



Fall Issue  
September 2026

# Texas German Society

Organized September 6, 1983 ■ Witte-Schmid Haus Museum  
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## Reporter

### President's Message

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Good day dear members, friends & guests!

Unbelievable that this summer comes to an end. I hope that you all are doing well!

Last August we had a TGS State Board meeting and had to talk & vote about a couple things. Like our membership number is shrinking and so is the money. We would like to continue to have our Convention meeting, Oktoberfest & Christmas celebrations. Therefore, we will raise the "State Dues" from \$8 to \$10! The Board doesn't know how far it will take us. This decision will take effect on 01/01/2027

Last year we had our first Oktoberfest for all members and it was very nice. With that I invite you all to celebrate this year again on October 3rd 2026, 2-4 pm at our German Museum "Das Haus", the Witte-Schmid Haus.  
2650 Witte-Schmid Rd  
Schoenau TX

We are looking forward that you all can come!

Guten Tag liebe Mitglieder, Freunde & Gäste!

Kaum zu glauben dass der Sommer zu Ende geht. Ich hoffe das es euch allen gut geht!

Wir hatten letzten August eine TGS State Vorstandssitzung und hatten ueber einige Punkte gesprochen & abgestimmt. Wie z.B. das unsere Mitgliedschaft abnimmt und somit auch die Anzahl der Beiträge. Wir moechten weiterhin unsere Konferenz haben und Oktoberfest & Weihnachten feiern. Deshalb werden wir den Beitrag (State Due) erhoehen von \$8 auf \$10! Der Vorstand weiss nicht wie weit es uns bringen wird.

Diese Entscheidung startet am 01/01/2027

Letzes Jahr hatten wir unser 1.Oktoberfest fuer alle Mitglieder und es war sehr schoen. Somit lade ich Alle ein fuer dieses Jahr am 3. Oktober von 14-16 Uhr, in unserem deutschen Museum „Das Haus“, das Witte-Schmid Haus mitzufeiern.

Wir hoffen das ihr Alle kommen könnt.

Bis bald Eure

**OKTOBERFEST**  
**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2026 2 – 4 pm**  
**DAS HAUS**



**Come join us to celebrate Oktoberfest with other members and to try different foods. The food will only be “finger food”. You are welcome to bring samples of your favorite German foods, such as cookies, sausage bites, cheese, and other German foods that are convenient to sample.**

**Come and enjoy the company and the food!**

**2650 WITTE-SCHMID RD.**

**NEW ULM, TEXAS 78950**



**TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY  
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS  
CELEBRATION**

**2:00 P. M.**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2026**

**WITTE-SCHMID HAUS MUSEUM**

**SCHOENAU COMMUNITY**

**2650 WITTE-SCHMID RD.**

**NEW ULM, TEXAS 78950**

**JOIN YOUR FELOW TGS MEMBERS FOR FOOD, MUSIC  
AND A CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS**

\*\*\*\*\*

**PLEASE BRING YOUR FAVORITE CHRISTMAS**

**GOODIE OR SNACK TO SHARE**

**HOSTED BY YOUR TGS OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

**\*\*DIRECTIONS:** Out of Bellville, take 159 West toward Fayetteville. Go through Industry (red light) and about 1 mile, turn right on FM 1457 toward Shelby and Round Top. Then turn right on Schoenau Road (all gravel) and turn left on Witte-Schmid Road.

**Ramp will be provided on steps at front entrance for those that need it.**

## REPORT OF THE TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY 43<sup>RD</sup> CONVENTION, April 11, 2026

The convention was opened by President Marion McClinton. The invocation was by Pastor Jay Grave, St. John Lutheran Church, Bellville. The flag ceremony with the American flag was presented by Boy Scout Troop 36 of Bellville.

The welcome was by Lena Anhäuser, German Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany.

TGS Vice-President Sandy Shuff read the names of the TGS members who had passed away in 2025. A candle was lit and remained burning in their memory during the convention.

The first speaker was Linda Ohlenbusch Phillips, TGS member, who gave a history of the Witte-Schmid Haus Museum, with a Power Point presentation.

A drawing of many door prizes were presented to the members.



The second speaker was Marcus Gaskamp, Director of the German-American Society of Tulsa. His presentation included information on the timeline of the German immigration into the U.S.A., the modes of transportation available to the immigrants in their time period, the many reasons for them wanting to leave their homeland and come to America and many of their contributions.

TGS Director Robert Herridge presented the scholarships to the first-place winner.

A very delicious lunch was again provided by Schovajsa Catering. As we ate lunch more drawings for door prizes were awarded and we were entertained by the Bellville High School Polka Band, Mr. Kenny Peters Director.

A business meeting followed lunch and the officers for 2026 were installed. It was determined that the 2027 convention will again be held at St. John Lutheran Church in Bellville on Saturday, April 10, 2027. More door prizes were awarded and the meeting was closed.

Germany is the second largest beer consumer in Europe – they usually drink around 2.55 billion gallons of it a year. Russia is number one.



**TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY**  
**Minutes of the Texas State Convention German**  
**Society**  
**Saturday, April 11, 2026**  
**St. John Lutheran Church, Bellville**

**“The purpose of the Texas German Society is to preserve and promote the German heritage, culture, and language.”**

The Texas German Society held its annual State Convention on Saturday, April 11, 2026, in Bellville, Texas, at St. John Lutheran Church Faith Center,

hosted by the Executive Board and Chapter members.

The Convention was opened by TGS President Marion McClinton, Pastor Jay Grave of St. John Lutheran Church opened with a prayer. The American flag was presented by Boy Scout Troop 36 of Bellville. We were also welcomed by Lena Anhauser from the German Consulate office in Houston.

TGS Vice President, Sandy Shuff and Ft. Bend Chapter President, Cathy Hanzik presented the names of TGS members who had passed away in 2025. A candle was to remain burning in their memory during the Convention.

Linda Phillips, Reporter Editor and Katy Tri-Co Chapter President, presented a program on the Witte-Schmid Haus Museum. The Haus was built by Dr. Ernst Witte, who immigrated from Hamburg Germany in 1860 to Austin County area.

Another program on German immigration was presented by Marcus Gaskamp, Director of the German-American Society of Tulsa.

Scholarship Chair, Robert Herridge presented the names of the winners of the Scholarship Essay Contest:

\$1500.00 Arjun Chandivali, Tompkins High School, Katy  
 \$1000.00 Kathryn Stephens, La Grange High School  
 \$750.00 Jacob Bridgefarmer, La Grange High School  
 Arjun Chanduptla was present and read his essay.

Entertainment was provided by the Bellville High School Polka Band.

An annual business meeting was held at the end of the day's programs. TGS President, Marion McClinton called the meeting to order. There was a motion to dispense with

the reading of the minutes from the Last Convention in Bellville by Herb Gerken and seconded by Glenn Altwein. The motion carried.

TGS Treasurer, Aaron Schindewolf gave the financial report as of March 31, 2026:

Amegy Bank, State Checking \$26,180.21 State CD \$11,894.04

Amegy Bank, Scholarship Checking \$ 5,176.83 Scholarship CD \$ 8,512.47

Perry Schindewolf made a motion to accept the treasurer's report and Steve Guettler seconded. The motion carried. This report is available for audit along with details of expenses and income. TGS has 12 Chapters at this time.

Witte-Schmid Treasurer, Georgianne Schmid gave the report as of April 10, 2026:

Industry (Cadence) State Bank, Checking \$8,691.01

Industry (Cadence) State Bank, CD \$13,288.43

CD interest in the amount of \$260.64 is automatically deposited to checking account.

Georgianne also reported operating expenses, including insurance, lawn, pest control, utilities can add up to \$6,600.00 annually. The Museum is supported by donations.

Tours of the Haus can be arranged by email: witte.schmid.museum@gmail.com

The fence at the Cemetery has been replaced with a generous donation by Verena Aeschbacher. Nelson Aschenbeck coordinated the project.

Webmaster Anthony Stott reported the website is up and current. Chapters can send events for the Event Calendar to him at [astott@uh.edu](mailto:astott@uh.edu). Access to the website is [www.texasgermansociety.org](http://www.texasgermansociety.org).

Reporter Editor, Linda Phillips is sending out the newsletter twice a year. At this time, she is sending out 255 Reporters by email and 70 paper copies by US mail.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

TGS Treasurer Aaron Schindewolf read the list of Nominees for the 2026 Executive Board Officers and Directors:

|                            |                       |                                |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| President                  | Marion McClinton      | Harris Co. Chapter             |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Pres. | Sandy Shuff           | Bluebonnet Chapter             |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres. | Georgianne Schmid     | Bluebonnet Chapter             |
| Secretary                  | Peggy Schulin         | Katy Tri-Co/ President Chapter |
| Treasurer                  | Aaron Schindewolf     | North Harris Co Chapter        |
| Reporter Editor            | Linda Phillips        | Katy Tri-Co Chapter            |
| Webmaster                  | Anthony Stott         | President's Chapter            |
| 2 Yr. Director             | Robert Herridge       | Bluebonnet Chapter             |
| 2 Yr. Director             | Mannie Fritsch-Schmid | Fayette Co Chapter             |
| 2 Yr. Director             | Herbert Gerken        | President's Chapter            |

2-year Directors having 1 year left on their term:

|               |                        |
|---------------|------------------------|
| Anthony Stott | President's Chapter    |
| Van Massirer  | Heart of Texas Chapter |

There were no nominations from the floor. Herb Gerken made a motion to accept the nominees presented and Holly Heinsohn seconded. The motion carried. Marie Herridge made a motion to close nominations and elect those presented, Rena Severin seconded and the motion carried with none opposed. Immediately following, Steve Guettler, Museum Director, installed the group.

President Marion reported 91 pre-registered for the Convention and 12 walk-ins came for the day. Next year's Convention was discussed, asking for a volunteer Chapter to host. Since no Chapter will be hosting on their own, President Marion asked the group if they would like to use St. John's Faith Center again next year. There were no objections and Peggy will call and reserve Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup> for next year's State Convention.

President Marion then did the Roll Call of the 12 Chapters to acknowledge those Chapters present for the day.

There being no further business, the business meeting portion of the Convention was adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,  
Peggy Schulin, TGS Secretary

#### Scholarship winners



*Presentation of the first-place scholarship winner, Arjun Chandupatla of Tompkins High School of Katy, Texas*

*Also present were his father and German teacher*

Scholarship Chair, Robert Herridge presented the names of the winners of the Scholarship Essay Contest:

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\$1000.00 Kathryn Stephens, La Grange High School  
\$750.00 Jacob Bridgefarmer, La Grange High School  
Arjun Chanduptla was present and read his essay.

**Arjun Chandivali, 1<sup>st</sup> place**  
**Tompkins High School, Katy**

My interest in German language and culture began with music long before I entered a German classroom. As a violinist and pianist, it was only a matter of time before I saw German words on my music sheets, nestled there between notes. Even though I didn't hear a single word of German at home, I inevitably ran into pieces with German titles, like Mozart's famous *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, German instructions, telling me to play schnell or langsam, and even whole paragraphs in prefaces. At first, I simply enjoyed the rich and complex sounds of German classical music, by Bach, Beethoven, or Brahms, but over time, I wanted to understand the nuances of those phrases, and how they added a whole new level of depth.

When I entered high school, I decided to take German, hoping to finally learn the language I'd seen over and over in scores. It opened up a linguist world. In German, I can say in one word what would take me a sequence of ungainly phrases in English. That, and the structured syntax where the second verb goes at the end of the sentence, has made comprehension so much easier and I've been able to make logical deductions when reading, writing, and listening. Now I have studied German for four years and I'm currently taking AP German, a class that has both excited and challenged me. My appreciation for the language has grown tremendously, even despite my constant confusion over noun genders and the dative case.

As I became a more proficient speaker, I began to understand and admire the depth of German culture and art, learning about how Ludwig II's love of fantastical castles influenced Wagner's music and how traditional folk songs made their way into Mahler's symphonies. I learned about the complementary and unique traditions of different regions, from more established practices like the Carnival in Köln/Cologne and Oktoberfest in Munich, and newer movements like the music festival/Wacken Open-Air, the largest of its kind.

And as I spent more time studying German, I've realized that the language, with all of its grammatical and syntactical complexities, has had an unparalleled influence on music. It's often mentioned that the three greatest composers had names starting with the letter B: Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. Each lived in a different time period, and each had an incredible influence on the evolution of classical music. And that influence isn't truly understandable without knowing German. It's impossible to separate music from German, from folk tales turning into operas and poems becoming Lieder. Learning German has helped me understand the meanings of markings on a level beyond simple translation, helping me express the composer's intentions through the music. What began as curiosity about mysterious words with far too many consonants has grown into a genuine passion for a language so similar and different to my first.

In the future, I hope to attend college to study computational biology, using algorithms and computers to model cells and genomes, finding cures for diseases. I hope to minor in German, keeping my skills fresh throughout college and I hope to one day conduct research at one of many institutions in Germany, Austria or Switzerland, only a quick Bahn-ride away from a world-class symphony. This scholarship will help me accomplish these goals by letting me focus on a top-tier education without having to worry so much about the cost. From the bottom of my heart, I am thankful to Texas German Society for enabling my study of German and this wonderful scholarship opportunity.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| How many Texas towns can you name with same name as cities in Germany? Examples: Weimar, Oldenburg, (New) Wehden, (New) Braunfels, (New) Ulm, Muenster (Münster), (New) Berlin, and Luckenbach |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Kathryn Stephens – 2<sup>nd</sup> place**  
**LaGrange High School**

My interest in the German language started when I was young. I've always known that I come from a German background, but when my aunt and uncle moved to Europe, and lived in Strasbourg, France, which is right on the border of Germany. They both learned how to speak, almost, fluent German and would always talk to me in German even though I couldn't understand.

Once I got to high school I enrolled in the German Club, and started German 1. My first year of taking German was incredible. I had such a passionate teacher who made learning the language so enjoyable. I signed up to do the German exchange program at the end of my sophomore year after developing such a love for it. The month that I spent in Germany is something that I will never forget. My host family was so kind, and they taught me so much about the language and culture. A core memory of mine was when Germany was playing Italy in the Euro Cup while I was there, and me and Lott's (my host) friends went to a watch party. Germany ended up winning, and I took pictures with so many people that I had just met. I got outside of my comfort zone so much that I ultimately decided that I would love to move to Germany after I finished with school.

Moving on to my family heritage, I have family on my mother's side who were part of the original settlers of the Cat Springs area. Their last name is Litzman, and when they settled here their last name had two N's. They dropped one end to make it sound less German. I have deep roots in German culture, and many of our traditions today still reflect that. For example, I have helped my grandmother make strudel, homemade sauerkraut, and we have a pickle on the Christmas tree. My personal favorite is helping my mom make Wiener Schnitzel because me and my sister grew up eating it at my grandma's.

**Jacob L. Bridgefarmer – 3<sup>rd</sup> place**  
**La Grange, TX**

Exploring My German Heritage Through Language and Culture From a young age, I grew up hearing stories from my father and grandfather about an ancestor named Johannes Brückenbauer. They often talked about how he was the first person in our family to leave Germany and travel to America in the early 1700s. Hearing about his journey sparked my curiosity about where my family came from and what life might have been like for him before he made that trip across the ocean.

When I had the chance to choose a language to study in school, German immediately caught my attention. Many students where I grew up naturally chose Spanish, but German felt more personal to me because it connected directly to my family history. I saw learning the language as a way to better understand my heritage and the culture my ancestors came from.

My interest in German culture grew even stronger after my family moved to La Grange when I was in seventh grade. La Grange has a strong German and Czech heritage, and seeing that influence in the community made what I was learning feel more real. Local traditions, community events, and even the history of the town helped me feel more connected to my background.

Throughout high school, I took German classes for three years. During that time, I not only learned the language but also studied German history, traditions, and culture. I also participated in my high school's polka band, where we performed traditional music at local events as well as statewide competitions. Playing polka music allowed me to experience an important part of German and Central European culture while sharing that tradition with the community.

|                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Germany has over 400 zoos and animal parks, making it the country with the most zoos in the world. |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

After my sophomore year, my German teacher gave me the opportunity to participate in a student exchange program in Germany. I spent two weeks living with a German high school student and experiencing what everyday life was like for someone my age. After that, I spent another two weeks traveling and learning more about German culture and society, making the entire experience about a month long. Seeing Germany firsthand gave me a much better understanding of the culture and the way people live there.

As part of the exchange program, the student I stayed with later came to Texas and lived with my family for two weeks. This allowed me not only to learn about German culture but also to share my own. We had many interesting conversations comparing everyday life in Texas and Germany, especially when it came to social norms and freedoms that are common here but less typical there.

Studying German and experiencing the culture firsthand has helped me feel more connected to my family's history while also giving me a broader view of the world. It has shown me how language and culture can bring people together and help us better understand each other. In many ways, learning about Germany has helped me better understand where my family came from and appreciate the journey that brought us here.

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#### NEW FENCE FOR WITTE-SCHMID CEMETERY

Thanks to Verena Aeschbacher who donated the money to have our cemetery enclosed with a new fence.



**DID YOU KNOW:** Germany is home to the world's longest castle wall, the Burghausen Castle, which stretches over 3.448 feet.



## **Bastrop County**

At our February meeting at St. Andrew Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, we gained 3 new members. Eight members attended the German Convention, where we donated 2 items to the silent auction. Our April social at the Wendish Museum was cancelled, but we had a successful June outing to Scales Cafe in McDade and the McDade Museum.

Our August meeting will feature a program by the hosts, and we are looking forward to our OctoberFest and the December social with St. Andrew's Community Christmas. I am happy to report there are no obituaries to submit.

## **Bluebonnet Chapter**

In July, Much fun was had at our Annual Ice Cream Social. We missed all that were not able to attend. Ilsa Grave was presented a \$1,500 college scholarship. Travis Koehn, former Austin County District Attorney, was our guest speaker. Lots of ice cream was consumed!

## **Fort Bend Chapter**



On Tuesday, April 21, 2026, the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German society enjoyed a delicious German meal of wiener schnitzel, red cabbage, noodles, homemade bread, Black Forest Cake, iced tea, & coffee prepared and served by the students at Needville High School culinary arts class.

Pictured are:

Sitting: Barbara Cooper, guest Linda Phillips, Carol Niemann, Cathy Hanzik  
Middle Row: Patsye Roesler, Linda Harris, guest Mary Grace Reeh, guest Peggy Schulin  
Back Row: Guest Sandra Meuth, Lynn Roesler,

Erna Thielemann, Clarence Thielemann, Loyce Anderson, guest Vivian Schultz, Helen Altimore, Delbert Niemann, Dr. Ed Geiger, & Chef Sarah Pugh

On July 27, 2026, the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society met at the Albert George Library Meeting Room and enjoyed Root Beer Floats while looking at pictures from Dr. Edwin Geiger's trip from the Rhine River Cruise. Dr Geiger is one of our members. Ten members were present. This is our annual "travel to Germany without leaving Fort Bend County" ice cream social.

Here is some information that we learned while listening to Dr. Geiger and looking at his pictures:

"The Rhine River starts in Austria, winds its way across Switzerland and then turns north along the western side of Germany, eventually dumping into the Baltic Sea. The Rhine River is a historic river. In 9 BC, the Romans attempted to conquer the Germanic tribes living east of the Rhine. The Roman army, while very good at fighting on an open plain, was not good at fighting in the heavily forested region of Germany at those times. The result of this was that the Rhine River became a permanent part of the northern border of the Roman Empire, and thus entered the history books. Later the Rhine River became a major trade route for luxury goods, coming over the Alps from Renaissance Italy. Today it is still a major route for goods moving through central Europe.

The cruise started in Basel, Switzerland, where the Rhine River becomes navigable. Cities visited were Briesech, Strasbourg, Mannheim, Heidelberg, Bernkastel, Koblenz, Remick, Cochem, Aiken, and Cologne. Some of the sites included the villages of the Black Forest, Vogtsbaue Museum, Rhine Gorge, Mouse Tower, the legend of Lorelei, an old fort from Teutonic Knights, Mosel River, Luxembourg, Eltz Castle, and the Cologne Cathedral."

Everyone enjoyed the presentation. Thank you, Dr. Geiger for sharing.

### **Katy Tri-County Chapter**



On February 5, 2026, we met at Luby's cafeteria for dinner and fellowship

On March 30, 2026, the Katy-Tri County Chapter visited the Bible Seminary in Katy to attend the informative exhibit of the Shroud of Turin ("A cloth wrapped in mystery"). It is the most studied artifact in human history.



On Thursday, May 14, 2026, the Katy-Tri County chapter visited the Cowboy History Museum in Rosenberg.

On Friday, June 26, 2026, ten members met at Luby's Cafeteria for a business meeting and fellowship. We had a discussion about future meetings of the club.

**DID YOU KNOW:** Germany is the birthplace of modern football (soccer), and the German national team is one of the most successful in history, having won four World Cup titles.

## North Harris County

January 26, 2026 Our meeting was cancelled due to potentially icy conditions.

March 23, 2026

For our January 2026 meeting, we watched the video "Contest of the cathedrals – the Romanesque Period." Here is a description of video: Why did Christians start building cathedrals reaching to the sky 1000 years ago? Was it to demonstrate earthly power, or an attempt to be close to God? Whatever the reason, the resulting architecture still fascinates us today. The Romanesque period still harbors many unsolved mysteries. For example, what led people at the turn of the millennium to build churches that towered into the sky, triggering competition among cities over cathedral size and splendor? This cathedral obsession is illustrated by the examples in Mainz, Worms and Speyer.

In St. John's Church in Mainz, a sarcophagus is opened after being sealed for 1,000 years. It's the resting place of Archbishop Erkanbald, who built Mainz Cathedral, the largest religious building in the West at the time. It was hoped the cathedral would turn Mainz into a second Rome, promoting its archbishop to pope's deputy. A short time later, King Conrad constructed a cathedral in Speyer, a burial place for his Salian dynasty. Its scope would befit the fact that God had installed the Salians as an imperial dynasty and therefore as supreme rulers of the world. Inevitably, there were conflicts between rulers and men of the church. But in Worms, another group established itself in the 12th Century quest for power: the emerging bourgeoisie. A new era began, in which the rigid power structures of the Romanesque period, reflected in its massive buildings, slowly broke down. As they did so, they left space for a new architectural style that honored openness and light: the Gothic.

May 25, 2026

For our May 2026 we had the pleasure of hosting Steve Baird, director of the Klein Independent School District Historical Foundation and Wunderlich Farm Interactive History Museum. Steve graduated from Texas Tech University in 1997 with a BA in Anthropology. After working as an archaeologist for a few years, he went back and got his Masters in Archaeology and Heritage Management from the University of Leicester. Steve worked as an archaeologist for many various firms across the state of Texas and eventually decided to hang up his trowel in order to stay home with his growing family. He went back and got his teacher certification and started teaching 4th grade for Klein Independent School District. With his passion for history he received the Texas History Teacher (4th grade) of the year in 2011 presented by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT). After 8 years in the classroom he was presented with the opportunity to take over the program at the Klein, Texas Museum/Wunderlich Farm as the Living History Educator and Director of the Klein Historical Foundation. He has been running that program for 14 years. Steve lives in Klein, TX with his wife Kasie. He has three sons and two daughters. Nestled in Northwest Harris County, Wunderlich Farm offers a unique opportunity to experience a quiet oasis that showcases the rural heritage of the early Klein community and families is preserved. The Wunderlich family was part of a large number of German families who settled in the Klein area in the last half of the 1800s. Political conditions in Germany were unsettled, land there was scarce, and the United States offered a new beginning. Here new immigrants found freedom and vast open spaces. In 1995, the Klein Historical Foundation converted the property into a museum to portray the way of life in Klein, Texas in the 1890-1925 era. With many furnished historical homes on the proper plenty of places to explore and take a step back in time

July 2026

No meeting was held in July 2026.

## Fredericksburg

Fredericksburg is a famous historic city in Texas, founded by German immigrants on May 8, 1846. A group called the *Adelsverein* (Society for the Protection of German Immigrants) brought the settlers to Texas. The town was named after Prince Frederick of Prussia. Fredericksburg is the official sister city of Montabaur, Germany.

Early settlers spoke a unique dialect called Texas German, and many historic Sunday houses and European-style buildings still stand.

Following typical German traditions, the town hosts a large annual Oktoberfest celebration.

One of the most famous citizens of Fredericksburg was Chester W. Nimitz, a German Texan, born on 24 February 1885, in Fredericksburg, where his grandfather's hotel is now the National Museum of the Pacific War. He was significantly influenced by his German-born paternal grandfather, a former seaman in the German Merchant Marine, who taught Nimitz, "the sea-like life itself-is a stern taskmaster...". His grandfather had become a Texas Ranger in the Texas Mounted Volunteers in 1851 and later served as captain of the Gillespie Rifles Company of the Confederate States Army during the civil war.

Originally, Nimitz applied to West Point, but no appointments were available. A US Representative told Nimitz that he had one appointment available for the United States Naval Academy. Nimitz graduated with distinction on 30 January 1905, seventh in a class of 114.

Nimitz spoke fluent German and studied engines at the Maschinenfabrik-Augsburg-Nürnberg diesel engine plants in Nuremberg, Germany, and Ghent, Belgium.



National Museum of the Pacific War



Midshipman 1/C Nimitz,  
*circa 1905*