



Volume XXI, Issue 2
Fall 2024

Texas German Society

Organized September 6, 1983 ■ Witte-Schmid Haus Museum
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[Website: www.texasgermansociety.org](http://www.texasgermansociety.org)

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Hello to my Dear Members of the “TGS” Texas German Society!

It’s hard to believe that the year 2024 goes slowly to an end. And all our chapters are still standing strong, thanks to all our dear members! Looking back on this year, I’m so blessed to be surrounded by so many wonderful people with their amazing gifts and talents. To organize & hosting an unforgettable Convention in Needville this year, with talented musicians, the many creative hands to set up & decorate our events, the so many volunteers to take care of the hospitality & making sure that all areas are clean & safe!

With this I like to say: Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a wonderful Happy New Year!

Bis zum naechsten Wiedersehen
Eure Präsidentin
Marion McClinton

Registration Form

2025 Texas German Society State Convention

Hosted by the TGS Executive Board/Chapters

At St. John’s Lutheran Church, 520 N. Holland St., Bellville, Tx. 77418

April 12, 2025

Registration: Postmarked by April 1, 2025 - \$20.00 (After April 1st and at Door, \$25.00)

(Please print the name / names wanted on name tag – **Please print, no cursive**)

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Chapter or indicate if visitor: _____

Please indicate:

_____ Number of people by April 1, 2025 X \$20.00 = _____ amount enclosed

_____ Number of people after April 1, 2025 x \$25.00 = _____ amount enclosed

OPTIONAL DONATION TO HELP DEFRAY COST OF CONVENTION _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED -----

Make checks payable to: TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY

Return this form and check or money order to: PEGGY SCHULIN, TGS SECRETARY

1404 BAIRD AVE. KATY, TEXAS 77493

Phone: 713-582-5210 Email: peggyschulin@comcast.net

Please make copies of this form for all members. Families with last name and address can use same form but please list first names separate for name tags.

****Please check here if you prefer VEGAN OPTION for Lunch (sides only) and number _____ x # _____**

2025 Texas German Society State Convention

Vendor Exhibitor Rules

Date: Saturday, April 12, 2025

Place: ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

520 N. HOLLAND ST.

BELLVILLE, TEXAS 77418

(Sponsored by the TGS Executive Board and Chapters)

Cost of space is \$25.00 paid in advance for profit booths. Non-profits booth rental is FREE.

Please make check payable to **THE TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY** and mail check and application to: PEGGY SCHULIN 1404 BAIRD AVE. KATY, TEXAS 77493. For questions you may call Peggy at 713-582-5210 or email peggyschulin@comcast.net.

1. Booth size is approximately 10' X 10'
2. Booth site will be assigned inside convention hall and each exhibitor will be provided with one (1) table (3'x 8') and two (2) chairs. Vendors are welcome to bring their own small table. 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 a.m.
4. Limited electrical outlets are available. Please let us know if you need electricity for your booth, and must be for reasonable use. First come, first serve, and may affect the booth location. Please bring an extension cord (20') as plugs may be a distance away.
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 15, 2025**
7. A catered meal will be available at lunch for \$10.00 per person (payable in advance).
8. Please write one check for cost of booth and lunch(es)
9. **NO REFUND FOR CANCELLATION AFTER APRIL 1, 2025, OR NO SHOW AT EVENT.**

Texas German Society State Convention

Saturday, April 12, 2025

St. John's Lutheran Church 520 N. Holland St. Bellville, Texas 77418

Booth Application – Please print, no cursive

Due March 15, 2025

Booth Name _____

Profit _____ (\$25.00) Non-profit _____ (no charge for booth)

Lunch = \$10.00 per person x _____ of people = \$ _____

Applicant's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____ Cell _____

E-mail _____

Items to be sold _____

Signed Agreement

I hereby release The Texas German Society of any responsibility for loss, theft, or damage to any work shown at the 2025 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 2025 convention.

I Also agree NO REFUND for cancellation after APRIL 1, 2025, OR NO SHOW AT EVENT

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(Mail application and check made payable to **THE TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY** to

Peggy Schulin, 1404 Baird Ave., Katy, Texas 77493)

TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY
Minutes of the Texas German Society State Convention
Saturday, April 6, 2024
St. Michael's Catholic Church, Needville, Texas

"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 6, 2024, in Needville, Texas, at St. Michael's Catholic Church Family Life Center, hosted by the Ft. Bend County Chapter.

The Convention was opened by Cathy Hanzik, President of the Ft. Bend County Chapter. Deacon Brady Williams, Sr. of St. Michael's Church, opened the Convention with a prayer. The American and Texas flags were presented by Boy Scout Troop 129 of Needville who led the pledges. We were also welcomed by Needville Mayor Chad Nesvabda, P. E.

TGs Director Robert Herridge presented the names of the TGS members who had passed away in 2023. A candle was to remain burning in their memory during the Convention.

Erika Isham, Ft. Bend County Museum Education and Engagement Coordinator, presented a talk entitled "German Influence in Fort Bend County."

Another program on "Why Was There the Great German Migration to the United States" was presented by Dr. Edwin Geiger, Ph.D.

Barbara Ortwein, German/English Author, talked on her historical fiction trilogy about the immigration of the Germans in the early 1800's.

Scholarship Chairperson, Robert Herridge, presented the names of the winners of the Scholarship Essay contest. They are:

\$1500.00 Arturo Pedraza Flores, Tompkins High School, Katy ISD

\$1000.00 Asmita Subash, Clements High School, Ft. Bend ISD

\$750.00 Jill Elizabeth Newton, LaGrange High School, LaGrange

\$750.00 (3rd place tie) Linsey Bledsoe, Whitney High School, Whitney, Tx.

Arturo Flores and his parents and teacher, Heinze Schmidt, were present. Arturo read his interesting essay to the Convention.

Entertainment was provided by "the Happy Musicians Band' from Needville.

Pg. 2, April 6, 2024 convention minutes

An annual business meeting was held at the end of the day's programs. TGS 1st Vice President, Sandy Shuff, called the meeting to order. There was a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the last Convention held on April 22, 2023, by Christine Womack and seconded by Keith Williams. The motion carried.

TGS Treasurer, Aaron Schindewolf gave the financial report for March 31, 2024, as follows:

Amegy Bank, State Checking \$18,240.42 State CD \$11,039.70

Amegy Bank, Scholarship Checking \$7,423.87 Scholarship CD \$9,809.56

Rodney Koenig made a motion to accept the treasurer's report as given and Keith Williams seconded. The motion carried. This report is available for audit along with details of expenses and income. At the time of the Convention, there were 325 paid members and 12 Chapters.

Museum Commission Treasurer Georgianne Schmid sent her report to be read by Secretary Peggy Schulin. As of March 31, 2024, the Witte-Schmid Haus Museum balance in a checking account in Industry State Bank was \$13,840.02. A CD in the same bank on March 31, 2024, was \$13,283.40. The Museum accepts donations and memorials at P O Box 233, Industry, Texas 78944-0233.

Aaron Schindewolf read the Museum Commission member, Patrick Schmid's update on recent maintenance and repairs. Preservation Texas has been contacted with Museum updates and have provided several organizations that have grant funds available. Applications for a grant will be submitted later in the year by the Commission members.

Webmaster Anthony Stott reported the website is up and current. Access is www.texasgermansociety.org

Reporter Editor, Linda Phillips, asked for articles and pictures to be sent to her at any time of the year. Plans are for 2 Reporter editions each year. She reminded members to contact Peggy or herself if they have paid dues and are not able to receive their Reporter.

New Business:

TGs Secretary Peggy Schulin read the list of Nominees for the 2024 Executive Board Officers and Directors:

President Marion McClinton Harris County Chapter
1st Vice Pres Sandy Shuff Bluebonnet Chapter
2nd Vice President Jarel Whitney Harris County Chapter
Secretary Peggy Schulin Katy Tri-Co and President's Chapter
Treasurer Aaron Schindewolf North Harris Co. Chapter
Reporter Editor Linda Phillips Katy Tri-Co Chapter
Webmaster Anthony Stott President's Chapter

Pg. 3. April 6, 2024, convention minutes

2-year Director Mannie Fritsch-Schmid Fayette Co. Chapter
2-year Director Robert Herridge Bluebonnet and President's Chapters
2-year Director Herbert Gerken President's Chapter
2-year Directors having 1 year left on their term are:
Cathy Hanzik from Ft. Bend Co. Chapter
Patrick Schmid from Bluebonnet Chapter
Lifetime Director is Flora von Roeder, Harris Co. Chapter

There were no nominations from the floor. Linda Phillips made a motion to accept the nominees presented and Kathryn Haluska seconded. The motion carried with none opposed and the nominees were elected to serve. Immediately following, Rodney Koenig of Harris Co. Chapter and TGS Founding member installed the officers. In addressing the subject of the 2025 State Convention, Vice-President Sandy Shuff invited the chapter presidents in attendance to meet with her at the end of the Convention to get their ideas for the next event. Sandy Shuff then did the Roll Call of the 12 chapters to acknowledge those chapters present for the day. Ft. Bend Co. Chapter President, Cathy Hanzik, reported 95 registered for the convention and 9 walk-ins came for the day. There being no further business, Linda Phillips made a motion to adjourn and Keith Williams seconded. The motion carried and the business meeting was closed.

Respectively Submitted,

Peggy Schulin, TGS Secretary



Officers and Directors for 2024
Aaron Schindewolf, Treasurer; Anthony Stott, Webmaster; Sandy Shuff, 1st Vice President; Peggy Schulin, Secretary; Linda Phillips, Reporter Editor; Robert Herridge, 2-year Director; Cathy Hanzik, Director; Herbert Gerken, Director.
Not Shown, Marion McClinton, President; Jarel Whitney, 2nd Vice President. Mannie Fritsch-Schmid, and Patrick Schmid, Directors.

REPORT OF THE TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY 41ST CONVENTION, APRIL 6, 2024

By Linda Phillips

The Convention was opened by Cathy Hanzik, President of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society. President Marion McClinton was unable to attend due to a family emergency.

The invocation was by Deacon Brady Williams, Sr. of St. Michael's Catholic Church. The flag ceremony with American and Texas flags was presented by the Boy Scout Troop 129 of Needville. Cathy Hanzik led the group in singing "The Star Spangled Banner" and "Texas, Our Texas". The Mayor of Needville, Chad Nesvabda, P.E. welcomed the convention and gave brief history about the town of Needville.

TGS Director Robert Herridge read 18 names of the TGS members who had passed away in 2023. A candle was lit and remained burning in their memory during the Convention.

The speakers presented very interesting information. The first speaker was Erika Isham, Education and Engagement Coordinator from Fort Bend County Museum. The topic was "German Prisoners of War, The Texas POW Experience". She provided pictures and documentation which were very informative.

The second speaker was Dr. Edwin Geiger, PhD, a Fort Bend Chapter member whose topic was "Why Was There the Great German Migration to the United States".

The final speaker was Barbara Ortwein, German/English Author, who presented a historical fiction trilogy about the immigration of the Germans in the early 1800's. Not only did she speak but entertained us with several songs.

Robert Herridge presented the very deserving first-place scholarship winner, Arturo Pedraza Flores, whose parents and high school German teacher were also present. There was also a second-place winner and two third place winners who were not in attendance. Please see their essays in this newsletter.

At noon a very delicious meal was provided and as we ate lunch, we were entertained by "The Happy Musicians Band".

A business meeting followed lunch where the officers for 2024 were installed by Rodney Koenig, Charter member of TGS.

There were many door prizes presented during the convention.





TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY
SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CELL PHONE # _____ HOME PHONE # _____

NAME OF FATHER _____ ADDRESS _____

NAME OF MOTHER _____ ADDRESS _____

Are you currently employed? _____ Name of employer _____

Do you plan to work while attending college? _____

What is your educational objective? _____

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Extracurricular Activities

Offices held in organizations, clubs

Special Honors and Awards _____

On a separate sheet of paper, please explain in a HANDWRITTEN statement how the Scholarship will help you achieve your educational goals. Please explain any extenuating circumstances which might add to your educational costs.

YOUR APPLICATION WILL NOT BE PROCESSED WITHOUT THIS STATEMENT.



TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES

This Scholarship is given by the Texas German Society.

The recipient shall be a Texas high school or Home School senior and is planning to attend college.

The purpose of the Texas German Society is to preserve and promote our German-Texan heritage, culture, and language.

1. Applicant must be a graduating high school senior and have passed all university/college admission requirements.
2. Copy of the seventh semester high school transcript must be submitted with completed application.
3. Applicant must submit an essay of at least 300 words written in the English language on the topic "My Interest in the German Language, Culture, and my German Ancestry". In addition, on a separate page, we require that you briefly demonstrate your ability to write in the German language a 30 to 50 word profile of yourself.
4. This scholarship is awarded for the academic year immediately following high school graduation. (Must be used during this year) for two long terms (fall and spring) as a full-time (12 or more semester hours) student.
5. The amount of the scholarships is 1st place \$1,500.00, 2nd place \$1000.00, and 3rd place \$750.00
6. The application deadline is **MARCH 10, 2025**

MAIL OR EMAIL COMPLETED PAPERWORK TO:

ROBERT HERRIDGE robert1@herridgeconsulting.com
5462 HWY. 159 W.
BELLVILLE, TEXAS 77418
(713)582-2461



Pictured with Robert Herridge, Scholarship Chair;
1st place Scholarship winner: Arturo Pedraza Flores with
his parents.

We sent out invitations to the German language teachers to have their students enter the essay contest for our Scholarship awards. Here are the winners of the 2024 scholarships:

\$1500.00	ARTURO PEDRAZA FLORES	TOMPKINS HIGH SCHOOL, KATY, TX
\$1000.00	ASMITA SUBASH	CLEMENTS HIGH SCHOOL, SUGARLAND, TX
\$ 750.00	ELIZABETH NEWTON (TIE)	LA GRANGE HIGH SCHOOL, LA GRANGE, TX
\$ 750.00	LINSEY BLEDSOE (TIE)	WHITNEY HIGH SCHOOL, WHITNEY, TX

Robert Herridge, Scholarship Chair

Volunteer judges were Carolyn Zaskoda, Ute Keeton, Judge Karl Micklitz, Dr. Herbert Schumann.

Arturo Pedraza Flores - First Place Winner

I am a proud German learner; my genuine love for learning a foreign language and the people that made up the class were what drove me to German every day. Learning a foreign language is getting a key that opens up the door to experiencing and being part of different cultures and communities (keyword: experiencing and being part of!). By my third year of learning German, I had become sophisticated with my German knowledge and had been applauded numerous times by my peers for having great German, but there was still something missing: experiencing German culture and language for myself. Being knowledgeable over a culture is impressive, but to truly experience this culture, I had to immerse myself with a trip to Germany. As it turns out, my German class offered the National German Exam every year that, if done well, would open the gateway to the possibility of winning a scholarship to go to Germany and get both a study trip and a very brief foreign exchange stay in Germany. I immediately went after this opportunity after realizing that I had no preset plans for the Summer of 2023 (which was when the program took place), and began to work on my German vocabulary, grammar, and the like. Given my preparations and my enthusiasm to go, I crushed both the National German Exam and the other assessments that I had to take to obtain the scholarship, but it was not over yet. I had to face another obstacle: my parents. My parents were initially refusing to let me go, and even after they did eventually allow me to do so, they would be continuing to dissuade me from going to Germany given the potential dangers and risks that being in such a faraway land would have wrought. Nevertheless, I stuck to my gut and said I would go; I was in good hands--the organizer of the trip was after all the government of Germany -- and knew that this was going to be a great opportunity for me to learn something new. What exactly I was going to learn did not dawn upon me, but once I got there, I was in no way let down. For two weeks in the study-trip phase of the trip, I ventured across a foreign country and bathed in its very friendly atmosphere. I visited very iconic places including Munich, the Zugspitze, Cologne, Bonn, Kassel, and Berlin. This part of my trip really opened my eyes to the endless opportunities my learning of German offered me, and it improved my German skills by a lot! Furthermore, the bustling cities gave me a very good idea of what life was like over there and I learned some of the more basic parts of German culture, but the best was yet to come. I was assigned to a foreign exchange program for another two weeks in a very small town called Hessisch-Lichtenau. At first, I did not seem to be too amused by the prospect of going to a small town when other groups went to much bigger cities such as Hamburg or Salzburg, but little did I know then what I would have seen. I was transported to a place only imaginable by the average person back in my hometown. I looked around to see the luscious rolling hills of rural Germany, dotted with rustic houses here and there. I saw kids going about their day in the streets, I saw school comradeship that was unheard of in the United States. It felt to me almost as if I had, before my excursion to Germany, never lived life properly--or was missing the beauty of living. I was humbled--a humble town humbled me. But that was just looking at everything. In these two weeks, I lived with a guest family that hosted my study in their nearby school, and it was far from a vacation. I got to work in the house by doing the usual--cleaning tables, washing dishes, ironing clothes--and the unusual--picking cherries from a cherry tree, taking a commute to go to a supermarket to buy goods, and of course going to a German school. It wasn't just work, though. I tried foodstuffs I never tried before (which I know sounds weird, but included cake and strawberries!), lived life with a German family in a small town, did things I would never have imagined myself doing (horseback riding!), went on hikes, swam in nearby lakes, and transformed my thoughts and behaviors to show me perspectives of life bigger than myself. To this day I still remember fondly the companionship and embracing something bigger than just yourself--humanity. Living is not just about receiving, but rather taking and giving back. I learned how to live life authentically and with purpose--I learned to enjoy the small things and yet continue to strive for more in life! It is for this reason that I became enamored with German culture and persisted with my studies in German. It is only now, however, that I look at the distinct German-Texan culture with much respect and care; If I was amazed with German culture, then German-Texan culture should not be any different! I indeed wrote this year a

research paper on German-Texan cultures and its humble beginnings, and I began to think to myself that this distinct culture should be protected and carried on if we want to continue having pleasantly surprising ways of living be carried on into future generations. It is for this reason that I wish to ensure that I use my future career as a chemical engineer (working in power plants) to also create community projects or improvements all throughout Texas--including the distinct German-Texan communities of Texas. Not only does my knowledge in German and German culture encourage me to do these deeds for these communities, but it may also make my job easier especially if I have many German-speaking colleagues!

The 30-50 word profile of me in German is in the page that follows.

Ich bin eine Person, die sich immer um die Zukunft kümmert. Ich glaube mit Ernst, dass wir als Menschen etwas größer als wir schaffen sollten und deswegen möchte ich eine Firma gründen, die Atomenergie versorgt. Ich glaube, dass Atomenergie unserer Umwelt und der Menschlichkeit helfen kann.

Asmita Subash, Second Place Winner

My Interest in the German Language, Culture, and My German Ancestry

My interest in the German language and culture began when I initially considered taking German due to Germany's advancements in engineering and automotive industries. I took the class and got hooked. I am very interested in linguistics and love learning different language dynamics. German grammar, when it comes to cases, is very similar to Tamil. However, its very unique when it comes to its sentence structure. I further explored the German language and culture through the club, competitions, GNHS, and personal interests. I didn't stop at that, I took it upon myself to share my German interest with others so that they also can unveil the beauty of German culture and of the German language.

I have been very involved with the German club since freshman year. I saw the upperclassmen officers having conversations in German, and it was a big inspiration for me to continue German. Junior year, I was voted in as German Club Vice President. As vice president, I was in contact with the other schools to plan our upcoming events and documented all of our meetings to make the club album. Some things we planned and organized in the German club were bake-offs against other German programs in our district. We had grill nights for Oktoberfest and Maifest in Memorial Park with other German programs. On those grill nights, we had many of our memorable moments where we played very competitive scavenger hunt games, Deutchies (paper cup awards), GNHS induction, Viking chess, and a lot of food. I wanted to be the inspiration the upperclassmen officers were to me, so as the officer team, our goal was to look cool and get everyone involved as much as possible. We also had meetings within our German program where we held movie nights, white elephants, German Wordle, Brent das Brot watch meetings, etc. One memorable movie we watched was Run Lola Run solely because of the amount we laughed throughout the movie and the inside jokes created within our German program because of it.

My influence extended past my peers, but also to middle schools. I was inducted into GNHS my junior year. As members, one of our responsibilities was to participate in a German boot camp called SPARK for middle schoolers. We held five sessions where we taught German using lesson plans we created ourselves. After SPARK, my German teacher had specifically emailed only my parents exemplifying my positive attitude towards the students and complimenting my excellent lesson plan, which felt very rewarding. In my senior year, we reorganized the officer roles according to our situation of having no one to induct into GNHS. I was voted to become a co-president of GNHS. This year, we put in a lot of effort to improve the previous lesson plans,

taking last year's feedback into account. We also wanted to have face-to-face sessions this year, so recruiting a middle school sponsor required early planning and convincing. Thankfully, I was able to convince my middle school English teacher to sponsor SPARK, and we went all out advertising our SPARK program with the help of the middle school's PALs program. We held a session every Monday for five weeks and had at least 10+ students consistently coming to every meeting. As presidents, we were there at each session, getting to know our students, along with a different GNHS member at each meeting to teach. I didn't realize the impact I had on them until I met them again at a middle-course election recruiting event. I said "Hallo," and they recognized me immediately. I realized that my efforts of becoming that one cool upperclassman worked when they responded back with "Guten morgen". They told me that they'd been learning more German through Duolingo and were very proud to share their progress with me.

A recent interest I've developed is listening to German music. My teacher played "Oft Gefragt" in class, and I added it to my playlist. One day, I searched for the song and played it on Spotify, which started a radio of similar songs. I realized I actually liked many of the songs that played, so I started compiling a playlist of songs I liked. My favorite artist right now is Ness; I practically know all of her songs, and my favorite song is "Ist mir egal". I recommended this song to everyone in my German class and take any chance to play it during club meetings. If you're curious about my Spotify playlist, search "Deutsch Musik," and the first song should be "Wenn sie tanzt" by Max Giesinger!

I also love to cook and have started to cook German dishes in my free time. Some things I've made include Apfelkuchen (apple cake), Potthucke (German potato cake), Pretzel, Schnitzel (thinly breaded and fried chicken), Wurst, and more. I make these dishes and then add other dishes with it making an Indian fusion so that I can get some rice in the dish.

As for Germany's role in my future. It played a big role in what college I chose to go to. I plan on majoring in Mechanical engineering at Texas A&M. Not only do they have a really good engineering program but they also have a very active German organization. Germany has a very strong foundation in Mechanical engineering, and I would like to study abroad for a year at one of Germany's top colleges, the Technical University of Munich. I enjoyed learning German and after taking it for 4 years I don't plan on just forgetting in an instant. I don't want to study abroad or transfer to a German college until my third year. I first want to get used to being independent and living alone before moving countries away from my family. But within these two years, I plan on joining Texas A&M's German organization. Through this, I can meet other Germans and German learners to keep practicing German. After stalking a bit of the organization's social media, I found that they have weekly "Kafeestunde" where everyone meets up to have coffee with activities and just talk in German. I look forward to this and definitely will be attending most if not all of the meetings. These weekly meetings can also ensure that I don't forget German or lose touch with the culture or language. This might end up being like my high school German club, a place where I found some of my closest friends.

German language a 30 to 50-word profile of yourself.

Hallo! Ich bin Asmita Subash. Ich bin von allem begeistert, was ich macht, weil ich liebe, was ich macht. Ich habe eine ständige Motivation, die mich antreibt, mein Bestes zu geben. Diese Leidenschaft erlauben mich täglich selbst herauszufordern und neue Fähigkeiten lernen, die mir geholfen haben, besser zu werden.

Jill Newton, Third Place Winner (Tie)

TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ESSAY

Ever since delving into German culture and language, I've found myself deeply intrigued. I began learning the language my freshman year of high school and have since served as Secretary and President of the German Club, traveled to Germany through the GAPP exchange program, and continued to study the language throughout high school. These experiences have not only nurtured my interest in the German language and culture but also sparked a connection to my distant yet significant German ancestry.

Upon entering the German class my freshman year, I didn't know what to expect. However, I soon came to realize that the language and culture was to become part of my everyday life at school. I have enjoyed learning about the different traditions during all of the important holidays such as Nikolaus Tag, Koeln Karneval, Dreikönigstag, Weihnachten, and even more. My teacher, Frau Faske, has worked hard to ensure that our class becomes comfortable with German culture through experiencing it first-hand. When the Germans are celebrating these holidays, our class is too. As we would advance in German from year to year, Frau Faske would gradually increase the amount she spoke to us in German with the expectation we would understand her. Because of our diligence and dedication to the class, we are all able to hold a conversation in German. This time of being surrounded and engaged in the language and culture of Germany has opened my eyes to the uniqueness of the country as a whole.

During the summer after my sophomore year, I gained a wider grasp of the culture, through traveling to Germany for one month with GAPP, a German exchange program. This allowed me to converse daily in German, which increased my ability to understand what is being said to me. Engaging in these German conversations expanded my proficiency, even leading to dreams in the language and widened my range of topics that I could discuss. My cultural knowledge also dramatically increased during the trip by having the chance to try new foods, visit historical museums, and simply walk around the cities we visited such as Berlin, Koeln, and Hamburg. Our group also had the amazing opportunity to visit a school and sit in on lectures as well as speak with the students about German and American differences and similarities. Talking with students our age helped us to better understand the true individuality of Germany and the way citizens live. As I came to realize the differences in our cultures, both big and small, it increased my interest in the culture and language.

My involvement with the German class and Club has only fueled my passion further. Taking on roles like Secretary and now President has allowed me to actively shape and contribute to our community. What began as a mere interest has evolved into a profound connection, driving me to pursue not just physical involvement, but also deeper engagement with the language, culture, and heritage of Germany.

TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY: GERMAN LANGUAGE ESSAY

Mein Name ist Jill Newton und ich bin achtzehn Jahre alt. Ich wohne in La Grange, Texas und ich bin eine Oberstufenschülerin der La Grange High School. Ich werde an die Texas A&M University gehen und einen Abschluss in Personalentwicklung machen, denn ich mag es, andere Menschen zu führen.

Linsey Bledsoe, Third Place Winner (Tie)

Over the past four years, I have developed a passion for German culture, as it has provided me with many experiences that have shaped me into the person that I am today. I have discovered my love for German foods and German music, while also learning traditional German folk dances and the German language, in which I have been studying for four years. While discovering these aspects of German culture, it has brought me closer to people within the German community and has given me the opportunity to gain more knowledge of the traditions within Germany and the impact that German culture has within the state of Texas.

Throughout high school, my school's German Club has been the organization that I have cherished the most. I have participated in the Whitney High School German Club for four years, and I am serving as the German Club Vice President and the captain of the Whitney High School German Folk Dance team during my senior year. Through these positions, I motivate students to be more involved in our program by encouraging them to participate in fundraisers and German-related events, which helps spread German culture throughout our community. Some of these activities include selling calendars to raise money for our German program and attending our local Pioneer Days, where we performed a folk dance routine for our community and rode on a German Club float during our annual community parade. We have also taken our club to events like Westfest, Muenster Oktoberfest, Tomball German Heritage Festival, Pilot Point Oktoberfest, Scarborough Fair, Tulsa Oktoberfest, Baylor Oktobearfest, and the Dallas Arboretum, where we have performed and connected with many people who have made lasting impacts on the lives of our German Club students. The Whitney High School German Club has benefited me through these experiences by allowing me to have a positive environment where I can share my passion for German culture with the people of central Texas.

I also volunteer at the ACE program, which is an after-school program for 3rd-5th graders, in which they learn about German culture and traditions. They are also taught basic folk dances, which they perform for the community as well. I help these kids with crafts, teach them new folk dances, and occasionally perform songs for them, allowing them to sing along to simple German tunes. My folk dance team and I also perform for these students every year to encourage them to participate in German-related activities within the community.

Over the last four years, I have competed in the Texas German State Contest. Through this contest, I have placed in a variety of categories including puppet show, contemporary music, folk dance, einzeltanz, photography, scavenger hunt, and club album. Through these events, I have used the arts of dance, music, and puppetry to win many prestigious awards throughout my high school career. These events also helped me improve my fluency in German and has allowed me to gain a better insight into the history of German culture. I also have won many scholarships through this program, including the Mary-El-Beheri Scholarship in 2024, and the Gail Cope Scholarship in 2023.

Throughout high school, I have grown to love the German language, and I plan on utilizing all the knowledge that I have acquired over the past four years to continue to incorporate German culture and traditions into my everyday life. I plan to use my knowledge of the German language in order to communicate more efficiently with German speakers at multiple different events, and I am optimistic that I will continue to use my knowledge of German culture to endorse German traditions throughout the state of Texas.

Mein Profil:

Ich bin Linsey Bledsoe und gehe in die Whitney Schule, wo ich schon vier Jahre Deutsch lerne. Mit meiner Tanzgruppe nehme ich an vielen deutschen Volksfesten teil. In Zukunft will ich Deutsch als Doppel Hauptfach oder Nebenfach studieren, denn ich möchte mehr über die deutsche Kultur und Sprache lernen.

GERMAN-AMERICAN DAY

This year we celebrated the “German-American Day”, (that is a holiday on October 6th) at the Witte Schmid Museum, Das Haus, on the 10/05/24

We had one dining room table set up in the German flag colors and the other one in American colors. After President Marion McClinton opened the ceremony and shared some interesting facts that the Germans brought to America, we took a self-tour in this beautiful Museum. The tables were filled with plenty yummy cookies, kolaches, cheese & pretzels and coffee, ice tea and water. We had live music with a “Horn” & German background music. Everyone socialized with old and new friends. We even had a ramp, if someone needed. There were about 45 in attendance. It was so wonderful, that we all decided to do it next year again!





TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

2:00 P. M. SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8. 2024

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.

.....
FYI: The Witte-Schmid Haus Museum (**For Memorials and Donations**) now has a **Post Office Box.**

**Witte-Schmid Haus Museum
P. O. Box 233
Industry, TX 78944-0233**

Physical - GPS Address:
2650 Witte-Schmid Rd
New Ulm, TX

.....

WITTE-SCHMID HAUS MUSEUM COMMISSION
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BASTROP COUNTY

October 2024 - The Bastrop County German Club meets every other month with a business meeting. In between months are for social outings, usually to a place of interest such as the Czech Museum in LaGrange or eating out. Sometimes we have a games night where "chickenfoot" and 42 are played.

Our president, Mikki Meyer, often shares information on the hardships experienced in Germany and the improved, but still hard work, involved while getting settled here in America.

At our October meeting, everyone brought German themed foods. There were even some dishes presented in the cast iron cookware that the food was cooked in, just as in the German kitchen of olden times.

Rosie Schulz, Secretary

BLUEBONNET

March 2024 - The Bluebonnet Chapter of Texas German Society met Sunday, March 17, 2024 at Concordia Hall in Bellville. President Sandy Schuff called the meeting together at 3:15 pm with 15 members present and the purpose of meeting is continuing our German heritage. Vice President Gil Franke led the pledge. Secretary Marie Herridge read the minutes from the last meeting and Shirley Hoff and second by Art Remmert. Motion carried. No treasurer's report. No cheer's report.

Art said there are 7 flag boxes around Bellville at the following locations – Austin County Tax Office, ACSB, FNB, Justice department, Police station, American Legion and Danny's Automotive for anyone to bring flags to be disposed of properly.

Gil Franke gave a book recommendation on German Spirit for Texas Freedom available at The Story Peddler \$15. Barbara Ormon author has a German trilogy and will be at The Story Peddler April 10 1-3 pm. She is also a speaker at State convention on April 6, in Needville. Tomball German Festival is March 22-24 in Tomball. Three large stages with music all day and night. Annette Syring will donate homemade pickles as a silent auction item and Art Remmert will donate 2 birdhouses for silent auction for the convention. Saengerfest work schedules were passed around. Refreshments by refreshment chair Ruth Brooks and Sandy and Marie provided green beer in celebrating St Patrick's Day.

President Sandy provided our program by giving history of the German language. She had a small vocabulary lesson for us to go through.

Jim Brooks made motion to adjourn with second by BR Koehler. We closed singing Du Du List Mir Herzen.

May 2024 - The Bluebonnet Chapter of Texas German Society met Sunday, May 19, 2024 at Concordia Hall in Bellville. President Sandy Schuff called the meeting together at 3:08 pm with 17 members and 1 guest present and the purpose of meeting is continuing our German heritage. Vice President Gil Franke led the pledge. Secretary Marie Herridge read the minutes from the last meeting and Jim Brooks made motion to accept with a second by Veronica Prescher. Motion carried. Treasurer Robert Herridge gave the treasurer's report. BR Koehler made motion to accept with second by Jim Brooks.

Robert gave Saengerfest report. We still don't have the final numbers from the Lions Club but we will get our check in June when they do their donations. Our dessert stand made \$479.05.

Citizens State Bank needs our minutes to show current officers so we can update our bank accounts.

Thank you to our refreshment chair Ruth Brooks and members for our refreshments.

New Business – Suggest a Saengerfest dessert chairman to oversee that we have everything needed. Suggest discussing with Lions Club about possible dessert at the drive-thru location.

President Sandy had a small vocabulary lesson for us and review of the previous months.

Bluebonnet Chapter (continued)

Vice President Gil Franke gave our program about a history of Saengerfest, German love of music. Piney Concordia Gesung Verein started May 26, 1860 and was started for music and fun but to make a social change. In May 1877 they had a new hall about 2 miles out of Bellville. The 1900 storm blew the building down and then they built on the current location. In 1938 they adopted the name Bellville Concordia Singing. He gave other singing groups around the area. A 100th anniversary was celebrated in 1960. The group ended around 1985. Saengerfest was brought back to life by Texas German Society Bluebonnet chapter and Bellville Lions club in 2003.

Grace Holtkamp's daughter brought 4 boxes of records from Grace.

Reminder our next meeting July 21 will be our ice cream social.

Jim Brooks made motion to adjourn with second by Gil Franke. We closed singing Du Du List Mir Herzen.

July 2024 - The Bluebonnet Chapter of Texas German Society met Sunday, July 21, 2024 at Concordia Hall in Bellville. President Sandy Schuff called the meeting together at 3:05 pm with 29 members and 4 guest present and the purpose of meeting is continuing our German heritage. Vice President Gil Franke led the pledge. Secretary Marie Herridge read the minutes from the last meeting and John Harle made motion to accept with a second by Shirley Hoff. Motion carried. Treasurer Robert Herridge gave the treasurer's report. Shelly Fahrenthold made motion to accept with second by John Harle.

Robert reported we received \$2,000 from Lions Club for Saengerfest.

Thank you to President Sandy for picking up our ice cream and refreshment chair Ruth Brooks for overseeing.

New Business – Discussion of next convention with chapters to volunteer for participating in convention.

Propose location and date that will not interfere with Saengerfest. Shelly said partnering is the way to go.

Locations suggested were Cat Spring (\$2,000), Millheim, Turnverein, St. John's Church Bellville.

While enjoying our ice cream President Sandy gave us some German history and small vocabulary lesson.

Reminder our next meeting September 15.

John Harle made motion to adjourn with second by Joyce Bullard. We closed singing Du Du List Mir Herzen.

Robert entertaining while members enjoy ice cream!



Bluebonnet Chapter (continued)

Sept 2024 - The Bluebonnet Chapter of Texas German Society met Sunday, September 15, 2024 at Concordia Hall in Bellville. Vice-President Gil Franke called the meeting together at 3:05 pm with 15 members present and the purpose of meeting is continuing our German heritage. John Harle led the pledge. Secretary Marie Herridge read the minutes from the last meeting and Jim Brooks made motion to accept with a second by BR Koehler. Motion carried. Marie Herridge gave treasurer report in Robert Herridge's absent. Treasurer's report will be filed for audit. Joyce Bullard was absent but had sent her report via Laura Schumann. She reported that she had sent a get-well card to Doug Mewis who had heart surgery. VP Franke announced the funeral services of former member Bob Witte which will be September 17 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Sealy with visitation at 12 and service following at 1 pm.

Thank you to refreshment chair Ruth Brooks for providing our snacks and any members who contributed.

New Business – Question concerning the scholarship fund was brought up whether it qualifies to home school students. Laura Schumann announced that we have a member whose daughter is studying the German language. The executive board will meet to discuss the scholarship fund and bring back to the members. Continuing the discussion of next convention with chapters to volunteer for participating in convention, Marie went over the different areas where help is needed. Suggested our chapter to consider providing breakfast for the convention. After discussion Herbert Schumann made motion for our chapter to provide breakfast for the convention and seconded by Jim Brooks. Motion carried. The convention will be April 12, 2025 at St. John Lutheran Church Faith center in Bellville.

VP Franke announced that TGS Executive board will be celebrating German American Day (10/6) on Saturday October 5 at Das Haus. It will be from 1-3 and you can tour the house, refreshments available and visit with each other. The TGS state Christmas party will be held on the 2nd Sunday December 8 due to Thanksgiving. It is from 2-4 with Christmas program, refreshments – bring your favorite snack for sharing and fellowship. Marie discussed our next meeting which is our Thanksgiving meal. The chapter will provide the meat and members A-G bring desserts and H-Z bring vegetables. German dishes would be great! Suggested meeting at 2 pm instead of our normal 3. Shelly made motion to meet at 2 pm with a second by Jim Brooks. Motion carried.

Our program for the meeting was by Art Remmert. He gave a report on the 3 books by Barbara Ortwein on Germans coming to Texas. He highly recommended ready the books as he found them very interesting.

BR Koehler told a joke about the Olympics but I didn't get it written down so you'll have ask him!

Reminder our next meeting will be our Thanksgiving meal on November 17 at 2 pm. Dues are due also!

John Harle made motion to adjourn with second by BR Koehler.

COLORADO COUNTY

February 22, 2024 – Colorado County Chapter met for the regularly scheduled meeting.

President Kathryn asked for a moment of silence in memory of Doroty Button, one of our long-standing members, who had passed away on January 23, 2024.

President Kathryn appointed a nominating committee as it was time for election of officers in April and the secretary and treasurer were resigning their positions.

The program for the evening was an exchange of German family recipes. Shirley Isbell spoke briefly about German food and asked members to speak about their recipes.

Colorado County (continued)

April 25, 2024 – The Colorado County Chapter met at Shaw’s Bend Social Club for their Sprint Fest/Meeting for a Potluck Dinner.

President Kathryn held a short business meeting for the election of the new officers. New Officers elected were Kathryn Haluska – President, Elena Holub – Vice President, Nancy Williams – Secretary and Mary Stavinoha – Treasurer.

The program was presented by Kathryn Haluska and Herman Brune on the “History of Shaw’s Bend. Also, one of our members Lyn Buescher celebrated her 95th birthday.

June 27, 2024 – Colorado County Chapter met on June 27, 2024, at the Colorado Co. EMS Building with President Kathryn Haluska presiding.

President Haluska called the meeting to order, led the pledge and prayer before welcoming guests. A moment of silence was given in recognition of deceased members Virginia Lilie and Adam Moeckel. Nelda Hajdik had also lost her daughter, Holly Hajdik. Mary Stavinoha was recognized as the new treasurer. The group enjoyed a program by Lawanda Fricks on the Mathias Berger, Sr. descendants who immigrated to Texas from Germany in the 1800’s, some of which ended up in Colorado County. Lawanda introduced a couple of guests present as descendants, Earline Berger and Michael Berger.

August 22, 2024 - The Texas German Society of Colorado County Chapter met on August 22, 2024, at the Colorado County EMS Building with President Kathryn Haluska presiding. President Haluska called the meeting to order, led the pledge and prayer before welcoming guests.

She stated that the Witte Schmid Museum house is being taken care of by a new couple and is in good condition. They have several projects they are working on. Kathryn advised that Georgianne, one of the new caretakers of the museum, wants to have a German Day at the house on October 6th, and advised that we would receive further information as soon as it was available.

Kathryn advised that the next State meeting would be April 12th, 2025, and would be held at St. Johns Lutheran Church in Bellville. Each club will get an assignment to help. Kathryn volunteered our club for the Door Prizes which will be 7 Door Prizes @ \$10 apiece. The State Christmas Party at the Witte Schmid Museum house will be on December 8th. We will pass on the invitation as soon as it’s received.

FAYETTE COUNTY

January 29, 2024 - The Fayette County Chapter met on Monday, January 29, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. at Randolph Rec Center. We held election of new officers and discussed possible programs and outings for the upcoming monthly meetings. Frau Faske, German teacher at La Grange High, and the folk dancing group from the German Club at La Grange High school performed for us at our chapter meeting. The afternoon was enjoyed by all.

February 28, 2024 - The Fayette County Chapter met on Monday, February 28, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. at Randolph Rec Center. Our guest speaker was Norman Wied who had an interesting presentation on the history of Fayette County. We were excited also to have a special concert given by the La Grange High School polka band, directed by the high school band director, Mr. Chris Cooper as they prepared for their regional German contest.

March 21, 2024 - The Fayette County Chapter met on Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. at the Fayette County Library and Archives. Roxanne Johnson, the museum archivist and curator, shared with us a very interesting presentation on Rev. Karl Baer, a German missionary in the Waldeck area. After the presentation, members were invited to have an early dinner at Ere’s Italian restaurant in La Grange together.

Fayette County (continued)

April 23, 2024 -The Fayette County Chapter met on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. to tour the Faison Home in La Grange. Marie Watts gave a very interesting tour of the home and members were invited to Dairy Queen afterwards for ice cream.

May 18, 2024 - On Saturday, May 18, 2024, our chapter hosted a booth at the third annual Monument Hill Schuetzenfest celebration on the bluff in La Grange. Over fifty children visited our booth this year again – where the children made their own cardboard Lebkuchenherz, learned about the significance of Lebkuchenherzen at festivals and learned to name the various colors in German. The festival seems to grow each year and is a fun family event.

May 20, 2024 -On Monday, May 20, 2024, our chapter met at the Round Top area Historical Society museum in Round Top, Texas. Neale Rabensburg shared very interesting information about the history of Round Top and the Nassau plantation and gave us a tour of the Nassau plantation site. Refreshments were provided at the beautiful museum complex after the tour of the Nassau plantation site.

September 26, 2024 - On Thursday, September 26 2024, our chapter met at the Fayette County Courthouse for a photo with County Judge Dan Mueller and the Commissioners at the Commissioners Court to commemorate the signing of the proclamation marking October 6, 2024, German American Day.

October 23, 2024 - On Wednesday, October 23, 2024, our chapter hosted a small Oktoberfest celebration at noon at the home of Lee Ann Hartmann. Fifteen members and guests were in attendance. The meal consisted of pork schnitzel with mushroom gravy, bratwurst, red cabbage, sauerkraut, scalloped potatoes, soft German pretzels with beer cheese, Erdbeersahnetorte, Obsttorte, and a Mandelkuchen. Our special guest was Zach Novak and his father, Mark Novak. The very talented Zach Novak entertained us with a fun sing-a-long accompanied by accordion before and after the meal.

November 18, 2024 - Our meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 18, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. at Randolph Rec Center. Glenn Altwein will present information about his travels to Germany this past summer and in December, Audrey Huenefeld will host our Christmas party.

FORT BEND COUNTY



Fort Bend County at the TGS State Convention on April 6, 2024.

Pictured are: Seated: Loyce Anderson Carol Niemann, Marilyn James, Evelyn Schmidt, Erna Thielemann and Linda Harris.

Standing: Cathy Hanzik, Ruth Kendziora, Delbert Niemann, Raymond Schmidt, Clarence Thielemann, Richard Harris, and Barbara Cooper.

Fort Bend County (continued)



On Tuesday, April 9, 2024, members of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society had a German lunch prepared and served at the House of Blue Restaurant at the Needville High School. The menu was wiener schnitzel, spaetzle, red cabbage, homemade bread, Black Forest cake, and tea/coffee. The food was delicious! The meal was prepared and served by the culinary arts students under the direction of Chef Sarah Pugh. The slide pictured behind the group said, "Happy Tuesday! German Spring Lunch at the House of Blue".

Seated are:

Ellvina Loehr, Deborah Pike, Marilyn James, Carol Niemann, Loyce Anderson

Standing: Cathy Hanzik, Ursula Fisher Thomas, Linda Harris, Richard Harris, Raymond Schmidt, Evelyn Schmidt, Delbert Niemann, Barbara Cooper, Helen Altimore, Ruth Kendziora, Clarence Thielemann, Erna Thilemann



On Wednesday, May 29, 2024, members of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society took a trip to West Columbia, Texas. Their first stop was the Varner Hogg Plantation State Historic Site. It was founded in 1824 by one of Texas' first settlers, Martin Varner and later owned by Texas Gov. James S. Hogg. Members explored the real stories of the people who lived and worked on this property, from the prosperous landowners to the enslaved people, prisoners, and

oil field workers. Governor Hogg's only daughter and last surviving child donated the plantation to the State of Texas in 1958. The next stop was lunch at Margarita Jones. Within walking distance is the replica of the first capitol building of the Republic of Texas. It was a home converted into a government building. It was here that Sam Houston took office as President and Stephen F. Austin as Secretary of State in 1836. The next stop was the Columbia Historical Museum and Rosenwald School. The Museum was filled with many items from weapons and oil field tools to antique textiles and dolls of the life of those living in the area. The Rosenwald School served the African-American children in East Columbia from 1921-1948. The building is constructed in a unique specific fashion using long windows to the east to allow natural light to light the one room school and smaller higher windows to the west to block the hot sun's heat and allow air circulation. West Columbia was a great educational, day trip for the members.

Pictured are Loyce Anderson, Cathy Hanzik, Carol Niemann, Francis Alvarado, Delbert Niemann, and Barbara Cooper.



On Saturday, July 20, 2024, three members of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society manned a booth at the Festivals of Cultures event hosted by the Fort Bend Museum. There were representatives of many cultures in Fort Bend County. Our booth had supplies to make paper snowflakes and decorate a Christmas tree. We were showcasing how the Germans brought over the Christmas tree which is so much a part of our Christmas tradition now.

Fort Bend County (continued)



On Wednesday, September 18, 2024, four members of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society took a tour of San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site in San Felipe, Texas. This site was the headquarters of Stephen F. Austin's colony in Mexican Texas. Founded in 1823, the town served as the administrative, political, and cultural capital of American immigration to Texas before it was intentionally burned by its residents during the Runaway Scrape of the Texas Revolution. After the tour, the group enjoyed lunch at Tony's Restaurant in Sealy, Texas.

Pictured are Delbert Niemann, Carol Niemann, Stephen F. Austin, Loyce Anderson, Cathy Hanzik



On Friday, members of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society enjoyed a meal at the Senior Citizens gathering at the Immanuel Evangelical Church in Needville, Texas. The meal was prepared by members of St. Michael's Catholic Church in Needville.

Pictured are:

Sitting: Evelyn Schmidt, Raymond Schmidt, Clarence Thielemann, Loyce Anderson

Standing: Dan Pavlos, Ruth Kendiziora, Cathy Hanzik, Barbara Cooper

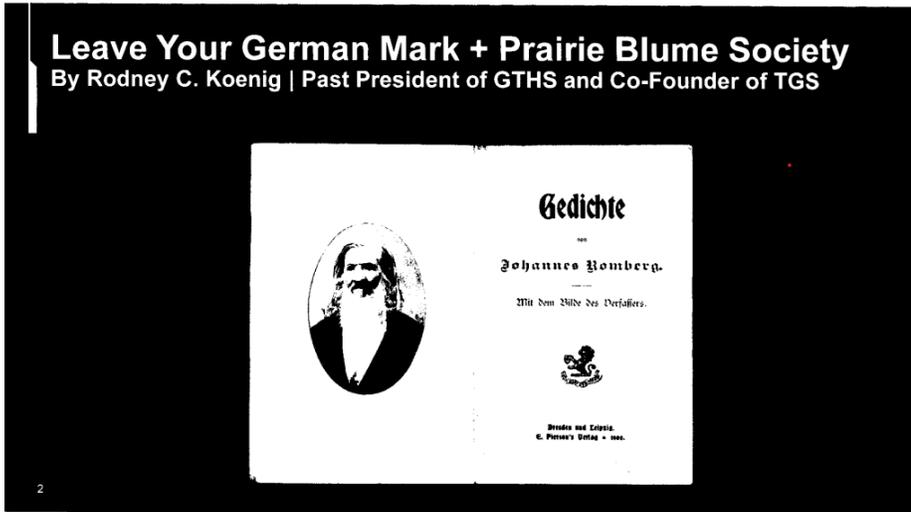
GOLDEN CRESCENT

NO REPORT

HARRIS COUNTY



On September 26, 2024, Rodney Koenig presented a very interesting program about German Immigrants Johannes & Fredericke Bauch Romberg. Johannes Christlieb Nathanael Romberg was a German Texan poet who started a popular literary club known as the Prairie Blume Society. The Prairie Blume Society was initiated in 1857, to hear and critique poems and stories. It has been revived in Fayette County by Rodney Koenig and Fayette County residents



HEART OF TEXAS

NO REPORT

KATY TRI-COUNTY

On February 21, we met for dinner at the Southern Dough Eatery in downtown Katy.



Enjoyed our Saturday March 16th bus trip to the 1940 Air Terminal at Hobby Airport. We had several guests along to help us enjoy the day.

On April 6, 2024, eight members of the Katy Tri-County Chapter attended the Texas German Society State Convention. Our Chapter donated 12 of the 24 Door Prizes given that day. We enjoyed great company, seeing friends and great convention.

In April we lost our member, Regina Hartford. She and Francis were always active and loved attending all the events.



On April 18, 2024 Katy Tri-County Chapter and guests enjoyed a bus tour to Danevang, Texas, The Danish Capital of Texas. We learned about the Heritage Preservation Society and Museum of the Danish immigrants to this part of Texas. We also enjoyed a

delicious Danish meal provided by the Danish volunteers.



Katy Tri-County (continued)



On May 16, 2024, members and several guests toured the Painted Churches in Schulenburg, Texas. Lunch was at The Oakridge Smokehouse.

On May 29, our group met at Luby's for dinner together. There were 10 of us and we had a great discussion of future plans.



On July 26, 2024, our group toured the Katy caboose MKT Railroad Depot museum. Afterward, nine members met at Sourdough Bakery for a delicious meal. Pictured are Keith & Maesa Williams, Francis Hartford, Helga Miller, Rena Severin, Peggy Shulin.

On August 29, 2024, we gathered at Luby's to share dinner together.

LAVACA-DEWITT COUNTY

NO REPORT

NORTH HARRIS COUNTY

March 25, 2024 - we hosted Sharon Menegas from the Houston Archeological Society who gave a presentation. Sharon is from the Tomball/Rosehill area and counts as some of her ancestors, the Brautigams, the Seidels, and the Gerths. Her husband and her still live on five acres from her great-grandfather's land. She has been volunteering with archeological societies, both at the local and state level, for almost 25 years and is also a steward with the Texas Historical Commission. Some topics for the presentation were the work along the Grand Parkway project in which TxDOT identified and the Houston Society participated in screening and identifying artifacts, and upcoming work at Frost Town, the first German community in what is now Houston.

May 2024 – No meeting was held in May.

July 22, 2024 - we watched the video "Neuschwanstein: King Ludwig's Dream Castle and its Secrets". Here is a description of the video: No other place is as charged with myths, legend and secrets than Neuschwanstein Castle. The childhood dream of a young prince became the most exciting building project in the world, when the foundation stone of the castle was laid on September 5, 1869. Today, Bavaria's most famous building is inextricably linked to the fate of its builder, King Ludwig II. The sudden death of the king gave the castle a brilliant start in its career as a tourist attraction. Says Ludwig, Prince of Bavaria, a relative of the fairy-tale king. "It's a built fantasy. You're not in a house, you're in a dream." Even when it was built, the castle seems to have fallen out of time. It's the perfect symbiosis of high-tech and medieval. The feeling of not being understood and accepted caused the monarch to slip into ever more enraptured dream worlds. Neuschwanstein became his last refuge. King Ludwig II. was denied the opportunity to live in his palace in its complete state. On June 12, 1886, he was arrested. The mysterious death of the King in Lake Starnberg a few days later makes the "fairy tale king" legend. Six weeks after his death, the castle was opened to visitors, partly to prove how "crazy" the king was. For decades, the castle lay dormant. It survived two world wars unscathed, misused by the Nazis during the Third Reich as a warehouse for looted art. At the end of the Second World War, US troops reached Neuschwanstein. The castle finds itself on the list of must-see sights for GIs stationed in Germany resulting in photos of the Bavarian dream castle entering the living rooms of many Americans. On this History Stories special, we reveal the secrets of the castle that became a symbol for a different Germany and immortalized in Disney's Sleeping Beauty.

September 23, 2024 - we watched the video "Brandenburg Gate: Memorial to Division and Unity". Here is a description of video: Berlin's Brandenburg Gate is a national symbol and one of Berlin's best-known landmarks. Like no other structure, it reflects Germany's turbulent past. Why does this edifice captivate Germans? This History Stories Special delves into the gate's eventful history and reveals its innermost secrets. It features people whose lives on both sides of the Iron Curtain were connected to the Brandenburg Gate in a special way.



Oregon descendants tour Witte Schmid Haus Museum

The Texas German Society Witte Schmid Haus Museum gave a tour which included Witte family descendants who traveled all the way from Portland, Oregon. Jan Westwater and Heather Hardy (mother

and daughter) have been tracing their family roots and visiting all the family homesteads and they were very impressed with the Witte Schmid Haus which was completed in 1860. (Continued on Page 2)

Witte Schmid Haus visitors

Continued from Page 1

Also a stop at the Shelby Store to visit with Carolyn Schmid Bruening was another family connection. Jan was born and raised in Lubbock, Texas.

The Witte-Schmid Haus

Museum tours are free, see the listing on the Round Top Chamber Member website. Pictured in the photo are Patrick Schmid, Heather Hardy, Jan Westwater.

IN MEMORIAM



Regina Blazek Hartford

August 14, 1950 – April 25, 2024

Regina Blazek Hartford was born on August 14, 1950 in Houston, Texas to Louis and Beatrice Buckner Blazek. She grew up in Houston and was a 1968 graduate of Sam Houston High School, where she was in the Houstonettes Marching Band and played first base in Moody Misfits, a girls softball team. Regina obtained her degree in Elementary Education from the University of Houston. On May 31, 1975, she married Francis Ellsworth Hartford at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church. She and Francis moved to the Katy area in 1977 and she worked in food service and special education at Katy Junior High in Katy. Regina loved animals and spoiled her pet cats, seven over her lifetime. She also fed the birds in the backyard of her home and worked to keep the two separate. Her memory was impeccable, helped by the notes she kept in spiral notebooks and on sale circulars. She could remember things about people she met that her husband almost always forgot. Regina was an active member of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Church, where she was a member of the Forever Young Club. She was also active in the Tri-County Chapter of the Texas Germany Society.

She is survived by her husband of 48 years, Francis Hartford; brothers, Louis Blazek and Frank Blazek; nieces, Cecelia Blazek and Lori Blazek Slott; nephew, Nicholas Blazek; grandnieces, Regan and Bethany Slott; and grandnephew, Naethan Slott. She was preceded in death by her parents.



Virginia Ray Glaeser Lilie

November 7, 1936 – May 9, 2024

Virginia Ray Glaeser Lilie, age 87, passed May 9, 2024. She was born to Walter & Nola Krause Glaeser on November 7, 1936, in New Ulm, Texas. When she started school at Henkhaus she could only speak German but quickly learned English. She attended New Ulm School and graduated from Columbus High School in 1955. She married Douglas W. Lilie on August 28, 1955 at Industry Methodist Church August 28, 1955. They were blessed with two sons Kevin and Kenton, 6 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

As a child she worked in the field with her parents chopping and picking corn and cotton. She worked as a typist, Receptionist and Administrative Assistant at First United Methodist Church in Columbus for over 30 years. She was a Den Mother for Cub Scouts, and Band Club Member, Young Homemakers and Home Demonstration, Little League Auxiliary, Hermann Sons Lodge #10, Colorado County Sportsman's Association, Texas German Society of Colorado County and Unser Deutscher Saenger (German Choir).

She loved dancing, sewing, caring for her grandchildren and leading wedding & anniversary grand marches. She and Doug made an effort to design each march for the participants and the hall. She supported Doug in Lions Club and received an award for support of the Lions and The Leader Dogs for the Blind in 2018. Her greatest passion and service though was loving and caring for her family.



Adam Peter Moeckel, Jr.

August 13, 1944 – May 31, 2024

Adam P. Moeckel, Jr passed away on May 31, 2024 at the age of 79. He was born on August 13, 1944, in Alleyton, Texas to Adam P. Moeckel Sr. and Annie Moeckel.

Adam graduated from Columbus High School, serviced honorably in the US Army and was stationed in Korea during the Vietnam War. He later became a welder and considered his career a craft that he performed with diligence and pride. Adam loved and appreciated the simple things in life like fishing, barbecues with family and friends and telling stories over a cold Burnin Daylight craft beer. He loved spending time with his grandchildren.

Adam was best described as the epitome of friendship. He had an easy smile, an open heart and was always ready to lend a hand, offer his friendship and had a remarkable ability to connect to people. He embodied selflessness.

He was preceded in death by his parents and 3 sisters, Earline Kulhaneck, Gladys Schriefer and Lillie Bruen. He left behind his son Jeremy Moeckel, wife Samantha, his daughter Jesica Ross and husband David, his daughter Johanna Moeckel and 15 grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother Clarence Moeckel and wife Joan, his sister Helen Berger and husband Kirby and his brother Richard Moeckel and wife Susie, mother of his children Barbara Urban Hinton and numerous nieces and nephews.



Leon Dittmar, Jr.

August 15, 1930 – November 2, 2024

Leon Dittmar, Jr., a beloved 4th generation Texan, passed away peacefully on November 2, 2024 at the Regency Nursing Center in Schulenburg. Born on August 15, 1930, at the Sealy Hospital to Leon and Louise (Hinkel) Dittmar, Leon lived a life rich in service and dedication to his community, and above all, love of his family.

Leon was a long-time active member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, where he married Verna Nell Frank on December 21, 1957. He served on the church council in his younger years and volunteered with Men in Mission later.

Leon was a local businessman as well as a true cowboy at heart. He was a rancher who managed his herd in Bernardo with unwavering commitment well into his 90s. He purchased the herd with his brother Max and later managed it with his sons Dusty and Dwight. Some of his favorite stories revolved around a memorable cattle drive he undertook with Leslie Reichardt from Cat Spring to New Ulm on horseback during World War II. He liked to recall that he was 13 years old at the time and he was paid \$1/day for himself and \$1/day for his horse.

Leon served his country with honor, dedicating two years of Army active duty in Austria and Germany. His military career extended into the Army National Guard, where he served for 35 years.

His belief in public service was evident through his long-standing commitment to the Columbus Fire Department, where he served for 20 years; his roles on the Columbus City Council, the Colorado County Appraisal Review Board and the Lion's Club. He was also a Life Member of the Colorado County Fair Association, where he served on the Board of Directors and was honored to be Co-Grand Marshal of the Colorado County Fair parade in 2001 alongside his wife, Verna Nell.

Leon is preceded in death by his parents; his brothers and sister, Herbert, Max and Clara Menke, and by his granddaughter Erika O'Rion Dittmar.



EDWING "BUTCH" THEISS

November 19, 1928 – August 31, 2024

In the early morning hours of August 31, 2024, our beloved father, grandfather, uncle and caring friend, Edwin Glendale "Butch" Theiss, was called to his Heavenly home with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Born in Louetta, Texas, on November 19, 1928, to Rosa Elizabeth Scherer and John Edwin Theiss, Butch lived the majority of his life in the Klein community. He attended Trinity Lutheran School through the eighth grade and graduated from Klein High School in 1947. Butch was an outstanding athlete playing high school basketball, and he was also active in FFA. Following graduation, he returned to KHS in the fall as a player/coach on the very first Bearkat Football Team. In 1950 during the Korean Conflict, he was drafted into the United States Army where he served as a tank driver, stationed at Fort Polk, Louisiana, earning the rank of Sergeant. On April 14, 1951, while still in the Army, Butch married his high school sweetheart, Billie Jean Armstrong. They celebrated their 60th anniversary before her passing on February 14, 2012. Following his discharge from the Army in 1952, Butch and Billie Jean lived in the Heights for a few years before settling in the Recreation Acres area of North Houston.

Butch had a long and fruitful career at Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, retiring with 38 years of service. He served his community faithfully as a member of the Klein ISD Board of Trustees for 18 years.. He was a driving force in the recruitment and eventual hiring of Dr. Donald Collins, who was the Superintendent of Klein ISD for 29 years. After retiring from Southwestern Bell, Butch resigned from the Klein ISD Board to begin working for the District, retiring with 16 years of service to Klein ISD. He was also a lifelong supporter of the Klein FFA.. For his many years of service to the Klein School District, his lifelong commitment to Klein football and athletics, and his dedication to the community of Klein, Butch was honored in 2010 with the naming of Butch Theiss Field at Klein Memorial Stadium.

Butch was most proud of his German heritage, as one of the foremost historians for the Theis/Theiss family history. He poured countless hours and his own personal funds into researching the Theis/Theiss history, publishing the history on two occasions, organizing many Theis/Theiss family reunions and providing valuable commentary on other related German families in the area as well. In the 1980s, they joined a group of Klein residents and traveled to Bottenhorn, Germany, the place from which many of the founding Klein families immigrated in the late 1800s. While visiting Bottenhorn, Butch and Billie Jean forged a lasting bond with distant relative Volker Theis and his partner, Margit Albers. He served on the Board of the Spring Creek Historical Foundation in Tomball for many years and was a major contributor to the Wunderlich Farm and Interactive History Park in Klein ISD. In 2015, his family home became one of the major exhibits in the museum. A consummate story-teller, Butch authored his auto-biography, My Life in Klein in 2009.



NELDA MARBURGER
November 16, 1929 - October 27, 2024

Nelda Marburger was born to Elo and Emily (Hartmann) Marburger in Sealy, Texas on November 16, 1929. She was baptized in the Lutheran faith on October 20, 1930, in Sealy and confirmed at St. John Lutheran in Wallis, Texas on February 25, 1945, by Pastor Sager. She is a member of St. John Lutheran Church in Wallis, where she taught Sunday School for many years and served on the Church Council in several positions. She and her twin sister Delta were members of the Priscilla Circle at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Houston for 40 years and considered it their second Christian home.

Nelda attended Sealy Public Schools and graduated in 1947. Upon graduation, Nelda moved to Houston. She worked for E.W. Saybolt for 40 years, retiring in 1992 as an Administrative Assistant. After retiring, Nelda enjoyed traveling the U.S., Alaska, Canada, Mexico, Europe, Israel, Egypt, and the Holy Lands. She joined the Sealy Garden Club and Austin County German Club of which she is still a member. Her hobbies include reading, traveling, oil painting, and learning to play the guitar. She was also an excellent seamstress, sewing many of her sisters' clothes. Her favorite pastime was cheering on the Sealy Tiger Football team and was in the stands at most games.