



Texas German Society

Organized September 6, 1983 ■ Witte-Schmid Haus Museum
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Fall 2025

Reporter

Chapters News

2025 Oktoberfest	2
2024 Christmas	3
2025 Convention Information	4
2025 Scholarships	07
Christmas 2025	11
Bastrop County	12
Colorado County	12
Fort Bend County	13
Harris County	14
Katy Tri-County	14
North Harris County	17
Other News	19
In Memorium	20

President's Message

Can it be that we finished almost ¾ of the year 2025? Time flies fast, when you have fun or stay busy. Like us "Texas German Society" members, we had a great Convention 2025 last April. I'm very proud of our 12 chapters, it takes a village to put a Convention Meeting together. And more will come before this year finds an end! There will be our first Oktoberfest @ Witte- Schmid Haus, our TGS Museum on Sunday, October 5th, 2-4pm. More information will be in this Reporter. And don't forget our annual Christmas celebration @ Witte-Schmid Haus on December, 7th

Ich freue mich Euch Alle recht bald wieder zu sehen.

Auf Wiedersehen
 Marion McClinton
 President



October 5, 2025 2- 4 pm
 DAS HAUS

OKTOBERFEST

OCTOBER 5, 2025 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.

Water and tea will be provided, Or you may bring your drink of choice.

Come and enjoy the company and the food!



TGS celebrated Christmas at the Witte-Schmid Museum Sunday December 8, 2024. Even the bad weather did not keep members away. TGS President, Marion McClinton, presented an Advent program, and had drawings for candy stockings and poinsettias. Marion read the Christmas story from Luke 2 in German and Aaron Schindewolf read the same verses in English. Vickie Weymeyer from Brenham played the antique piano and we all sang Christmas songs in English and German.

REPORT OF THE TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY 42ND CONVENTION, APRIL 12, 2025

By Linda Phillips

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 and Texas flags 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 2024. A candle was lit and remained burning in their memory during the convention.

The first speaker was Bryan McAuley, Site Manager of San Felipe de Austin State Historic site and the Texas Historical Commission. He spoke about the history of the German Immigrants in that area and presented information about the German contributions.

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

The second speaker was Karen Locher, Retired Senior Director of Libraries at UH-Victoria Regional History Center on the topic of Indianola. Her presentation included information about some of the first immigrants to come into Texas. Her presentation included many maps, documents, pictures and other information about that Indianola.

TGS Director Robert Herridge presented the scholarships to the first place winner, Hunter Sabo of LaGrange High School and third place winner, Retaj Darwish of Austin High School, Ft. Bend ISD. Second place winner, Addison Faske of LaGrange High School, was unable to attend.





A very delicious lunch was provided by Schovajsa Catering and as we ate lunch, more drawings for door prizes were awarded and we were entertained by Concordia Gesang Verein and Robert Herridge and his very talented student, Ella B, who is not only talented at music, but also singing.

A business meeting followed lunch where the officers for 2025 were installed by Rodney Keonig, Charter member of TGS. More door prizes were awarded and the meeting was closed.

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TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY
Minutes of the Texas German Society State Convention
Saturday, April 12, 2025
St. John Lutheran Church, Bellville, 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 12, 2025, 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 and Texas flags were 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 2024. A candle was to remain burning in their memory during the Convention.

Bryan McAuley, from the Texas Historical Commission, presented a program on San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site.

Another program on “Indianola” was presented by Karen Locher, retired senior director of Libraries at UH-Victoria.

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

- \$1500.00 Hunter Sabo, La Grange High School
 - \$1000.00 Addison Faske, LaGrange High School
 - \$750.00 Retaj Darwish, Wm. B. Travis High School, Ft. Bend ISD
- Hunter Sabo and Retaj Darwish both read their essays.

Entertainment was provided by the Concordia Gesang Verein and Robert Herridge and Ella B (Broussard).

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 Needville by Anthony Stott and seconded by Sandy Shuff. The motion carried.

TGS Treasurer, Aaron Schindewolf gave the financial report as of April 4, 2025:

Amegy Bank, State Checking \$23,071.70 State CD \$11,489.26

Amegy Bank, Scholarship Check \$ 4,107.87 Scholarship CD \$14,316.90

Kathryn Haluska made a motion to accept the treasurer's report and Rodney Koenig seconded. The motion carried. This report is available for audit along with details of expenses and income. Aaron presented that we purchase a ramp for the front of the Museum with a \$300.00 donation received recently. Herbert Schumann made the motion for the purchase and Steve Guettler seconded. The motion carried. At the time of the Convention there were 253 paid members and 12 Chapters.

Aaron also gave the Witte-Schmid Haus Museum treasurer's report as of March 31, 2025 from Georgianne Schmid, Museum Treasurer:

Industry State Bank, Checking \$11,380.68

Industry State Bank, CD \$13,288.43

Patrick Schmid sent an update on projects at the Haus. The ongoing work now is to possibly replace the wood shutters. Gaeke Construction has been asked to submit a bid. To schedule a tour of the Haus, contact by email witte.schmid.museum@gmail.com.

Webmaster Anthony Stott reported the website is up and current. Chapters can send him events for the Event Calendar. Access is www.texasgermansociety.org.

Reporter Editor Linda Phillips is sending out the newsletter twice a year. In November she mailed out 69 paper copies and emailed 253 Reporters.

NEW BUSINESS:

TGS secretary Peggy Schulin read the list of Nominees for the 2025 Executive Board Officers and

Directors:

President	Marion McClinton	Harris Co. Chapter
1 st Vice Pres.	Sandy Shuff	Bluebonnet Chapter
2 nd Vice Pres.	Georgianne Schmid	Bluebonnet Chapter
Secretary	Peggy Schulin	Katy Tri-Co 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	Van Massirer	Heart of Texas Chapter
2 Yr. Director	Anthony Stott	President's Chapter
2 Year Directors having 1 year left on their term are:		
Mannie Fritsch-Schmid		Fayette Co Chapter
Robert Herridge		Bluebonnet Chapter
Herbert Gerken		President's Chapter

There were no nominations from the floor. Kathryn Haluska made a motion to accept the nominees presented and Shirley Fahrenthold 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 group.

President Marion reported 106 pre-registered for the convention and 10 walk-ins came for the day. She encouraged Chapters to consider how they can contribute to next year's 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, Aaron Schindewolf made a motion to adjourn and Perry Schindewolf seconded. The motion carried and the business meeting was adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,
Peggy Schulin, TGS Secretary

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2025 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER'S ESSAYS

1st: Hunter Sabo, LaGrange High School

Throughout my entire life, I have been extremely interested in both the German language and German heritage. Having lived in La Grange my entire life, I have been blessed to learn about the German history of this town. During high school, I took four years of German, was inducted into the Delta Epsilon Phi German Honor Society, and participated in the GAPP foreign exchange during the summer of 2024.

My love for German emerged at a very young age when my grandpa, Frank Moellenberndt, taught me a few German words he learned when taking German classes in school. He also taught me the German song, "Mein Hut Der Hat Drei Ecken", which I still catch myself singing to this day. Also, during elementary school, I took several field trips to Monument Hill, a German historical site in La Grange. Learning about the German immigrant, Heinrich Ludwig Kreiche, his family, and the brewery he started fascinated me, even at such a young age.

I really found my love for the German language when I began taking German classes at La Grange High School by freshman year. At first, learning the new language was really nerve wracking. After only a couple weeks, I found that the language came extremely easy to me, and I found so much joy in learning it. I have excelled throughout my years of taking the class, with my grades showing it, and I also advanced to the German State Competition during my sophomore and junior years for creating a photo essay and being a part of a skit spoken completely in German. During my junior year, I was inducted into the Delta Epsilon Phi German Honor Society for maintaining an outstanding average throughout my first two years in the class. Now, as a fourth year German student, I am able to read and write the language as well as participate in simple conversations in German.

Last summer, I was granted the opportunity to go to Germany through the German American Partnership Program (GAPP) foreign exchange. Myself, about a dozen other students from La Grange, and two teachers, Tracey Faske and Kevin Obkirchner, spent the entire month of June traveling around Germany. Our first destination was Freiburg, where we toured the old town and even got to make a small trip to Strasbourg, France! We then spent two weeks in Cologne where we stayed with our host families. During this time, we got to spend a day in school with our exchange students, go on several

Hunter Sabo (continued)

astonishing day trips around Cologne and its surrounding areas, and just enjoy the German way of life as a whole. My exchange student's name was Alex. He and his family were some of the most polite, welcoming people I have ever met. They treated me so well by showing me how they live, taking me out to eat traditional German food like Schnitzel, and even taking me on a weekend trip to Amsterdam! After our time in Cologne, the group went to southern Germany. We got to see so many beautiful things in the mountainous region of Germany like Zugspitze, the highest point in Germany. This trip was hands down one of the most memorable learning experiences in my life. I was blessed to build relationships with new people, try new things, and live a totally different lifestyle. In September of last year, my family hosted Alex in La Grange for a few weeks. I was able to do what he did for me and show him how us Texas live. Alex and I still talk to this day, and I hope to visit him again one day.

To say the least, German culture has left a huge impact on me and who I am today. Learning the language and visiting such a foreign country has taught me so much about the differences between various cultures. It has opened my eyes to exploration and the passion of learning new things. I am so thankful for the love I have obtain for German, and I hope that one day I will be able to visit Germany again in the future, whether it be studying abroad in college or simply taking a family vacation.

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2nd Addison Faske, LaGrange High School

A Lifelong Connection to German Language and Culture At fourteen, I boarded a plane from Austin, Texas, to Frankfurt, Germany. Two years later, I did it again at sixteen. Growing up with a mother deeply immersed in the German language and culture - having studied it for years, and even hosting a German exchange student - I thought I had a solid understanding of both the language and the country. That was, until I landed in Germany, realizing that I had barely scratched the surface.

My mother's journey with the German language began when she spontaneously became an exchange student in Germany for a year, igniting a lifelong passion. She loved it so much that she later moved back with my father and oldest brother, gave birth to my middle brother there, and then returned to the U.S, where I was born. Her deep connection to Germany naturally influenced me, and I grew up hearing the language constantly. With Duolingo as my best friend, I followed in her footsteps, fueled by her encouragement to explore the culture and language even farther.

I didn't just study German- I lived it. I took four years of German classes, competed in language competitions, and participated in a variety of events. I danced in German Folk competitions for two years, took part in scavenger hunts, photography contests, skits, and scrapbooking. A photograph I captured in Germany of the Berlin memorial won first place at the State German Contest, and our Folk Dance team placed in the top five. Beyond competitions, I've been immensely involved in my school's German Club, serving as an officer for three out of the four years. As Historian my sophomore year, I documented club events and created the contest scrapbook. My junior year, I was elected Vice President, assisting with leadership decisions and being the president's right hand. Now, as a senior, I am President - leading meetings, setting agendas, and serving my fellow members. Taking on these leadership roles has been one of the best decisions I've ever made, teaching me responsibility, confidence, and teamwork. Through it all, I've not only learned about German culture but also discovered more about myself.

Addison Faske (Continued)

My love for German culture extended beyond the classroom. Twice, I had the incredible opportunity to visit Germany through the GAPP (German American Partnership Program) exchange. The first time as a freshman in 2022, I knew no one going on the trip. It was primarily for juniors and seniors, but since my mother was the teacher leading the group, I got the chance to go with just one year of German under my belt. However, having my mom as my teacher came with higher expectations - I was held to a stricter standard and was expected to know more than my classmates. Despite the pressure, it pushed me to improve my language skills and adapt quickly.

Landing in Germany, I was immediately struck by the cultural differences. From vegan Capri Suns to the directness of German conversations, everything felt unfamiliar. The time change and cool weather, even in July, took some adjusting, but I embraced the challenge. With COVID-19 still prevalent, we navigated travel restrictions and mask mandates, making the experience even more unique. Despite the hardship, I fell in love with Germany - and so two years later, I returned. The second trip was different. This time, I had more knowledge, a better grasp of the language, and my best friend by my side. We explored new places, and I learned how to coexist 24/7 with someone just like me. We had our ups and downs, but in the end our friendship grew even stronger. These two GAPP exchanges were life-changing, giving me invaluable experiences, lifelong friendships, and a deeper connection to the culture.

If you think my journey with German ends there, think again. It came full circle when my family hosted a German exchange student for six months. Earlier, I had mentioned that my mother was an exchange student in Germany, where she lived with her host sister, Kay. Years later, Kay's daughter, Florentine, decided to participate in the GAPP exchange, and she came to live with us in Texas. Since my older brothers had already moved out, we had a spare bedroom - making it a perfect fit. I had always wanted a sister, and suddenly, my dreams came true.

At first, the adjustment was difficult for both of us. I had to get used to not being the only child in the house anymore, and Florentine had to navigate an entirely new culture. I took on the responsibility of introducing her to my friends, driving her around, and helping her feel at home. At times, it was challenging, not exactly what I had envisioned. But over time, we grew close. She found her place, made friends, and had me as a support system. I knew I played a significant role in her experience, so I made sure to be patient and understanding. At the end of her stay, her parents, Kay and her husband, came to visit for Christmas. We introduced them to American and Mexican food, which is a must, considering that Mexican food in Germany is... well, underwhelming. Their Italian on the other hand is incredible! After six months, Florentine returned to Germany and suddenly, the house felt empty again. I no longer had a sibling to bicker with, and I missed having her around.

Looking back, my experiences with German language and culture have been remarkable. My parents plan to move back to Europe after I graduate, so this journey is far from over. I am excited to continue strengthening my German skills so that when I visit them for the holidays, I can speak fluently. German has been a part of my life for as long as I could remember, and I know it always will be. It has shaped me into the person I am today, and I can't wait to see where it takes me next.

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3rd Retaj Darwish, Austin H S Ft. Bend ISD

My passion for the German culture and language is closely related to my aspiration to be an engineer. Germany has traditionally been at the vanguard of innovation, accuracy, and technological advancement. Through additional studies in German culture and language, I often had myself attracted to the values and principles that have propelled Germany to become a leading country in engineering globally. This has not only enhanced my passion for learning but also impacted my goals towards the type of engineer that I aim to be.

The German language aligns with the kind of analytical thought process needed in engineering. Learning German has taught me to approach problems systematically, paying close attention to detail and striving for precision. For example, the word compounding of the language, where various concepts are integrated into a single word, is representative of the inter connectedness of engineering systems where the various specialties must work together to create a cohesive product. Word compounding and other linguistic features such as this caused me to look at how the various components work together to create a functioning whole.

Germany's engineering achievements have always been inspiring to me. From pioneering advances in the automobile industry to leading the world in clean energy; Germany is a beacon of engineering's drive, development and sustainability. Siemens, Bosch, and Volkswagen are not just industry titans but also symbols of the country's obsession with quality innovation. By learning German I hope to create door to many great technical literature, research and collaborations with German engineers and universities. Becoming proficient would enable me to communicate more efficiently with German engineers as well as make contributions to global innovations in engineering.

In addition to its technical achievements, German culture is rich in values required to succeed in engineering. The emphasis on work, diligence, and collaboration reflect the qualities needed to solve difficult engineering challenges. Meanwhile, the cultural richness of Germany in classical music, literature, and philosophy encourages imagination and critical thinking. These aspects of German culture remind me that engineering is not just problem solving but imagining new possibilities and pushing the boundaries of what can be accomplished.

My interest in the German language and culture is linked to my ambitions. Through acquiring the language and learning the values that foster innovation in the culture, I wish to contribute to the world community of engineers and inspired by Germany's track record of greatness.



1st Place winner: Hunter Sabo

2nd Place winner: Addison Faske

LaGrange High School

The Fayette County Record



TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

2:00 P. M.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025

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.

BASTROP COUNTY

Bastrop County German Club currently has 16 members. We meet six times each year in the months of February, April, June, August, October and December. We have two social outings and four meetings held at St. Andrew Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall at Paint Creek.

At our meetings, several members have reported on their ancestors and the living conditions of their earlier years decades ago. One member had made notes of talks with his grandmother about weather conditions, experiences and reminiscences of neighbors and acquaintances. She lived to be over 100 years of age so her stories spanned many years and were very interesting.

Following the meetings, there was fellowship playing chickenfoot and 42. There were some Bingo nights, also.

Our chapter helped fund the door prizes at this year's convention and also furnished 2 items for the silent auction.

Mikki Meyer, our president, was a part of the convention planning committee that met at Das Haus in July.

Rosie Schulz, Secretary

COLORADO COUNTY

FEBRUARY 27, 2025

A meeting was held at the Colorado County AG Building with President Kathryn Haluska presiding. President Haluska called the meeting to order, led the pledge and prayer before welcoming guests. The December Christmas Party was reported as well attended. Members resigning their TGS membership were Heinsohn, Mattern, and Schobel.

It was decided to have the meeting dates continue to be on the 4th Thursday, but quarterly in the months of March, June, September and December.

Election of new officers are: Kathryn Haluska to continue to be president; Elena Halub as Vice-President; Nancy Williams, Secretary and Mary Stavinoha as treasurer.

Program for the evening was on the "History of the Zimmerscdheldt School" presented by Patty Glaeser, Joan Trojacek and Kim Lynch.

JUNE 26, 2025

The meeting was our annual Potluck dinner, and the food was abundant and wonderful. No one went away hungry.

Kathryn Haluska offered her rental property at 1503 Milam Street as an option and those in attendance agreed that it would make a good location. She also mentioned that we could consider it for our Christmas party in December.

President Kathryn stated that the Witte Schmid Museum house is being taken care of by a new couple and is in good condition. It was announced that a German Day on October 6th was being considered and that we would receive further information as soon as it was available.

The program for the meeting was a presentation by Shirley Isbell on the Our Lady of Scfhoenstaff Shrine Lamar in Rockport, Texas. This beautiful shrine was built and dedicated in Lamar Texas on October 18, 1959, for Father Jose3ph Kentenicfh of Germany. Today it serves as a retreat and place for men, women, and families. There are similar Shrines in Houston, Austin, Corpus Christi, and San Antonio. Shirley encouraged everyone to try to visit one of these shrines and stated how beautiful the chapel was and how welcoming the sisters are. After Shirley's presentation, Nancy Williams presented a German Trivia Game. Everyone had a great time testing their German knowledge in both Germany and Texas German Trivia.

FORT BEND COUNTY

Calendar for 2025:

Monday, January 20, 2025 ~ Planning ~ met at Schulze's Bar-B-Que

TBA ~ German Meal at the House of Blue at the Needville High School

Saturday, April 12, 2025 ~ TGS State Convention at St. John's Lutheran Church in Bellville, Texas.

Monday, July 14, 2025 ~ Ice Cream Social at the Albert George Library in Needville, Texas

Tuesday, September 9, 2025 ~ lunch at the Jay Cafe in Needville, Texas

Friday, November 7, 2025 ~ lunch with the Senior Citizens at the Immanuel Evangelical Church in Needville, Texas

Sunday, December 7, 2025 ~ Christmas Party at Das Haus in Shelby, Texas

Monday, January 12, 2026 ~ Planning for 2026



On Saturday, April 12, 2025, 8 members of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society attended the 42nd Texas German Society. The State Convention was hosted by the members of the group's State Officers with different responsibilities spread amongst the different chapters. The Fort Bend Chapter was in charge of the vendors and The Memoriam.

Pictured are: Cathy Hanzik, Ruth Kendziora, Delbert Niemann, and Carol Niemann, Clarence Thielemann, Erna Thielemann, Marilyn James



On Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 17 members of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society ate a German meal prepared by the students of Needville High School House of Blue. The students prepared and served the delicious meal under the direction of Chef Sarah Pugh.

Sitting: Deborah Pike, Ellvina Loehr, Clarence Thielemann, Erna Thielemann, Marilyn James
Standing front row: Cathy Hanzik, Ruth Kendziora, Evelyn Schultz, Helen Altimore, Patsye Roesler, Carol

Niemann, Linda Harris, Evelyn Schmidt, Chef Sarah Pugh; Standing back row: Lynn Roesler, Delbert Niemann, Richard Harris, Raymond Schmidt

HARRIS COUNTY

The Harris County chapter is meeting every other month, the odd month, at the Community Center on the fourth Thursday, from 5:45pm-7:45pm!

We try to have a speaker for our meetings. The theme for July is Watermelon, we add watermelon cuts to our potluck to celebrate the summer. In November is our annual “Feast”, where we celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year together with a potluck & catered meat and music!

KATY TRI-COUNTY



On November 16, 2024, the Katy-Tri County chapter visited Sam Houston Park in downtown Houston, the Museum and the following buildings.



The 1891 **St. John Church** was built by German and Swiss immigrant farmers in northwest Harris County for their Evangelical Lutheran congregation. It was either the second or third church building for the congregation, which formed around 1860. Services were held primarily in German until the 1930s.

The church is a vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style of architecture from the 19th century. The handmade cypress plank pews in the interior, original to the building, attest to the “can do” spirit that built this elegantly simple place of

worship. The building was moved from its original site on Mangum Road to Sam Houston Park in 1968. It is oriented east to west in the park, with the altar at the east, as it was on its original site.

The Kellum-Noble House is the oldest surviving building constructed in Houston. Even more remarkable, it stands on its original foundation and retains its original brick walls made with mud from Nathaniel Kellum’s brickyard on the banks of nearby Buffalo Bayou.

The 1868 **San Felipe Cottage** is an example of the vernacular architecture of Houston’s German population of the late 19th century. Originally located at 313 San Felipe Road (now West Dallas), the cottage was inhabited primarily by German immigrant families but also by immigrants. The house illustrates the cultural legacy of the German working class, one of the predominant cultural groups in Texas.

KATY TRI-COUNTY (Continued)



Saturday, December 14th, 8 members of the Katy Tri-County chapter celebrated Christmas at Brookwood.

Those attended were Peggy Schulin, Paddie McCarty, Francis Hartford, Keith Williams, Mike Severin, Rena Severin, Susan Daniels and Mark Daniels.

Looking forward to the TGS Convention in April. Wishing all of you a Blessed Christmas and see you in the New Year!



On Saturday, January 25, the Katy Tri-County chapter met at Peggy Schulin's house for a business meeting and a very delicious meal.



On Thursday, March 6, eleven members of the Katy Tri-County chapter met at Luby's for a business meeting and dinner.

KATY TRI-COUNTY (continued)



On Wednesday, March 19, 2025, the Katy Tri-County Chapter and guests went to Columbus to visit the Confederate Memorial Museum, the Santa Claus Museum and the Stafford Opera House. They completed the day with a delicious meal at Schobels Restaurant.



On Tuesday, June 3, Katy Tri-County met at Luby's cafeteria with ten members present.

KATY TRI-COUNTY (Continued)



On Saturday, July 19, the Katy Tri-County chapter toured the Roseberg Railroad Museum with a very informative guide, touring inside the caboose and one business passenger car. After the tour had a delicious lunch at the Ol Railroad Café, Rosenberg.

North Harris County

November 27, 2024

For the November 27, 2024 meeting, a video was presented on the Great Galveston Hurricane of 1900. The video featured Nicholas P. Cox, PhD, who spoke about the devastating impact of the hurricane on Galveston's population and economy. He also discussed the long-term consequences of the hurricane on the island, the Gulf Coast, Houston, and even other parts of Texas. After the video, President Aaron Schindewolf gave a presentation of information on the grade raising of Galveston that occurred following the construction of the Seawall, where the elevation of 500 city blocks was raised between 3 and 22 feet, and in the process, 2,000 structures were raised, along with fences, streetcar tracks, and all utilities.

January 27, 2025

For our January 2025 meeting, we watched the video "Cologne Cathedral – History of a German Gothic Masterpiece". Here is a description of video:

The foundation stone for what would become the tallest building in the world was laid on August 15th, 1248. The builders in Cologne knew that they would never get to see the finished cathedral.

Construction lasted for 632 years — and work on the Cologne Cathedral never really ends. The local saying is, "When the cathedral is finished, the world will end." The cathedral is a long-term project to create an appropriate home for the precious relics of the Three Wise Men, that can also accommodate the large streams of pilgrims. Today, the cathedral is Germany's most-visited landmark.

March 24, 2025

We have an exciting presentation for our March 2025 meeting – An evening with VALINA POLKA! Who is Valina Polka? She's the entertainment coordinator for Tomball German Festivals, she announces and stage manages for various German festivals around Texas, she teaches polkas, waltzes, social folk dances, and German folk dance for competition, she plays percussion, is the vocalist and manager for Das ist Lustig German band, She organizes and hosts small group vacations for Lustig Tours Holiday, and most recently began writing folk songs and poetry.

NORTH HARRIS COUNTY (Continued)

Her passion for people, culture and tradition led her to a path that is full of German heritage, dance, music and keeping traditions alive. She has passed this passion on to youngsters through German folk dance, and they now continue to preserve German folk dance, music, and love of Gemutlichkeit.

Her band Das Ist Lustig is one of the busiest and most requested traditional German folk duos / bands in the southern part of the USA. With performances all over the southeastern US in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee and, of course, Texas, they share their energetic style with festival patrons, restaurant and Biergarten clientele, students, and private party guests. Traveling Europe, exploring German language speaking countries, experiencing local culture and music is also a passion of hers.

Valina is excited to have an opportunity to share her love of all things German, her goals for continuing German heritage in the Houston / central Texas regions, her travel experiences, and probably bring a little music and dance along too.

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.

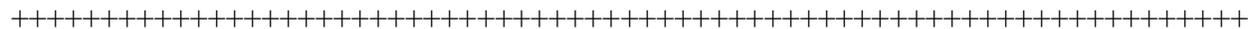
July 28, 2025

For our July 2025 meeting, we watched the first part of two of a video entitled "From Nefertiti to Beuys – Berlin's Museums". Here is a description of video:

Berlin has a unique treasure trove: the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation. It is one of the five largest universal collections in the world, including 20 museums with over five million objects from the bust of Nefertiti to the art of Joseph Beuys. The Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation includes one of the world's largest libraries as well as outstanding archives and research institutes. Among the stars of its gigantic collection, which encompasses all areas of cultural tradition from the Stone Age to contemporary art, are the bust of Nefertiti in the Neues Museum, Hans Holbein's portrait of the merchant Georg Gisze in the Gemäldegalerie, and the installation "Das Kapital" by Joseph Beuys in the Hamburger Bahnhof. But the Berlin museums do not only exhibit, they also search for answers to the great questions of humanity: How can we open up the world and its resources and yet live in harmony with it? And how can we better understand and shape reality through our rich cultural heritage? The two-part documentary reveals the secrets of many spectacular pieces of art, shows the museum organizers and accompanies archaeologists to China. Berlin's museums reveal themselves to be not just temples of beauty and ultra-modern research centers, but also as the home to countless fascinating stories.

RAMP FOR DAS HAUS!!!

We now have a ramp for Das Haus. We know, the picture does not show them at Das Haus! The two pictures are just to let you know that we now have them and what they look like.



The Rockne Historical Association welcomes (“Willkommen”) you to the inaugural Oktoberfest, to be held in Rockne, Texas, on Saturday, October 11, 2025. The event will commence at 11:30 AM and conclude at 3:30 PM at the Rockne Museum and Pioneer Village, located in Hilbig Park at the physical address of 4065 FM 535, Bastrop, Texas 78602.

This celebration of German heritage will feature a variety of activities, including beer (“Bier”) tastings and an assortment of finger foods, such as sausage wraps & hot dogs (“Wurst”), sauerkraut, and traditional German desserts. Attendees will have the opportunity to enjoy live entertainment provided by local musicians. Additionally, guests are encouraged to explore the Rockne Museum, the Lehman log cabin, the Goertz log cabin, and several outbuildings on the premises.

Visit the website at <https://www.rocknemuseumandhilbigpark.com>

Thank you,
Bonnie Bauer Shimek
TGS-Bastrop Chapter / RHA Board Officer
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512-581-2625

IN MEMORIAM



William "Billy" Lee Baca
April 1, 1943 - April 12, 2025

William Lee Baca was born on April 1, 1943 in La Grange, Texas to Anton and Esther (Barton) Baca. He was baptized on April 17, 1943 and confirmed Catholic, and later confirmed as an adult with St. Andrews Lutheran Church in Paint Creek. Billy spent his childhood on a dairy farm in LaGrange and graduated in 1961 from LaGrange High School. He then graduated with a Bachelor of Science from Sam Houston State University. Billy then served honorably in the US Army Reserves, earning the rank of Sergeant before leaving the service. He married Marilyn Kay Schulz on May 31, 1969 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in La Grange and was blessed with two children, Christie and Steven. Billy worked as a schoolteacher in Bastrop and Paige and then for the Giddings ISD in many roles, serving as a Special Education teacher before retiring. During the summertime, he took on various additional jobs to support his family.

When Billy wasn't working or volunteering with various organizations, he enjoyed hunting with his son, fishing, grilling for family functions, searching for arrowheads and rocks. He enjoyed spending time with his wife, children, and grandchildren at the beach and traveling to various sporting events, including his favorite, Astros. He also served his family as a "jack of all trades" and was not afraid to try new things. Billy and Marilyn enjoyed casino trips and visiting all 50 United States. As a member of St. Andrews Lutheran Church, he enjoyed volunteering with various fundraisers. Billy passed away the morning of Saturday, April 12, 2025 in Georgetown, Texas on a trip with his wife and family.



GRADY PRESTON MARTIN, JR.
July 23, 1943 – July 24, 2025

Grady Preston Martin, age 82, of Tomball, Texas, passed away peacefully on July 24, 2025, surrounded by family. Born on July 23, 1943, to Preston and Margie Martin in Brookhaven, Mississippi, Grady was a passionate entrepreneur and small business owner who made a lasting impact on the Tomball community.

Grady is survived by his beloved wife of 37 years, Sandra Martin; his five children Lee Ortiz, Brandi Hazelton, Austin Martin, Bryan Adcock, and Jason Adcock; seven grandchildren: Kristen, Timothy, Brendan, Miranda, Aidan, Hannah, Sadie ; and one great-grandchild Lily, Siblings: Phillip and Patricia Martin.. He was a devoted husband, proud father, cherished Opa, loving brother, uncle, and dear friend to many.

In 2000, Grady and Sandra founded the Tomball German Heritage Festival, a cherished tradition that continues each March and December. His deep love for people and the Tomball community was evident in every detail of the festival and remains a living tribute to his vision and generosity.

Grady was known not only as a builder of community, but also as a historian, an art enthusiast, and a lover of antiques. Those closest to him will remember his warm spirit, his storytelling, and his passion for preserving culture and bringing people together.

Grady's legacy will live on in every smile at the Tomball German Festivals, in every shared story, and in the hearts of those who had the privilege to know him.