

Texas German Society



Organized September 6, 1983

■ *Witte Schmid Haus 1860*

Editor – Marie Herridge, 5462 Hwy 159 W, Bellville, TX 77418

marie@herridgeconsulting.com

REPORTER

Winter 2017

VOL. XIV, NO. 1

***Annual Convention March 18, 2017, La Grange, TX
The Knights of Columbus Hall 190 S. Brown Street***



Knights of Columbus, La Grange

Note from the Fayette & Lee County Chapters - (Host Chapters)

Here's hoping this finds you all doing well in the New Year. It's hard to believe another year has come and gone and the 2017 convention is fast approaching. We would like to encourage you all to make every effort to attend this year's convention. The committee is working very hard to make this a very successful convention. The speakers will be very interesting and informative, the quiet country town of La Grange, one of the best in the area, and the food, fellowship and entertainment some of the finest around. Hope to see you all in La Grange, Texas on March 18th.



Fayette County Courthouse, La Grange, TX

Convention News

The 34th Texas German Society State Convention will be held March 18, 2017 at The Knights of Columbus Hall in La Grange, Texas (190 S. Brown Street). Doors will open at 8:00 am with registration and breakfast from 8:30 am to 9:30 am. You are all invited to come and enjoy German Music and information about our German Heritage and Culture. There will be vendors of German and handmade crafts and products. A German style meal will be catered at noon by The Knights of Columbus.

MITTAGESSEN

Paniertes [Hühnerfleisch](#) (Chicken Fried Chicken)
Wurst (Sausage)
Sauerkraut
Gebutterte Kartoffeln (Buttered Potatoes)
Grüne Bohnen (Green Beans)
Roll
Tee (tea)

The cost per person is \$15.00 in advance and \$20.00 if postmarked after March 1st or at the door. For additional information contact Georg Ulbrich at 713.254.5124 or georg@ulbrich.org. Information is also available at www.texasgermansociety.com under the Convention tab. A Registration form is at the end of this newsletter and the tentative schedule is also included (subject to change).

Vendor Exhibitor Information

The cost of the space for each vendor exhibit is \$25.00 for profit vendors and no charge for non-profit vendors. Booth size is approximately 10'x12'. Booths need to be set up and ready to go by 8:30 am and remain until the convention is adjourned. The noon meal is available to vendors for an extra \$10.00 per person. For more information and/or a "Booth Application" please contact Charles Murray at 979.968.6715 or cjmurray1@earthlink.net. All vendors of German and handmade crafts and products are welcomed.

Silent Auction

As in the past, there will be a Silent Auction at the 2017 state convention. The auction will run from 8:30 am until approximately 3:00 pm. Each chapter is asked to bring two (2) items this year. Proceeds from the Silent Auction will benefit the scholarship fund.

Welcome to La Grange, Texas
34th Annual
Texas German Society State Convention
Tentative Schedule- March 18, 2017

08:00 am	Doors Open
08:30-09:30 am	Registration Music –Robert Herridge Kaffee, Orange Juice, Kolaches
09:30 am	Invocation – Father Eric Hungerford Willkommen Fayette Co. Chapter President – Georg Ulbrich Flag Ceremony – United States & Texas Flags presented by The Marine Corps League Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag Star Spangled Banner La Grange Mayor – Janet Moerbe State President – Glenn Altwein German Consul General
10:00-10:20 am	Judge Ed Janecka – “Painted Churches & German Settlers in Fayette County”
10:20-10:40 am	Mayor Janet Moerbe – “Casino Hall”
10:40-11:00 am	District Judge Jeff Steinhauser – “Influence of Law in Fayette County”
11:00-12:00 pm	Texas German Society Business Meeting President Glenn Altwein
12:00-01:00 pm	Meal
01:00-02:00 pm	County-wide German Singers with Dr. Don Kerby, Choir Director at St. James Episcopal Church, La Grange
02:00-02:30	La Grange High School German Folk Dancers
02:30 pm	Closing Remarks
02:40 pm	Break and Silent Auction

In Memoriam

Please contact your chapter president with information on any chapter members that have passed in the last convention year (March 2016-March 2017). They will need the name of the deceased, date of passing, age of passing and the TGS Chapter of which they were a member. Please have this information to your president no later than February 15th so it may be submitted to the host chapter on or before March 1st.

Guest Speakers for the Convention

Judge Edward F. Janecka

Judge Ed Janecka, Fayette County Judge, will speak about the “Painted Churches and German Settlers in Fayette County”. Ed is a lifelong resident of Fayette County, Texas. He and his wife Margie have been married 40 years and live on a farm in Dubina. They have five children and five grandchildren. He has two (2) degrees from Sam Houston State University and is a Vietnam Veteran. Judge Janecka was elected in 1990. He is proud of the County’s German and Czech Heritage. Janecka wrote legislation that was passed by the Texas legislature and signed by then Governor, George W. Bush, to designate the first week of October as “German Cultural Awareness Week”.



St. Mary's Catholic Church of High Hill

Mayor Janet Moerbe

“The History of Casino Hall” will be the topic of Mayor Moerbe’s presentation. Janet was born in Corpus Christi, Texas and at the age of three moved to Bellaire. She graduated from Bellaire High School in 1967 and earned her degree in education from Southwest Texas State University in 1971. She and Harvey Moerbe were married in 1971 and she began her teaching career in Schertz. In 1976 she, Harvey, and their three children moved to La Grange where she continued her teaching career at La Grange ISD. During the years her children were growing up, Janet served on the board of the Little League, taught religious education classes, and was an assistant Scout leader. She also served as a board member and President of the Fayette County Museum League. She was instrumental in working with the league in the development of the playground and gazebo at the Library Park. Mrs. Moerbe was elected to the La Grange City Council in 1988. Some accomplishments as a council member include the city’s first Summer Recreation Program for La Grange’s youth and adults and working with a group of citizens to obtain a Main Street designation for the City of La Grange. 2001 saw Mrs. Moerbe become the Mayor of La Grange and she is proud of the city’s continued investment in businesses and citizens. In 2002 Janet and a group of ladies created the Texas Women’s League and over the years their efforts have resulted in the distribution of over \$700,000 to the charities in Fayette County. Janet had a teaching career that lasted 33 years and was recognized as “Teacher of the Year” by the Veterans of Foreign War in 2005. She is currently an active volunteer at St. Mark’s Medical Center and Amen Food Pantry. She is also a member of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, Catholic Daughters of America and the Altar Society.



Casino Hall, La Grange, Texas

District Judge Jeff Steinhauser

District Judge Jeff Steinhauser will speak to the convention about the “Influence of Law in Fayette County”. Judge Steinhauser was elected in November 2010 to serve in Fayette, Austin and Waller counties. He graduated from Flatonia High School in 1983, The University of Texas in 1987 and the University Of Houston Law School in 1990. While working for a law firm in Houston he moved to Pascagoula, Mississippi where he met and married Stephanie. Judge Steinhauser practiced law in Flatonia from 1993 until his election to the bench. Jeff and Stephanie have four daughters, Megan, Katie, Rachel and Lillie Anne. Megan is married to Lucas Hernandez and they have two children, Karsyn and Micah. Jeff has been involved in a variety of civic groups in and around Fayette County, both before and after being elected. The Judge and his family are members of Flatonia Baptist Church.



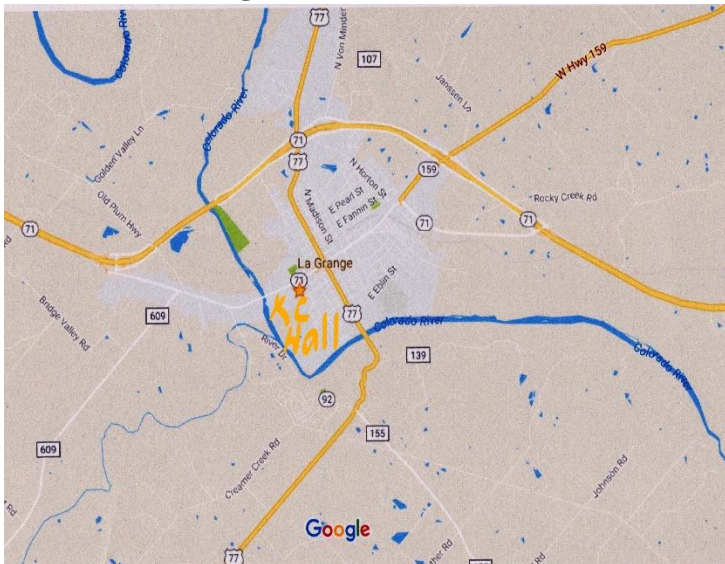
Friday Evening Activity

There is no planned activity by the Fayette/Lee County Chapters for Friday Evening. There is a weekend long event planned in La Grange that promises to be fun and interesting. We hope you take time to participate in this event.

La Grange Uncorked – Wine & Food Festival
March 17-19, 2017
Fayette County Courthouse Square – 151 N Washington Street

Join us for a weekend of celebrating everything wine and food! We’ve got 3 fantastic events lined up for you. **Uncorked Farm to Table Dinner, Uncorked Wine & Food Festival, and Uncorked Cooking Class**
More information at: <http://visitlagrangetx.com/la-grange-uncorked/>

Directions to Knights of Columbus Hall



Directions from Houston area: Take I-10 West to Columbus, Texas. Continue through Columbus on I-10 for approximately 1 mile and take exit 695 TX-71 toward La Grange. Continue on TX-71 for about 20 miles then take TX-71 Business (first La Grange exit) into La Grange. Continue on 71 through downtown La Grange until you reach South Brown Street (3 blocks past the courthouse). Turn left and the KC Hall is on your right a block or so down.

Directions from Austin area: Take TX 71 E to TX 71Bus E/W Travis Street. Follow 71/W Travis to S. Brown Street and take a right. KC Hall is on your right. You will cross the Colorado River and S. Brown is before you reach downtown La Grange (3 blocks before the courthouse).

Registration Form
2017 Texas German Society State Convention
 Hosted by Fayette County & Lee County TGS Chapters
 Saturday, March 18, 2017
 Knights of Columbus Hall
 190 S. Brown
 La Grange, TX

Registration: Postmarked prior to March 1, 2017 - \$15.00 per person
 Postmarked after March 2, 2017 (must be received by March 18th) - \$20.00 per person

(Please print the name/names wanted on name tag)

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Chapter or indicate if visitor: _____

Title _____ if _____ applicable _____ (i.e. _____ President, etc.): _____

Please indicate:

_____ Number of people before March 1 x \$15.00 = _____ amount enclosed

_____ Number of people after March 1 x \$20.00 = _____ amount enclosed

_____ Number of people paid at door x \$20.00 = _____ amount paid
 (not guaranteed food)

_____ Number of students ** x \$10.00 = _____ amount enclosed

_____ Booths for vendors x \$25.00 = _____ amount enclosed
 (submit by March 1, 2017) x \$10.00 for noon meal = _____ amount enclosed

**Under 22 years of age and enrolled in an accredited school, college or university.

Make checks payable to: Fayette County TGS

Return form and money to: Mannie Fritsch
 250 S Main
 La Grange, Texas 78945

Questions on Registration may be directed to: Mannie Fritsch @ 979-968-3382

Families with same last name and address may use the same form but please list first names separate for name tags.

2017 Texas German Society State Convention Vendor Exhibitor Rules

Date: Saturday, March 18, 2017

Place: Knights of Columbus Hall 190 S. Brown La Grange, TX 78945

Cost of space is \$25.00 paid in advance for profit booths. Non-profits booth rental is FREE. Please make check payable to "Fayette County Chapter of the TGS" and mail check and application to: Charles Murray, 155 E. Walnut Street, La Grange, TX 78945. For questions you may call Charles at 979.968.6715 or email cjmurray1@earthlink.net.

1. Booth size is approximately 10' x 12'
2. Booth site will be assigned inside convention hall and each exhibitor will be provided with one (1) table and two (2) chairs. The Fayette/Lee County Chapters of the Texas German Society and/or the Texas German Society will not be responsible for any loss, damage, or injury.
3. Booths should be set up by 8:30 am and remain until the end of the convention which will be approximately 3:30 pm. Hall will be open for setup at 7:30.
4. Limited electrical outlets are available, but arrangements need to be made in advance.
5. Each participant is responsible for collecting and reporting STATE SALES TAX. You sell directly to the public.
6. Deadline for submission of application is March, 1, 2017.
7. A catered meal will be available at lunch for \$10.00 per person (payable in advance).

Texas German Society State Convention
Saturday, March 18, 2017

Knights of Columbus Hall
190 S. Brown
La Grange, TX 78945

Booth Application
Due March 1, 2017

Booth Name _____
Profit _____ (\$25.00) Non-profit _____ (no charge for booth)
Lunch (\$10.00 per person) _____
Applicant's Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Daytime Phone _____ Cell _____
E-mail _____
Items to be sold _____

Signed Agreement

I hereby release The Fayette/Lee County Chapters of the Texas German Society and The Texas German Society of any responsibility for loss, theft, or damage to any work shown at the 2017 Convention. I agree to abide by the rules included with this application. I also agree that my booth name and items to be sold may be used to advertise the 2017 convention.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(Mail application and check made payable to "Fayette County Chapter of the TGS" to Charles Murray, 155 E. Walnut Street, La Grange, TX 78945. For questions you may call Charles at 979.968.6715 or email cjmurray1@earthlink.net)

Texas German Society State Convention
Saturday, March 18, 2017
Knights of Columbus Hall
190 S. Brown
La Grange, TX

In Memoriam Form
From March 2016 through March 2017

Name: _____

Date of Passing: _____

Age at Passing: _____

TGS Chapter: _____

Please send or email information by March 1, 2017 to:

Mannie Fritsch
250 S Main
La Grange, Texas 78945
979.968.3382
mannie@nwcable.net

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

I don't intentionally leave any chapter news out but there are times items get misplaced and overlooked (even with email). So I apologize upfront to any chapter/person if your news is overlooked. I would really like to have news from every chapter. Any special events or stories you want to share would also be appreciated. Please put TGS in your subject line on email. (Editor)

Austin County

Bastrop County

New members are always welcome. For more information, please contact our president Mikki Meyer at (512) 253-1111 or vice-president Rebecca Bernhard at (512) 818-1022.

Bluebonnet Chapter

2016 was a very busy year for the Bluebonnet Chapter with meetings held six times at the Hill Center in Sealy. The purpose of the chapter is to preserve and promote our German heritage, culture and language, so we choose speakers and activities to introduce us to some outstanding German individuals and cultures of the past and present. We began the year with a presentation by Jim Woodwick, a native of Austin County, on the life of William Trenckmann, also a native of Austin County. Trenckmann published a German weekly newspaper Das Wochenblatt in Bellville and later in Austin. He wrote the newspaper until he died in 1935.

In the March meeting discussion was held concerning the up-coming "Saengerfest" and State Convention. Unfortunately the "Saengerfest" was cancelled because of bad weather. The state convention on March 12 at St. Roch's in Mentz, was a great success with many members of the Bluebonnet Chapter attending. Amber Clepser of Sealy High School received the \$1,000 TGS scholarship. In the May meeting we learned that Hope Zaruba, a senior at Sealy High School, won our annual scholarship. During the May meeting, Vice-President Sand Schuff told about the eight years that she spent in Germany while her father was in the service. Very interesting.

Our July meeting is a favorite for the members – ice cream and entertainment by the Concordia Gesang Verein singers. Our November meeting is also a favorite because it is the annual German dinner. There is so much food and good entertainment by the Concordia Singers.

We look forward to 2017 to programs that will preserve our German heritage, language and culture. Meetings scheduled at the Hill Center in Sealy are January 25, March 22, May 24, July 26, September 27 and November 15. Everyone is invited.



Bluebonnet Attendees at 2016 Convention Mentz, TX

Colorado County

The Texas German Society, Colorado County Chapter, met on August 25, 2016. With the business meeting being very short this evening, President Dorothy asked Kathy Bullard, who is a member of our chapter, to tell us about her new business, named The Vineyard II, Texas Wine and Craft Beer Tasting located in Eagle Lake, TX. Our program entitled I am a “German Studeten” was presented by Ursula Keierleber. This is her story about flight and expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe after World War II that she experienced as a child.

October 27, 2016 – Our speaker for this evening’s gathering was H. O. “Butch” Strunk speaking about the history of Hackberry and Oakland, Texas. He showed a painting of Oakland, TX, painted by a local artist using old photographs of accuracy and an old Texas map dated 1864 showing these areas.

December 15, 2016 – The annual Christmas Gathering was held at Pilsner’s Restaurant where we enjoyed a dinner of roast beef, mashed potatoes, green beans and dessert. The Unserer Deutschen Sangers led us in Christmas songs while we enjoyed winning door prizes.

Fayette County

June was an indoor picnic and German games. They will celebrate October fest with a German meal at The Oaks.

Fort Bend County

FORT BEND GERMAN SOCIETY VISITS WHARTON

The Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society visited the Wharton County Historical Museum and the 20th Century Technology Museum. A historical airplane exhibit, a visual timeline of technology, a Trophy Room with a game collection comparable to an animal exhibit in any museum of natural science all coexist under the same roof were among some of the displays enjoyed. Individuals featured at the museum included world renowned journalist and Wharton native Dan Rather. Exhibits contained the area’s history of rich law enforcement, agriculture, medicine, churches and Texas Gulf Sulphur Company among many others. The tour was enjoyed by the Chapter’s members and guests.



They are from left, front row: Helen Altimore, Leona Band, Theresa Schultz, Ruth Kendziora, Darlene Mensik, Walter Todd, and Marilyn James. Second row: Vivian Schulze, Delbert Niemann, Lynn Roesler, Carol Niemann, Raymond Schmidt, Evelyn Schmidt, Clarence Thielemann, Erna Thielemann and Lois Anderson. The visit concluded with lunch at the 9ers Grill.

The Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society meets on the second Tuesday of every other month at the Albert

George Library Meeting Room in Needville at 7 PM.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact President Cathy Hanzik by telephone at 281-342-8243 or by email at cathyhanzik@gmail.com.

Fort Bend 2017 Schedule

January 17, 2017	Planning ~ Albert George Library
March 4, 2017	Brazos Cultural Heritage Festival ~ Decker Park, Richmond
March 18, 2017	TGS Convention ~ LaGrange
May 9, 2017	House of Blue ~ Needville High School
July 11, 2017	Ice Cream Social & Movie ~ Albert George Library
September 5, 2017	Bryan Museum ~ Galveston
December 3, 2017	TGS Christmas Party ~ Das Haus
January 9, 2018	Planning ~ Albert George Library

Galveston Chapter

Contact Dolores Taylor at 409.750.0172 or dtylr28004@yahoo.com for more information.

Golden Crescent Chapter

June 05, 2016 - This was not a formal meeting; it was our yearly June picnic. We met at 2:00pm at The Crossing which is across the street from our regular meeting place.

Fried chicken was provided and the members brought the side dishes and desserts. As usual we had more than enough food to enjoy. Some of the members brought dominoes to play, some played cards while others were just happy to visit among themselves. We do not get to visit a great deal at our regular meetings so this was enjoyable.

Dennis Boehm, President, asked for the member's attention about 5:00pm; we said the pledge of allegiance and Dennis gave the blessing for our meal.

Minutes: No minutes read. Treasurer: No treasurer report given.

Announcements: Dennis asked for recent anniversaries/birthdays of members and we sang Happy Birthday to everyone who had a birthday.

Old Business: Dorothy Albrecht displayed the papers for our scholarship students for members to view.

New Business: We had Patrick and Monika Janak as guests and they joined our group. This is exciting as Monika is a retired German teacher, so we can hope for help with our German lessons. Maybe they will have some ideas as to how to attract some more members with German interests.

Program: No program, games were played and members visited among themselves.

Attendance: 30 persons were in attendance, including our two new members. Meeting was adjourned about 7:00pm.

December 01, 2016 - Dennis Boehm, President got our attention at 6:30pm. Dennis shared a prayer and invited us all to enjoy our catered Christmas Party meal. We began our party at 5:30pm and had been happily visiting with each other.

After we had eaten Dennis asked us to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance; and a short informal meeting.

Minutes: No minutes read. Treasurer: No treasurers report.

Announcements: Dennis thanked Ann Heinrich for a wonderful job on the decorations with assistance from some of the members. He reminded us that we will be electing officers during our February 2017 meeting; and we do not have a Vice President as yet. He encouraged someone to volunteer as he and Dorothy would like to do some traveling next year and he would like to feel secure there would be someone to guide any meetings they might miss.

Dennis asked for birthdays/anniversaries of members; he congratulated those whose hands were raised and asked for the exact dates of their celebrations. He also went over the names of our members who are ill or have not been attending due to health reasons and/or just do not drive at night any longer.

Dennis announced that state wanted to send out as many newsletters by e-mail as possible and asked for permission to give our addresses to state. Those without e-mail will naturally keep receiving newsletters by snail mail.

Dennis suggested that we take whatever monies we got from the no bake sale and the treasurer will add the difference to make a \$500 donation to our scholarship fund. That was voted on and agreed by all present.

While Dennis was getting our sing along songs loaded onto the computer; Mary Belle Meitzen shared a few comments about German Christmases she knew. Dennis did a super job of collecting German and English Christmas songs for us to sing.

Old Business: None discussed.

New Business: None discussed.

Attendance: 28 persons were in attendance. Meeting was adjourned about 8:45pm.

Harris County Chapter

The Harris County Chapter of the Texas German meets at Trini Mendenhall Sosa Community Center, which is at 1414 Wirt Road at the intersection of Wirt and Westview in Spring Branch. They have very interesting programs and if you are in need of some ideas or information you can contact Ruth Froebel at 281.531.0822.

The **September 8, 2016**, meeting began with socializing and a lite dinner. After a short business meeting and announcements, architect and author James Gast discussed his book *The Astrodome: Building an American Spectacle*. He revealed the results of more than a year's research using both primary-source archival material and interviews with the Astrodome participants. Mr. Gast spoke about the people, technology, and the politics

that built the world's first domed stadium. He discussed the creation and early days of the first domed stadium, highlighting the people who participated and the unprecedented solutions they developed for problems that had not previously existed. Gast also placed the building in its historic context among worldwide architectural and engineering accomplishments, as well as its cultural setting in mid-century America. Many questions followed. Also, members shared their own memories of the Astrodome.

On Thursday evening, **November 10, 2016**, the TGS Harris County Chapter hosted its annual Thanksgiving Dinner at the Harris County Precinct 3 SOSA Center. Despite horrendous traffic, members arrived early to set up and decorate; others arrived early with pot luck dishes, some German style, to reheat before the arrival of the turkey, dressing, gravy, and ham. Provided by the Chapter, the entrees were transported to the event by Ruth and Robert Froebel. Long-time member, comic, and preacher, Governor Clements, gave the blessing before serving began. Background music was provided by Kenny James. When all were sufficiently stuffed, Governor Clements took the podium and related some of the many funny stories and jokes in his repertoire. After the laughter subsided, a drawing was held to give away a number of door prizes. The musician, a one man band with an accordion, harmonica, and drums, was introduced and thanked for contributing to the pleasant evening. All were wished a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

The **January 12th, 2017**, meeting began with apple strudel from Rudy Lechner's restaurant. Many thanks were given to Ruth and Bob Froebel for bringing the strudel. Next, announcements about the 2017 TGS Convention in LaGrange followed. Vice President Roy Whitney summarized topics covered at the January TGS Board Meeting. The speaker for the evening was Mike Vance, Program Director for the Houston Heritage Society and co-author of *Murder and Mayhem in Houston* from History Press. He spoke about the quintuple homicide called the Heights Horror in March 1910, an event that involved German emigrants! He followed that crime with a pair of murders in 1838 and 1840. Those involved the Rowdy Loafers furloughed from the Texas Army and Mandred Wood. The other one intertwined Shelby Smith's shooting of Jack Vance. A lively discussion on members' questions and comments followed.

Heart of Texas Chapter

MAY- Dorothy Leyendecker had graciously offered to bring the Llano Estacado panels to be displayed at the Bosque Museum in Clifton. A special "thank you" to Dorothy.

TGS member and former teacher at Whitney HS Kathy Radde gave a report on the fact that Lisa Mays, the present German teacher at Whitney High School helped with the translation of the book "Between Worlds Never To Return" by Barbara Ortwein of Germany.

Kathy also stated that the German program is going well at the Whitney High School and that they now have 7 classes in German. Thirty five (35) dancers took part in performing for Pioneer Days in Whitney. They also took 6th place in state competition in Dallas recently and that the group had also performed at the Muenster German Fest in Muenster, Texas.

Helen Miller gave a program on the family history of one Jeremiah Chamberlain Sleeper and his wife Elizabeth. It was based on the memories of Julian Sleeper who was 91 years old in 1979 when he wrote everything down. His siblings were Mary, Pattie, Fabius, John, and Susie. It was very interesting to hear about the lives of those who lived in the late 1800's and early 1900's.

JUN – The HOT Chapter was invited to a hamburger supper at Jay Thiele's (museum) family farm. This is a special outing for us.

JUL-Several members plus two new members dined at [Ketzler's Schnitzel Haus and Biergarten in Granbury.](#)

AUG –We spent this meeting preparing last minute items for Oktoberfest held on September 17. The famous Enzian Buam was the featured band.

OCT- After recovering from Oktoberfest we planned the Christmas Party.

DEC- Our Christmas party was held at Christ Lutheran Church. The church band entertained us. Wiethorn Catering provided the catered meal. We chose to bring food for the food bank.

2017 We look forward for a great New Year and wish you all the same.

NEW OFFICERS FOR HOT CHAPTER: President & Secretary: LaNell Mueller, Treasurer & Publicity: Betty Hubbard, Programs: Helen Miller.

Katy Tri-County Chapter

A recap of the Katy Tri County Chapter's 2016 activities.

In February President Linda Phillips presented the group with a DVD on the "Orphan Trains" about over 100,000 orphans in the New York area who were moved all over the country to new homes. There was a Children's Aid Society founded by Charles Brace in 1853 and by 1929 over 100,000 children had been relocated.

In April, the Cinco Ranch High School's German classes and their teacher, Heidi Kirby, presented parts of their State competition performances and displays that won them many awards. One of Ms. Kirby's students won one of the TGS Scholarship essay awards in 2016.

May was a "Show and Tell" program for the members. They brought photos and momentous and shared the stories connected to each.

In June, members Regina and Francis Hartford brought us a DVD touring Germany from Heidelberg to the Black Forest. They even shared some good German music with the group.

In July, we "toured" the 3 castles of King Ludwig II of Bavaria thanks to President Linda Phillips video presentation.

Our program in September was entitled "Hallowed Grounds" about America's overseas military cemeteries.

To celebrate Oktoberfest, the Chapter members and their guests enjoyed a great tour of Das Haus given by Paul Schenck. One of our members, Helga Miller, had donated the stove sitting in the hallway at Das Haus. This stove was manufactured by her father in Germany and shipped to Helga here in Katy. We enjoyed lunch together and a great afternoon.

Christmas was celebrated together at Peggy Schulin's house sharing food and friendship. We are looking forward to an exciting new year....

Lavaca/DeWitt County

The Lavaca/DeWitt Chapter of the Texas German Society meets six times each year, on the second Thursday of every other month, in the historical Hochheim Prairie Schoolhouse.

Our February, 2016, meeting was met with the enthusiasm of planning a new year. During our business meeting, discussions and plans centered on the State Convention. After the business meeting ended, Betty Rathkamp presented a program on "Fasching" and its parades, balls, and celebrations throughout Germany.

In April, after the business concluded, the night's program was about the Linden tree and its significance in German culture. In June, we escape the heat with an "Indoor Picnic" and game night. After a delicious meal, groups enjoyed playing dominoes, Scrabble, and Skat. In August, plans were organized for the annual signing of the German American Proclamation.

On or close to October 07, members attend the signing by County Judge Tramer Woytek in Hallettsville, County Seat of Lavaca County and by County Judge Darryl Fowler, in Cuero, County Seat of DeWitt County. In October, we celebrated Oktoberfest at Kloesel's in Moulton.

After Thanksgiving, members decorated a tree for the annual Christmas Tree Forest in the Yoakum Heritage Museum.

In December, we gathered to celebrate the season with a warm and wonderful Weihnachtsfest. After the meal which was catered by Chef Heinz Braun, numbers were drawn for the door prizes of Nunberg Gluhwein and Poinsettias. State President Glen Altwein was our special guest. He presided over the swearing in of our 2017 slate of officers. They are Virginia Flathmann, President, Holly Heinsohn Kropp, Vice President, Barbara Braun, Secretary, and Rose Ferguson, Treasurer. After all business matters were concluded, everyone joined in acapella caroling in German and in English.

The first business meeting of 2017 will be on Thursday, February 09, at 6:00 pm at the Hochheim Prairie Schoolhouse. We look forward to a great new year.

Lee County

The Lee County Chapter meets the first Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. at First National Bank meeting room, and we enjoy a snack supper.

.

North Harris County

January 2016

The January 2016 program was about the numerous German Prisoner-of-War (POW) camps that existed in Texas during WW II. Of particular note will be Camp Hearne located outside of Hearne, Texas and Camp Huntsville, located outside of Huntsville, Texas.

March 2016

In March, our chapter had the opportunity to present a two-for-one program special. First, the Trinity Lutheran School Choir, who performs at numerous German related events each year (including every Klein Deutschfest since it was started) entertained our chapter with wonderful German singing.

Second, Jan Rowland presented his interesting story of how the German culture became part of his life, from his early years learning German in college to his Army days which led to him meeting his wife Hanna.

May 2016

For our May meeting, our chapter hosted a presentation from Steve Baird, who has served as the Living History Educator/District Historian for the Wunderlich Farm and Klein, Texas Museum for the past 3 years.

Since taking his current position, Steve has used his passion for "living history" to further promote the museum to the community. To do so, he has organized a monthly farmer's market which occurs during the museum's usual open to the public time, as well as annual festivals. Also, the experience has been made even more realistic with the introduction of actual livestock animals at the farm, including goats, sheep, chickens, and rabbits.

Further excitement has come to the museum with the move of the Theiss House to the property which will not only represent an early 20th century farmhouse, but also serve as the new museum office and research center.

July 2016

At our July meeting, we took the opportunity to celebrate the birthday of the United States in July by marveling at the wonders of this country which our ancestors came to generations ago, and new immigrants still come to today.

Burl and Eva Holloway presented their experiences at one of these national treasures, the Grand Canyon. As the Holloways have made trips both during the summer and winter time to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, our chapter had the opportunity to experience the wonder of this place with the contrast that one sees during the different seasons.

September 2016

In commemoration of our Chapter's 21st birthday, our Chapter reflected on how our German heritage first came to America. We watched the film "Off to New Shores: 300 Years of German Immigration to North America", which was filmed in 1983 in recognition of the proclamation of German-American Day by President Ronald Reagan on October 6, 1983 for the 300th anniversary of arrival of the first German families to Philadelphia, PA. Although this film was produced over 30 years ago, it provided a very detailed and interesting history of German immigration to first the colonies in America in then later the United States. Please join us for this commemoration and time of fellowship.

November 2016

Our Chapter celebrated the Christmas season as we took time for fellowship and watched the 2014 video, "Rick Steves' European Christmas". From England to Norway, Burgundy to Bavaria, and Rome to the top of the Swiss Alps, Rick Steves' European Christmas placed you a seat at the family feast; saved you a pew up in the lofts with the finest choirs; and handed you a rolling pin in grandma's kitchen as she labors over her best-kept holiday secrets.

Southbelt Chapter

The South Belt chapter meets at 5:30 p.m. on the Third Thursday evening of every month at Mount Olive Lutheran Church on Scarsdale Blvd. in Houston, Texas. We invite all who are interested in our German heritage to join us for food and fellowship.

Tarrant County

Washington County

Our chapter decided in December of 2015 to try having meetings every other month starting in February of 2016. It proved to be well accepted.

In April aside from lots of regular business, we learned to sing a song in German and did quite well.

June is our month to take a field trip. This year we met at Must Be Heaven in downtown Brenham first for lunch. From there we had a presentation at the restored Simon Theater on Main Street. Our plan was to visit Glissman's Gift Shop across from the theater but due to the massive recent storms the end of May we were unable to as Glissman's had major damage from the torrential rains. Some members chose to tour other historical sites in Brenham. Glissman's store is owned by Gloria Nix, one of our members, and has always been in her family. There one can see a video of the old pharmacy and tour the old building where Gloria has many beautiful German items for sale.

Axel Baerhen was our guest speaker in August. He was born and raised in Duesseldorf, Germany, on the Rhine River. He first came to the United States in 1954. Touring the United States, he ended in California where he met Jeri whom he later married. After residing in several locations including Germany and New Orleans due to Axel's work in the steel industry, the Baerhens moved to Texas permanently in 1985. After attending Brenham's Maifest in 1986 he along with the Tates went to Germany to study styles of Mai Poles as he strongly felt that one was missing at Brenham's yearly celebration in Firemen's Park. Subsequently with the help of Valmont Industry and Blinn College, a Mai Pole was designed and donated. It can still be seen there today. It is a replica in the Bavarian design of 1762. When asked what he missed most about Germany, he replied that Oktoberfest in Germany is held during the last week in September to celebrate the coming of October when hops needed for brewing beer are harvested.

In spite of Axel Baerhen's feelings about when to celebrate Oktoberfest, our members will celebrate at our October meeting. In addition, we will plan for our Christmas party to end our get-togethers for 2016.



Axel Baerhen August speaker

Please! Support the Texas German Society Scholarship Fund by subscribing or renewing your subscription to GERMAN LIFE. 50% or 1/2 of the subscription money stays in our scholarship fund **ONLY if you send your renewal to the address below – not directly to German Life. You will receive your renewal from German Life but please make your check payable to TGS and mail to the address below.**

FUND RAISER PROGRAM

2017

TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY

**German Life
Thank you for your support!**

Please mail to:

TGS Scholarship Fund
13730 Hambleton Circle
Houston, TX 77069
www.texasgermansociety.com

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

1-yr. Subscription \$24.95 (save 23%)
 2 yr. Subscription \$38.95 (save 38%)
 3 yr. Subscription \$53.95 (save 42%)
 Renewal
Payment:
 Cash Check # _____
(make checks payable to TGS)

Texas German Trails Project

Texas German Trails project is underway to identify and locate on a state map or in a guide all of the more significant communities and towns that were settled by German immigrants. If you would like to see your area represented and are willing to help or would like additional information, please contact Van Massirer at (254) 486-2366 or vmassirer@yahoo.com.

Be sure to submit any activities in your area. The next newsletter will be in **June** so start submitting your articles and information now. The deadline for the **June 2017** newsletter is **May 17, 2017**.

IN MEMORIUM

Betty Ruth Floyd passed away in Tomball, Texas, on September 12, 2016. She was the third child born to Alfred and Ruth Schroeder in Giddings, Texas, on February 3, 1941. She was baptized shortly thereafter at Martin Luther Lutheran Church in Giddings. Betty attended Immanuel Lutheran School in Giddings, and she was confirmed there on April 3, 1955. Betty graduated from Giddings High School in 1959. She was very active in the "Walther League" and travelled nationally as a representative for the organization through her college years. While attending Concordia College in Austin, TX, she met David Floyd on a blind date. Betty graduated from Concordia in May of 1961. She and David were married June 17, 1962, at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston. David and Betty were blessed with two children: Brenda (1963) and Michael (1967). After 29 years of marriage, David passed away in May of 1992. Betty remained active in the Lutheran church as an educator and as a member of LWML. In her 35 years as an educator (most of them at Immanuel), she taught Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade. She even served as the girls' volleyball, basketball, and cheer coach in her early years. Betty loved being around little children. When she was no longer teaching, she treasured the time spent with her grandchildren. Whether they were playing games, listening to stories of her childhood in Giddings, or helping her in the yard, there was always laughter - - and a lot of talking. Betty never met a stranger. Betty is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Brenda and Cecil Burdick; son and daughter-in-law Michael Floyd and Tricia; grandchildren, Brianna Ritter and husband Dan, Harrison Burdick, and David Floyd. Betty was predeceased by her younger half-brother Fred Pampell, and is survived by her sister Dorothy Kellner and husband Elmer; brother, Bruce Schroeder and wife Janice.



Bernard Wilbert Ehrhardt 1929-2016

Bernard Wilbert Ehrhardt, 86, of Klein, TX passed away Wednesday, June 1, 2016. He is survived by his wife JoAnn Ehrhardt; two sons Duane Ehrhardt and wife Monica, David Ehrhardt and wife Cindy; one daughter Beth Yokem and husband Todd; six grandchildren Lauren Ehrhardt, Brittany Ehrhardt, Kristin Ehrhardt, Daniel Ehrhardt, Ty Yokem and Stephanie Ehrhardt.



Reinhardt "Roger" Wunderlich 1930-2016

Reinhardt "Roger" Wunderlich, 85 Of Spring passed away peacefully on September 21, 2016 with his family by his side. He was a resident of the Klein Community and member of Trinity Klein Lutheran Church. Roger was born November 22, 1930 in Klein, TX to Bertha Theiss Wunderlich & Reinhardt Wunderlich. He attended Massey School of Business and University of Houston, Central Campus. He began his career with Humble Refinery, now Exxon. He worked forty years as a Research Chemist in the Specialty Coatings Division where he was credited with several patents. He served as an elder for Bethany Lutheran Church. He followed in his mother's footsteps by teaching Sunday school for over 37 years. He was the President of the North Harris County German Society for twenty years and a member of the Trinity Lutheran Men's club. Roger coached Little League Baseball for 16 years at North Houston National, and Lindale Little League. He was a passionate sports fan. He loved watching baseball, football, and basketball with his family. He also enjoyed farming & ranching. Roger was a world traveler, often traveling to research genealogy for his books. He published four genealogy books during his life and often served as a local historian and valuable resource for the Klein Community. He was extremely active in his community and served on the school board. Roger had a heart for evangelism. He spent years in outreach for Bethany Lutheran Church and school and supported them in every way he could. He was strong in his faith. He genuinely loved spending time with every one of his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Each one was very important to him. Roger truly lived life to the fullest. Preceded in death by his parents, Reinhardt and Bertha Wunderlich, and grandson, Adam Kyle Wunderlich. Survived by his wife of 66 years, Clarice Wunderlich; children, Ronald Wunderlich & wife Deborah, Kathlyn Cirtaus & husband Steven, Larry Wunderlich, & Brenda Walters; many grandchildren, and great grandchildren.



Donald Wayne Beckendorf born June 27, 1949. Baptized in Christ in July 1949 and confirmed on June 16, 1957 all at Rosehill United Methodist Church. Taken by God on January 1, 2017.

Loving son, husband, father and grandfather. He was bigger than life and had many accomplishments to show his dedication for his faith and family. He was a volunteer at the Rosehill Volunteer Fire Department from 1965-1995, on the Board of Trustees for Perry United Methodist Church (4 years), Gideon (5 years), President and Vice President for SPJST Lodge 182 during 1990-2010, Vice President for SPJST Lodge 196 (3 years), Houston Livestock Show Sponsor of Commercial Steer Records Book Award (5 years), volunteered at the Houston Livestock Commercial Steer

Committee (20+ years), volunteered at the Houston Livestock Show Ag Mechanics Show (18 years), Sponsor of FFA and FCCLA 1990-2006, Sunday School Teacher for 2 years at Forestburg. His deep seeded love for the outdoors and cattle was long ingrained in his history. He was fourth generation dairy farmer on one side of his family and third on the other. He enjoyed being outside and working with the land. He was a retired dairyman, but continued to farm and ranch.

His love and dedication for life supersedes him. He was the type of person that would give you the shirt off his back if he knew you needed it. He was always a shoulder to cry on and had a reassuring bear hug or kind word to get you through tough times. He always believed in God's greater plan and lived his life through the word of the Bible. He never met a stranger and always had a kind word to say. He enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren, especially giving his grandsons rides on the tractor (which they requested often).

He leaves behind his mother and father, Vada and Marvin Beckendorf, his loving and devoted wife of 40 years, DeAnn Beckendorf, children Jason & (Becky) Beckendorf, Dana & (Scott) Farrell, Jeannie & (Justin) Parker, and Daniel Beckendorf. Grandchildren, Bailee, Paetyn, Tynlee Beckendorf, Sam Farrell, and Liam Parker. Numerous other children that he claimed and that claimed him.

There is no doubt, that Donald is a beautiful addition to Heaven where his booming voice is sure to be heard while handing out bear hugs and handshakes. The memories of his giving spirit will live on in all the numerous people he touched by his example of love, faithfulness, and being a servant of God. He will be deeply missed.

Let us say goodbye as we watch Donald go off into the sunset on his tractor one more time

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL?

If you would like to receive your newsletter by email, please send me an email at marie@herridgeconsulting.com and you will be added to the database. The newsletter will be sent in a PDF format, which if you do not have Adobe Reader on your computer it is a free program to download and I will include instructions for you. If you are willing to receive it by email, it will be helpful on the cost of printing and mailing our newsletters. Let me know if you have any questions or suggestions. Thanks.

If you do not have a computer or do not wish to receive it by email, you will still receive a printed newsletter by US mail. Please do not worry, as the newsletter will always be available in printed form for all who want to receive printed.



Calendar of Events 2017

MARCH

March 31, April 1-1 16th Annual Tomball German Heritage Festival www.tomballsistercity.org
March 18 Texas German Society State Convention 34th Annual – Hosted by Fayette & Lee TGS Chapter, location The Knights of Columbus Hall, 190 S Brown, La Grange, TX

APRIL

April 23- 15th Annual Frühling Saengerfest, sponsored by Bluebonnet Chapter of TGS & Bellville Lions Club, Bellville, Concordia Hall, 936 S Tesch, Bellville 11 am.

MAY

May 5-6 – Brenham Maifest, Washington County Chapter, Brenham, TX www.maifest.org

SEPTEMBER

Sept 1-2- Westfest, West, TX <http://www.westfest.com>
Sept 9 - Caldwell Kolache Fest <http://www.burlesoncountytexas.com/kolachefestival.html>
Sept 23 - Heart of Texas German Fest

OCTOBER – Look for all the October festivals around our area.

Oct 21 - Fayetteville Licksillet <http://www.fayettevilletxchamber.org/>

DECEMBER

December 3 – Das Haus Christmas Party - all members welcomed - Bring your favorite dish/snack
December 8-10 German Christmas Market “Weihnachtsmarkt Texas Style”, Tomball, TX The Market is sponsored by the City of Tomball, Tomball Sister City, and German Heritage Festival
www.tomballsistercity.org . www.myspace.com/tgchristmas

2017 Tomball German Heritage Festival March 31, April 1-2, 2017



Old Town Tomball, Texas
Historical Train Depot Plaza

15th Annual Fruehling Saengerfest
Sunday, April 23, 2017



For additional information call:

Laura Schumann 979-865-3804 or Robert Herridge 979-865-3222