So we went by but hardly, and beside that, from that all men, no man was ever living on a boat or knowing handling to handle a boat.

DAUGHTER: **None of you had the knowledge to work that.**

MOM: *No, and this was something...*

DAD: I had the knowledge but was not enough. And then came on another place again, bridge down, what to do with the current is so, and came another river into the **Danube, the river called "Inn"** [a/so spelled "En"]. And is very . . . came from the mountain, very strong, and that because that is strong, it pulls that Danube water strong. And here is the bridge, here is you, so what to do? The men decided we will put a rope on our barge and go beside and hold back to go slow, till the current is over. And mom was on there with the children and the other lady.

MOM: *All out of the boat. Just Dad was in and a couple men in it.*

DAD: Yeah, but the man does not want to listen, here is the bridge and the bridge is build on a solid foundation. And they hold the rope around the corner instead of go with the rope, not to hold back, and when the finger came to the solid, you let them go, so one by one let everybody go and the ship go and came around and pull it and go that way, not that fast, but goes that way into the **Danube River**.

MOM: *We don't see any men anymore on the ship. Nothing's there, nobody.*

DAD: And then the ship goes that way.

DAUGHTER: **Before you go any further, dad, give me approximately how big this barge was.**

DAD: The barge is big, maybe that big from that ladder, like that room.

DAUGHTER: **All the way to the kitchen?**

MOM: *Yeah, all the way.*

DAUGHTER: **About 40 or 50 feet. And about that same wide?**

DAD: Maybe that wide, maybe that wide.

MOM: *Yeah, so wide too.*

DAUGHTER: **18 feet?**

DAD: Yeah.

MOM: *That's like a barge.*

DAUGHTER: **Who was on the barge? The women and children?**

DAD: No, the men.

MOM: *Couple men.*

DAD: Just a couple men. And they had all the other let out.

MOM: *I went out. I don't want to go...*

DAD: And then, but little bit farther that bends that way. Because it was war, war time, so the Hungarian marine, marine who was working, a soldier on the ships.

MOM: *On the ships.*

DAUGHTER: **That's called Navy.**

DAD: Navy, the Navy, they don't want to surrender to the Russia, they fly [flee?] to the American, to surrender [to] the American. And they was parked there in the Danube River, the Hungarian, like a prisoner of war -- but on their ship because they surrender here, and they threw a lasso, I would save, would catch.

MOM: *He caught it.*

DAD: I would catch the ship...

DAUGHTER: **The barge?**

MOM: *The barge with Dad. Some jumped out.*

DAD: And then when they caught us, then we were afraid to go farther.

MOM: *They told Dad and they told us, don't do it anymore. You cannot go.*

DAD: You cannot go on.

MOM: *You have to be a really a seaman.*

DAD: Not only that, the bridges are down here and there, everywhere, you could not go to **Yugoslavia**, to **Belgrade**.

DAUGHTER: **Where did this happen? At this intersection with the Inn [a/k/a En]³ and the Danube River.**

DAD: A little bit farther. And that's close by Regensburg,⁴ that's all . . .

³The **Inn River** [a/k/a En River] is a tributary of the **Danube River**. The Inn River drains into the Danube at Germany's Lower Bavarian city of Passau, on the border of Austria and Germany. As a border city, Passau is an important migrant entry site for people immigrating into Germany. The Danube River itself eventually drains into the Black Sea.

⁴Interestingly, **Regensburg** (a Bavarian city at the confluence of the Danube, Naab, and Regen rivers) was once a hub of expatriate **Croatian Protestantism**, led by a Croatian Lutheran named **Matija Vlačić (Franković) Ilirik** – i.e., **Flacius** (i.e., Matthias Flacius of Illyricus, AD1520-AD1575), who taught Calvinist-like theology at a school that he founded in Regensburg, in December of AD1561. Flacius was born in the Istrian town of Labin (a/k/a Albona), when Labin was still part of the Venetian Republic. (Labin was later acquired by Austria; today Labin is part of Croatia.) Due to persecutorial Counter-Reformation politics (including the Schmalkald War), Flacius could not live safely in Croatia, so he dwelt most of his life as an exile-refugee in Germany (and briefly elsewhere), from where he led the conservative portion of Germany's Lutheran church after the death of Lutheranism's founder, Dr. Martin Luther. Flacius's leadership included service as Hebrew professor in Wittenberg, and later teaching in Magdeburg, Antwerp, Frankfurt, Strasbourg, and again in Frankfurt. In Wittenberg, during AD1545, Flacius first married, having 12 children by his first wife (before her death in AD1564). In Regensburg Flacius remarried, later in AD1564, and had another 6 children by his second wife. During World War II Regensburg hosted a factory for Messerschmitt Bf 109 aircraft, as well as an oil refinery, both of which were bombed by Allied warplanes (8-17-AD1943, again 2-5-AD1945). During AD1945-AD1949. As part of the American Zone of Occupation, Regensburg hosted the largest Displaced Persons camp in Germany, at one point housing about 6000 refugees and other displaced persons.

DAUGHTER: *So everybody had to run and catch up then.*

MOM: *Bassau, Bassau, Bassau, Bassau* [probably Mom said "**Passau**", which is the city located at the intersection of the Inn River and the Danube River],⁵ **not Regensburg**, *Bassau*.

DAD: Not the Regensburg.

DAUGHTER: 'Cause I know. . . ? **Regensburg** was earlier.

MOM: *It was* [undecipherable -- perhaps she said "**Passau**", which is located in Lower Bavaria, Germany]. *I know good.*

DAD: B... B... Bassau [**"Passau"**, perhaps?].



Map showing **Passau & Regensburg** (Germany)

Image credit: <http://pennilessinpassau.blogspot.com/p/history-of-passau.html>

DAUGHTER: **Okay. Where was this? In Czechoslovakia?**

DAD: No, **Germany**, It's in **Germany**. And then the prisoner of war take their package, go home, with their package of war, walking... wherever.

MOM: *Left us alone.*

DAD: Now we are alone. We are alone. That other family left and we are alone. Very good, we go with 6 small children and waiting another to go. Where could we go? Here is the **Danube River**, beside the river is a road. Always in the mountains, between the mountains where the river is,

⁵Regarding the Bavarian city of **Passau**, (a/k/a **Dreiflüssestadt** or "City of Three Rivers," because **Danube** there receives the **Inn River**, from the south, plus the **Ilz River**, from the north). Notice that the Danube River's intersection with the Inn River is specifically mentioned in this part of the interview. [For more about Passau, see <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passau> .]



[Passau, Germany, AD1945, showing wartime damages]

Photo credit: <http://www.lonesentry.com/S8/>

[to be continued, D.v.]

The next report (D.v.) resumes the chronicle of the Webel family exodus, with further perils and adventures as refugees (“displaced persons”), eventually leading to a successful migration to America, with some of their future offspring, descended from young **Robert Webel** (who was just a baby when the Webel family left Yugoslavia for Germany), to eventually arrive on Earth as native Texans.

That same **Robert Webel** (who emigrated from Yugoslavia, as a baby, with his family fleeing Communism) is the father of **Stephen Webel**, who is father (by his wife Erica) of brothers **Nate and Luke Webel**, the two native Texans mentioned on the first page of this report. (Thus Robert Webel, born in WWII, is the paternal grandfather of Nate, Luke, and their sisters.)



So, for now, this “chapter” rests with an appreciation that two native-Texan boys, **Nate Webel** (born in AD2007) and **Luke Webel** (born in AD2012), as well as their sisters, descend from German immigrant stock (“*Volksdeutsche*”) who trace back one ancestral line to paternal grandfather’s parents, **Jakob Webel and Katarina Schleicher**, whose *early family life together included surviving WWII*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Dr. James J. S. Johnson is a member of the **German-Texas Heritage Society**, and an occasional contributor to its Journal pages. A lover and teacher of Providential history and geography, Jim has taught at 4 different Christian colleges (LeTourneau University, Dallas Christian College, Concordia University Texas at Fort Worth, and ICR School of Biblical Apologetics) in Texas, as well as aboard 9 different cruise ships. As a C.P.E.E. (*Certified Paternity Establishment Entity*, credentialed by the Texas Attorney General’s Office), Jim maintains a strong interest in family history documentation. After studying under many teachers, at many schools, Jim happily acknowledges that his best teacher (under God) was Chaplain Robert (Bob) Webel.

Below (left) is a newspaper caption, dated 3-19-AD1951, with the “Volksdeutsche by the Dozen” Webel family, who immigrated to America. Also shown below (right) is Chaplain Robert Webel (who was 8 when his family came as refugees to America) with his wife, Marcia, residents of Florida. Chaplain Bob Webel provided information supplementing and clarifying his sister’s interview of their parents (titled *From Vinkovci to Medina*) quoted hereinabove.



VOLKSDEUTSCHE BY THE DOZEN—From behind the long curtains in a window, the an Olden family in the city of Vinkovci, Croatia, is seen in this number. Members of the family are seen in the photograph on the left. A group of twelve persons in New York City, Mr. and Mrs. (Chaplain) Robert Webel, standing by the Webel family, and a group with Mr. Webel's sister and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Jakob Berger, standing in the center of the group. The Berger's sponsored the immigration of the Webel's. The Webel's are the group of twelve persons in the photograph on the right. From left to right: Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel, Mrs. Webel. The photograph on the right was taken in the city of Vinkovci, Croatia, in 1948. The photograph on the left was taken in New York City, in 1951. The photograph on the right was taken in the city of Vinkovci, Croatia, in 1948. The photograph on the left was taken in New York City, in 1951. The photograph on the right was taken in the city of Vinkovci, Croatia, in 1948. The photograph on the left was taken in New York City, in 1951.



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The 5 earlier episodes, in this Webel family history series, are published as follows:

- (1) “Volksdeutsche by the Dozen, Part One: Jakob and Katarina Agreed to Marry Before They Ever Spoke to Each Other, A True Example of Love at First Sight...and First Sound”, *Journal of the German-Texas Heritage Society*, 35(1):25-32 (spring 2013), quoting from Rosalie Webel Whiting’s *From Vinkovci to Medina* (unpublished Webel family history), supplemented by personal interviews with Chaplain Robert Webel (during August AD2012);
- (2) “Volksdeutsche by the Dozen, Part Two: Volksdeutsche in Croatia, before World War II: Jakob and Katarina Webel are Merchants in Marinci (Taking Care of Business and the Business of Life)”, *Journal of the German-Texas Heritage Society*, 36(3):154-170 (fall 2014);
- (3) “Volksdeutsche by the Dozen, Part Three: World War II Confronts Jakob and Katarina Webel (Swabians Face Nazi Invaders and Yugoslavia’s Break-up)”, *Journal of the German-Texas Heritage Society*, 37(2):98-113 (summer 2015); and
- (4) “Volksdeutsche by the Dozen, Part Four: Surviving in Yugoslavia, Then Fleeing for the First Time – Jakob & Katarina Webel Escape from Marinci to Vinkovci,” *Journal of the German-Texas Heritage Society*, 37(4):219-240 (winter 2015).
- (5) “Volksdeutsche by the Dozen, Part Five: Fleeing Yugoslavia, Escaping the Communist Takeover: Jakob & Katarina Webel Flee Toward Germany,” *Journal of the German-Texas Heritage Society*, 38(3):110-124 (fall 2016).

OPERATIONS

Board of Directors Meeting 15 January 2017

The regularly scheduled quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors of the German Texan Heritage Society was held on 15 January 2017 in the German Free School headquarters of the Society with the President in the chair and the Secretary being present.

Meeting Attendees: Michael Krause, Charles Locklin, Richard Gruetzner, Connie Krause, Dr. Larry Deuser, Janis Gonser, Chris Markley, Eddie Wolsch, Barbara Berthold, Brent Hunter, Kristi Nordin, Marc Pierce, with James Kearney present via phone.

President Krause called the meeting to order at 11:09 am and it was established that a quorum was present as of that time.

The minutes of the previous Board meeting of 28 August 2016 were reviewed. They had previously been approved electronically and printed in the Journal. The minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of 16 November 2016 were also reviewed.

Summary of 2016 Events – Chris Markley presented an overview of 2016's events and activities and how we can utilize social media to better market the Society. Regarding the Christmas Market: We had approximately 1,500 people attend, including people that flew in from as far away as Florida, California, and Ohio. We had gross receipts of about \$32,000, with a net profit around \$12,000. The average purchase (not counting food purchases) was \$60.00. The wait time for people to get into the building was between 60 to 75 minutes. Fifty people signed up for classes while at the Christmas Market. It was noted that we need more volunteers for such events and need to consider making the event a two-day event or held on two weekends. Preparation for the event took 600 man-hours at a minimum. The logistics of handling the inventory is very cumbersome and needs improvement. It was suggested that we should move to a system using bar coded pricing which will simplify checkout. Various ideas regarding moving some sales outdoors with German Christmas Market style booths were explored.

Some opportunities for improvement of operations were discussed. The importance of social media and how it interacts with our web site and paper publications was stressed. We are not using social media as effectively as we should. An example of how media such as Facebook can impact us was cited. A simple request for donations resulted in people donating 25 Christmas wreaths, 10 Christmas trees, and 3 boxes of Christmas lights. Other ideas for opportunities such as holding a gala night for members, hosting other organization's meetings, and using on-line conferencing for statewide classes were mentioned.

A discussion about scheduling of 2017 festivals was held. It was decided that Mai-Fest would be held on 20 May and Oktober-Fest would be on 14 October 2017.

A discussion was held regarding the 2017 Annual Meeting. Suggested dates were 14-15 July or 21-22 July. The Callaway House is suggested as a site for rooms and meals with parking provided. Larry Deuser will check with the Callaway House to determine if either of those dates are available. Topics discussed included how Germans influenced education in Texas and how the world was impacted German language and culture in Texas. Board members were requested to forward ideas for speakers and topics to Secretary Richard Gruetzner.

Election of Officers – President Krause reported that the Executive Committee had recommended a slate of candidates for the officers of the Board which consisted of the current occupants of those positions. Nominations from the floor were requested but there were none. A motion to elect the recommended slate of candidates, being Mike Krause – President, Charles Locklin – Vice-President, Larry Deuser – Treasurer, and Richard Gruetzner – Secretary, by acclamation was made by Marc Pierce. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote. **Motion adopted.**

Personnel Action – Charles Locklin discussed the creation of a new staff position of Operations Director which will be part-time at 30 hours per week at an agreed upon salary. This position will assume responsibility for managing the property, acting as business manager and fund-raiser, handling events and gift shop sales, supervising membership services and electronic communications and records, and coordinating with community contacts. The Executive Committee has recommended hiring Chris Markley to fill this position with the understanding that Chris will not vote on any issues before the Board which would conflict with his position. It was noted that this is not the position of Executive Director discussed in our by-laws. A motion to approve the hiring of Chris Markley as Operations Director with the indicated responsibilities was made by Larry Deuser. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote. **Motion adopted.**

2016 Annual Financial Review – Treasurer Larry Deuser presented information of our finances for 2016. He gave a comparison between the categories bringing the most financial returns for 2015 and 2016. In 2015, classes brought in the most money, followed by membership, events, and products/gift shop. In 2016, it was membership, classes, events and products/gifts. It was noted that we did not have one set of classes during the summer of 2016 and that influenced the amount received. In 2016, we received about \$1,000 from the annual meeting, lost about \$1,200 at Mai-Fest due to weather, and made a net of \$12,362 at Oktober-Fest (which includes a \$5,000 grant from the City of Austin). There was also discussion regarding the costs of our software versus the value received. Some discussion was held regarding this year's budget. Connie Krause made a motion to approve the Board spending at levels equal to that approved in last year's budget until the Finance Committee can meet and recommend changes to the budget. The motion was seconded and approved on voice vote. **Motion adopted.**

Opportunities for Expanding GTHS Educational Programs – Charles Locklin and Barbara Berthold reported on the meeting held on the 14th with Dr. Hans Boas and multiple persons involved in German language programs around Texas. There is a great deal of interest among teachers for German-Texan heritage information that they can use in their classes and continuing education classes for teachers. The idea of providing some topics for teachers at the annual meeting or even holding the meeting for a third day specifically for teacher classes was discussed. It was noted that February 25th is the date for the Texas State German Contest and GTHS will participate again. President Krause then appointed Barbara Berthold to represent the GTHS at the Texas State German Contest. Eddie Wolsch will also be attending.

Planning for 2017 – President Krause handed out committee assignments for Board members. He requested committees to submit their goals for the year by mid-February.










Schedule of next Board meeting – Following discussions of dates, Charles Locklin made a motion to set the dates for the next three Board meetings as: 30 April, 6 August, and 5 November 2017. The motion was approved by voice vote. **Motion adopted.**

Charles Locklin made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote. **Motion adopted.**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Minutes were approved by electronic vote as of 31 January 2017.

BOOKS PUBLISHED BY THE GERMAN-TEXAN HERITAGE SOCIETY

The Journal		ISSN 0730-3106, 4x per year, 8½ x 11, paperback. Since 1978. Each issue of this member publication contains over 100 pp of German-Texan genealogy, history and related info in English, with occasional German articles translated.	\$5 members \$6 non-GTHS members
Diary of Hermann Seele		ISBN 1-57168-238-4, 504 pp, 6 x 9, hardback. Illustrations, bibliography, index. Translated and edited by Theodore Gish. Gives a revealing and intimate picture of 19th century Texas. Includes Seele sketches from Texas.	\$27.50
A Sojourn in Texas, 1846-47		ISBN 1-57168-237-6, 400 pp, 6 x 9, hardback. Illustrations, maps, index. Edited by W.M. Von-Maszewski. A. Sorgel's Texas Writings. This dual-language edition is filled with observations, advice, and warnings for those who chose to come to Texas.	\$35 signed by author, \$30
Roemer's Texas		ISBN 1-57168-043-2, 308 pp, 6 x 9, hardback. Bibliography, index. By Dr. Ferdinand Roemer, translated by Oswald Mueller. Long considered one of the best narrative accounts of life in early Texas.	\$35.00
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History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831-1861		ISBN 1-57168-236-8, 280 pp, 6 x 9, NEW edition, paperback. Maps, illustrations, appendix, index. By Rudolf Biesele. Covers the actual founding and history of many German settlements and towns in Texas prior to the American Civil War.	\$35.00
The Cabin Book		ISBN 0-89015-525-9, 296 pp, 6 x 9, hardback. Illustrations. By Charles Sealsfield. Sealsfield's hopes about America focused on Texas when he wrote this in 1841. This novel, in part about Texas life in the 1830s, became a best-seller.	\$20.00
Texas in 1848		ISBN 1-57168-242-2, 240 pp, 6 x 9, hardback. Bibliography, index. By Victor Bracht. Originally published in German in 1849, this book has been described as a "treasure of German-Texan history." Filled with early Texas observations.	\$30.00

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Summer, 2017

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November 1, 2017

February 1, 2018

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Materials sent for *The Journal* will not be returned. All materials must include the contributor's name, a source and a date. All submitted manuscript articles must be typed single-spaced on 8 ½ x 11" white paper with right, left, top, and bottom margins no less than .7 inches. Electronic versions are preferred. Newspaper clippings should NOT be cropped closely. This can be done more accurately with our computer. All German materials must be accompanied by an English text. All submissions will be reviewed by the *Journal* editor and the Publications Committee. They have the right and responsibility to refuse materials that may not be in accordance with GTHS policies. The German-Texan Heritage Society, its volunteer *Journal* editors and its paid office staff are not responsible for errors or misinformation in submitted articles. All editors are volunteers, and are not paid for their services.

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