

North Star Chapter

January 2010

<http://www.northstarchapter.org/>

Volume 35 Number 1

Creating Memorable Family Reunions

Saturday, January 23, 2010, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Berea Lutheran Church, 7538 Emerson Ave. S., Richfield MN

There's much information available on planning and financing a family reunion. But after the organization is done, it's time for the fun part: creating activities that will make your family reunion a success that will be remembered for years. Cynthia Miller from the North Star Chapter will give a presentation full of ideas for adding the small touches that make a big impact. Your next family reunion can be more than talking and eating. There will also be time after the presentation to share ideas from family reunions you've attended.

Spring Genealogy Workshop and Soup Luncheon

Saturday, February 20, 2010, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Berea Lutheran Church, 7538 Emerson Ave. S., Richfield MN

10:00 am — Noon: For those wishing to conduct research, the North Star Chapter library will be open. Seasoned researchers will be on hand to answer questions and guide research.

Noon —2:00 pm: Join us for hearty soups, homemade breads, and kuchen. Be prepared to experience memories of Grandma's kitchen. Free-will donation accepted.

2:00 pm: Michael Miller, Director and Bibliographer of NDSU's German Russian Heritage Collection (GRHC), will give a program profiling the mission and goals of this world-renowned non-profit organization (501-c3) located on the campus of North Dakota State University, Fargo.

Miller has been at the helm of GRHC's large and impressive book, document, and photo collection for his entire career. GRHC has been a pioneer in website building, creating and monitoring electronic listservs, organizing homeland tours, desk-top book publishing and working with Prairie Public Television, creating a series of documentaries about German-Russian culture.

Throughout his career, Miller and GRHC have developed relationships with German-Russian organizations and academic institutions across the globe.

Join us for a great day of learning, good food, and Gemütlichkeit.

Neujahr Schießer

by Jim Gessele

Editor's Note: At the Weihnachtsfest, we shared memories of holidays past, including the New Year's shooters. In this article, Jim Gessele explains the tradition for those of you who are unfamiliar with it.

The phenomenon of the "Neujahr Schießer" (New Year's shooters) comes up throughout German-Russian family lore and in letters from ancestors in the Russian homeland. One of the best accounts is found in Jake Klotzbeacher's memoir *As I Remember It*.

Klotzbeacher writes about the lonely life of our prairie ancestors: "Dances and other types of entertainment were not available to them due to sparse settlements of most areas. Also, their transportation was strictly by horse-drawn vehicles, particularly in the wintertime. All households would prepare extra food and alcoholic-type beverages on New Year's Eve, then retire for the night. Right after midnight, however, they could expect a rap on their bedroom window, indicating there were some New Year's shooters outside ready to wish them a Happy New Year."

The shooters were young neighborhood men armed with shotguns roaming the rural countryside. They stopped at residences, rapped on windows, and once they had the owner's attention they would recite a verse or sing a song. A typical greeting could go something like this:

*Nun ist das neue Jahr gekommen,
Hab' ich es mir vorgenommen,
Euch zu wünschen in der Zeit,
Friede, Glück und Einigkeit.*

(Now that the New Year has arrived
I take it upon myself
To wish upon all people
Peace, good fortune and unity.)

(**Neujahr Schießer** , continued on page 7)

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What's a Palatine?

by Henry Z. Jones, Jr., Fellow, American Society of Genealogists

Probably the question I'm asked most frequently at a genealogy gathering is "What's a Palatine?" Is it a surname, like "Harriett and Irving Palatine," or what?

"Palatine" is, indeed, a term that we often hear when climbing the family tree. In fact, I've been immersed in chronicling these so-called "Palatines" for some 40-plus years now. Basically, here's who they were: if you were a German-speaking immigrant to colonial America in the early- to mid-18th century, you would have been called a "Palatine" by those already here in the New World. It was sort of a generic term, the roots of which come from the word given to the area in southern Germany called the "Pfalz" or "Palatinate" where so many of these early settlers originated. Many American Palatines also came from other regions outside of the borders of today's Palatinate, however: Isenburg, the Kraichgau, Hessen, the Westerwald, Wurttemberg, and Siegen, for example.

The first burst of emigration from Germany began in the 1680s and then reached full thrust in 1709/10, with large settlements in Ireland and colonial New York and North Carolina. Later groups went to Pennsylvania, Maryland, and other colonies.

But, sadly, the new arrivals in America weren't simply known as "Palatines"; they were a hyphenate and called "Poor Palatines,"

which denoted the economic and social status in the Europe they had left behind. It was a derogatory term, and, unfortunately, it endured for a few decades.

However, upon their arrival, the Palatine immigrants to colonial America found a wilderness ready to be tamed and transformed into livable communities by perseverance and hard work. Their story is a tribute to their fortitude and quality of character, which enabled them to find the inner strength to meet the terrible difficulties they faced in their new life in a new land. They "took the risk" and succeeded!

Over the years, I have written several books documenting these hearty emigrants and their origins, including "The Palatine Families of New York, 1710," "More Palatine Families," "The Palatine Families of Ireland," "Even More Palatine Families" (with Lewis B. Rohrbach), and "Westerwald to America" (with Annette K. Burgert); all are available at my website www.hankjones.com/. Annette's many books on Pennsylvania Palatines and their origins are the best volumes covering that state's "Pennsylvania Dutch"; they are available from her at AKB Publications, 691 Weavertown Rd., Myerstown, PA 17067.

In addition to these books, it would be a wise decision for any descendant of these colonial Germans to join and network with the members of Palatines to America-German Genealogical Society (<http://palam.org>).

Words To Live By

Written by 90-year-old Regina Brett of Cleveland, Ohio.

1. Life isn't fair, but it's still good.
2. When in doubt, just take the next small step.
3. Life is too short to waste time hating anyone.
4. Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends and parents will. Stay in touch.
5. Pay off your credit cards every month.
6. You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.
7. Cry with someone. It's more healing than crying alone.
8. It's OK to get angry with God. He can take it.
9. Save for retirement starting with your first paycheck.
10. When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile.
11. Make peace with your past so it won't screw up the present.
12. It's OK to let your children see you cry.
13. Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
14. If a relationship has to be a secret, you shouldn't be in it.
15. Everything can change in the blink of an eye. But don't worry; God never blinks.
16. Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.
17. Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful.
18. Whatever doesn't kill you really does make you stronger.
19. It's never too late to have a happy childhood. But the second one is up to you and no one else.
20. When it comes to going after what you love in life, don't take no for an answer.
21. Burn the candles, use the nice sheets, wear the fancy lingerie. Don't save it for a special occasion. Today is special.
22. Over prepare, then go with the flow.
23. Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.
24. The most important sex organ is the brain.
25. No one is in charge of your happiness but you.
26. Frame every so-called disaster with these words: "In five years, will this matter?"
27. Always choose life.
28. Forgive everyone everything.
29. What other people think of you is none of your business.
30. God heals everything. Give Him time and let things go!
31. However good or bad a situation is, it will change.
32. Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does.
33. Believe in miracles.
34. God loves you because of who God is, not because of anything you did or didn't do.
35. Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it now.
36. Growing old beats the alternative -- dying young.
37. Your children get only one childhood.
38. All that truly matters in the end is that you loved.
39. Get outside every day. Miracles are waiting everywhere.
40. If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.
41. Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.
42. The best is yet to come.
43. No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up.
44. Yield.
45. Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift. Friends are the family that we choose for ourselves.

Salvation

A husband and wife were 85 years old and married for sixty years. They were in excellent health, due to the wife's insistence on healthy foods and exercise for the last decade.

But their good health didn't help when they went on vacation and their plane crashed, sending them to Heaven. St. Peter escorted them inside. He took them to a beautiful mansion, where a maid was hanging their favorite clothes in the closet.

They gasped in astonishment when Peter said, "This will be your home now." The old man asked Peter how much it would cost. "Nothing," Peter replied. "This is Heaven."

The old man looked out the window and saw a golf course more beautiful than he'd ever seen. "What are the fees," grumbled the old man. "This is Heaven," Peter replied. "You can play for free, every day."

They went to the clubhouse and saw a lavish buffet, with every imaginable cuisine, from steaks to exotic deserts, and free-flowing beverages. Peter said, "This is Heaven; it is all free for you to enjoy."

The old man glanced nervously at his wife. "Where are the low-fat and low-cholesterol foods," he asked.

"That's the best part," Peter replied. "You can eat and drink as much as you like of whatever you like, and you will never get fat or sick. This is Heaven!"

The old man said, "No gym to work out at?" Peter answered, "Not unless you want to,"

"No testing my sugar or blood pressure?"

"Never again. All you do here is enjoy yourself."

The old man glared at his wife and said, "You and your bran muffins. We could have been here ten years ago!"

We Survived the 1930s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s

We survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while being pregnant. They took aspirin, ate tuna, and didn't get tested for diabetes. Then we were put to sleep on our tummies in baby cribs covered in lead-based paint.

We rode in cars without car seats, seat belts, or air bags. We rode bikes without a helmet and had no childproof lids on medicine bottles. We drank water from a garden hose and shared one bottle of soda with four friends, and nobody actually caught germs and died from this.

We ate cupcakes, white bread, real butter and sugar, but we were not overweight because we were always outside playing. We would leave home in the morning and play all day as long as we were back before the streetlights came on. No one was able to reach us all day. And we were OK.

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones, and there were no lawsuits from this. We ate worms and dirt. We were given BB guns for our tenth birthday, made up games with sticks, and very few eyes were poked out.

Sports teams had try-outs and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. It was unheard of that a parent would bail us out if we broke the law. They actually sided with the law!

These generations produced great risk-takers, problem-solvers, and inventors. We had freedom, failure, success, and responsibility, and we learned to deal with it all.

Book Review: “The Pages In Between” by Erin Einhorn

By Cynthia Miller

In 2001, a young newspaper reporter named Erin Einhorn decided to move to Poland to look into the details of her mother Irene’s early life. Irene’s father, a Jew, had placed his toddler daughter with a Catholic family to protect her from the Nazis when he was sent to a concentration camp. He survived the war, remarried, and took his daughter to America. Irene always claimed she had no memories of her early life, and didn’t care. But the story was irresistible to a reporter, and Erin was willing to take a year’s leave from her job and move to a country where she didn’t speak the language in order to learn more.

“The Pages In Between” is the story of Erin’s search, which turned out very different than she would’ve hoped. She found the son of the woman who had saved her mother. But instead of a happy, fulfilling friendship, Erin found herself in the middle of a decades-long feud. According to her mother’s foster family, Irene’s father had promised them his house, where they still lived, in return for the safe care of his daughter. However, he never returned to Poland to finalize the deed...if it was true that he had intended to hand over his family home.

In addition to being the compelling story of a young woman’s journey into her family history, this book will appeal to anyone who has gone searching for their family’s stories. Erin touches on the difference between memory and truth, the grueling hours of research only to reach the dead-ends that all historians face, and the triumph of making

an unexpected connection. Erin’s year in Poland researching her mother’s story was certainly one of the turning points in her life, and many people will relate to her need to know her history.

Happy Birthday

January: Ron Anderson, John Groh, Sara Sue Groh, Pete Kleingartner, Bernadine Kuhn, Roger Kuhn, Cindy Miller

February: Bernie Becker, Sandy Brown, Gordon Herrboldt, Marlene Schonebaum, Sandi Zimmerman

Happy Anniversary

January: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Coates

Please Take Note

There have been some changes in the newsletter. Although the lay-out remains the same and we will continue to publish four times a year, we are now printing on 11 x 14 paper, which is folded to create sections of four, eight, or twelve pages. We are also mailing it first class, so it should arrive sooner.

Cynthia Miller has taken over mailing duties from Ardella Bennett.

If you have questions about receiving your newsletter, or need to have a newsletter mailed to a prospective member or organization, let Cindy know. Also, if you prefer to receive your newsletter by email or look it up on our website, let Cindy or Duane Stabler know.

.(Neujahr Schießer , continued from page 2)

*Wenn ich Euch nur wünschen könnte
Was ich in meinem Herzen finde,
So viel Glück und so viel Segen
Fährt man nur auf einem Wagen.
Kehrt man in alle Häuser ein,
Leib und Seel' soll gesegnet sein.*

(If I could only wish you
What I find in my heart,
So much luck and so many blessings
That they could only be hauled on a wagon.
We stop at all your houses
To bless both body and soul.)

*Wir wünschen Euch ein glückseliges Neues
Jahr,
Und ein langes Leben,
Darauf soll's Rauch und Feuer geben.*

(We wish you a New Year
Filled with good fortune and long life,
And now we offer you smoke and fire.)

Then shots rang out. Once the hoopla died down the Neujahr Schießer were invited inside to partake of the food and drink. Klotzbeacher writes: "After eating and drinking the best wine and schnapps, they'd depart for the next place. By dawn, most were so intoxicated they would start falling out of their sleds."

Everyone Loves Our Cookbook

"Received a copy of your cookbook "Sei Unser Gast" from a dear sister-in-law and I love the German recipes. Would it be possible to get 3 more copies?" -Dolores M., Yakima, WA

"I am so enjoying your cookbook... I just love it. The background information on the Germans from Russia was most interesting. Thanks for putting such an awesome cookbook out!" -Lavern B., Alberta, Canada

To Order More Sei Unser Gast Cookbooks

Share your German-Russian heritage with family and friends. *Sei Unser Gast* cookbooks make the perfect gift for birthdays, graduations, showers, weddings, anniversaries, and holidays. Give them to say "Danke schön." Donate copies to the libraries and schools in your community. *Sei Unser Gast* cookbooks are sold at some North Star Chapter meetings. To order by mail, complete the form below and mail it with a check payable to "North Star Chapter" (payable in U.S. dollars) and mail to: Cookbook Orders, North Star Chapter of Minnesota, P.O. Box 583642, Minneapolis, MN 55458-3642. Additional order forms can be printed from our website: www.northstarchapter.org

Name _____
St., Rt., P.O. Box _____
State/Province ZIP/Postal Code _____
Home Telephone Number (____) _____
Number of cookbooks being ordered _____
Total cost of books (see insert) \$ _____
Postage/Shipping (see insert) \$ _____
Total enclosed \$ _____

Cookbook Prices*

1 to 4 copies: \$12.95 each. 5 to 9 copies: \$11.95 each. Save! Buy 10 or more *Sei Unser Gast* cookbooks and pay only \$10.95 each.

Postage/Shipping

Only one mailing address per order, please.

1 to 4 books: \$2.50 per book (U.S.), \$5.75 (Canada)

5 to 9 books: \$2.00 per book (U.S.), \$4.50 (Canada)

10 or more books: \$1.50 per book (U.S.), \$4.00 (Canada)

*These are North Star Chapter prices. Other vendors may charge more or less for the book.

North Star Chapter of Minnesota-AHSGR and GRHS

Non-Profit Organization

P.O. Box 583642

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Return Service Requested

2010 Membership Form

_____ New _____ Renew _____ Individual _____ Family
Name(s) _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Please note that a membership directory might be provided to North Star Chapter members that would include your name, address, phone, and email. If the chapter chooses to publish a membership directory:

_____ I **agree** to have my name, address, phone and email in the published directory.

_____ Please **exclude** my information from the published directory.

National Membership: _____ AHSGR _____ GRHS _____ Both AHSGR and GRHS

Local dues are \$12.00 per year per family, plus membership in either AHSGR or GRHS. AHSGR members please submit \$62 (\$50 for AHSGR, \$12 for North Star membership). GRHS members please submit \$12.

GRHS requests that you send your national membership (\$50) to GRHS, 1125 W. Turnpike Ave., Bismarck ND 58501.

**Please make your check payable to North Star Chapter and submit to:
Ardella Bennett, 175 Spring Valley Dr., Bloomington MN 55420**

Questions: Contact Ardella at 952-884-4211 or ardellabennett@msn.com

For newsletter greeting only: Birthday Month(s) _____ Wedding Anniversary Month _____