

# North Star Chapter

March 2009

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

Volume 34 Number 2

## **Writing Your Life Story: Who will do it if you don't...and get it right?**

**Saturday, March 21, 2009, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM**

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

No matter what your age or life experiences, putting together your life story is an important, fulfilling endeavor. But who will record your life if you don't? Who will get it correct except for you? At our March program, we will welcome Pat Ramberg to guide us in getting started or continuing our life stories. Pat has a master's degree from the University of Minnesota and is retired after 20 years as a secondary teacher in the St. Paul schools. Pat's father told such colorful stories of his life that she has always been interested in family stories, and she started seriously working on memoir after her retirement. She published the article "Family Myths" in last summer's issue of GRHS's *Heritage Review* and has edited her dad's memoir *The Education of the Dakota Kid*. She has ideas for recording your life story as a narrative, a poem, or even onto a tape or a disk. Bring a pen and a notebook because we will spend a few minutes writing a short memoir .

## **North Star Chapter Annual Spring Banquet**

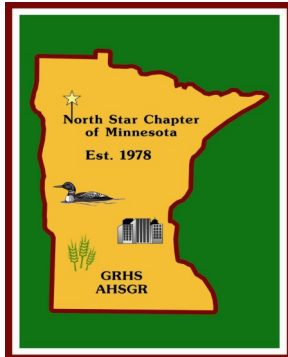
**Saturday, April 25, 2009, 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

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

Please join us for one of our premier events of the year, the annual spring banquet. The event will begin with a social hour at 5:00, followed by a catered dinner. Entertainment will be provided by the Twin Cities Harmonica Group. The group has travelled internationally, entertaining people with a variety of music featuring different harmonicas. Bass player Dick Gardner is the only living original member of the Harmonicats. The cost is \$17 per person, and guests are always welcome. A registration form is located in this newsletter; please mail it in by April 14. We usually have a full house for this event, so plan to join us soon!

## **International Conventions**

AHSGR and GRHS will hold separate conventions this year, and the time is now to plan your attendance. The AHSGR convention will be June 15-21 in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada. Please remember that a passport is now required to enter Canada. The GRHS convention will be September 9-13 in Rapid City, SD. The theme is "Living Our Grandparents' Dreams." More information can be found at the organizations' websites: [www.ahsgr.org](http://www.ahsgr.org) and [www.grhs.org](http://www.grhs.org).



## President's Message March 2009

By Duane Stabler, North Star Chapter

In spite of our cold, seemingly endless winter, the North Star Chapter activities are moving along. Eloise Kelly has stepped up to volunteer to be our

vice-president of programming. Lil Ward will assist her so we do have plans for our March meeting as well as our spring banquet. Details are found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Each time we meet, you are probably going to get a chance to volunteer to assist in one way or another. Many tasks are for a one-meeting sign-up so this helps if you feel uncomfortable about signing up for something all year long. Volunteers are the only thing that keeps any chapter going and ours is no exception. I view our lack of volunteers as a threat to our existence in the future. I thank Eloise for stepping forward and I thank Lil for offering to assist as needed.

Beyond our chapter, I can say that both AHSGR and GRHS are well into the planning stage for the national conventions in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada and Rapid City, SD, respectively.

I have relatives in Medicine Hat and I know they are involved with those activities; it's bound to be a good convention. Rapid City's GRHS chapter is hosting this year's GRHS convention. From my previous experience, they'll do a great job and it, too, should be fun. I encourage all of you to seriously consider going to one or both conventions. I always look forward to meeting old friends, making new friends, and learning new things about our heritage that I never knew. On occasion, I might be able to help someone along the way, too.

The AHSGR convention is in the height of  
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## Remembering Rose

By Carol Just

We lost another daughter of the prairie recently. Born of German-Russian immigrants and raised in rural Grant County, ND, Rose Doll Wood landed in urban Minnesota as a young wife and mother. The tenacity, optimism, and work ethic vital to survival on the prairie accompanied her to the city when she and husband Bob landed in Richfield some 40 years ago.

I met Rose and Bob in 1978 when the North Star Chapter of Minnesota was chartered as a chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (AHSGR). The North Star Chapter was unique in that members lived all over the large Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area and descended from colonies representing all parts of South Russia. A positive reality if you desire to learn about the different groups, not always so easy when distance and differences are thrown into the mix.

Those early members worked at building a solid community with a focus on education and maintaining the culture. They funded mailings, hosted events in their homes, and forged ahead with a vision to create a strong organization. Rose and Bob each held offices in the organization and were part of the glue that held the North Star Chapter together in those founding years.

The Wood home was often the site of North Star Chapter board meetings or event planning meetings. But my most memorable gatherings were in Rose's basement workroom. Rose had an upholstery business and for years the North Star Chapter newsletter was assembled on the giant cutting table in that room.

We used to joke that we were simply replacing our grandmother's quilting circle. In truth, the dynamic was the same. Over time we

got to know one another like family. In those couple of hours we would assemble, staple, label, stamp, seal, and organize by zip code, all the while sharing stories and chatting about our lives, our families, our research, our hometowns, recipes, travel, hopes, and dreams. In a way those newsletter assembly nights four times a year did as much to cement the future of the North Star Chapter as any chapter meeting or event could. We would end the evening around her dining room table with coffee and some tasty delicacy she whipped up for us. But most important we all were embraced by the knowledge that even though our families lived miles from our urban setting, we were like family for those few hours in her home.

Over time, there was a budget to pay a printer to do all the assembling. The torch passed and others assumed the mantle of chapter leadership. Rose and Bob always stayed involved. For years they handled the shipping duties for our wildly successful chapter cookbook, "Sei Unser Gast."

Rose's death in January 2009 brought all those long ago memories flooding back. She passed into death much the way she lived her life – with grace and dignity - leaving her imprint on our history.

## Member News

The North Star Chapter welcomes new members Pat Ramberg, White Bear Lake; Rachel Mantik, Shoreview; and Rebecca Ellsworth, Minneapolis.

Our condolences to Bernie and Roy Becker on the death of Roy's son, Jon, of St. Louis Park, on February 2.

## Opportunities Lost and Found

By Cynthia Miller

I had planned to share with you some ideas from a book I recently read describing the author's belief that cultural legacy is extremely important in forming who we are, even if we are very far from our country or heritage of origin. It helps explain why centuries of rice farming help Asians excel at math, and why many Southerners still carry the fighting spirit of their warrior Scots-Irish ancestors. But while I was forming my thoughts, I got some bad news: my great-uncle, my family history mentor, unexpectedly passed away at the age of 70.

I'm not close to many of my great-aunts and uncles. My parents have 30 aunts and uncles between them, and that doesn't include the spouses. But Uncle Mal was different. When I was a little girl, he retired from the military to his hometown, right next to mine. A lifelong bachelor, he was often included in our family events. His major pursuit during his retirement was genealogy. He was an active member of GRHS, and wrote a book about the history of his hometown. He is featured in the film "Prairie Crosses, Prairie Voices" because his father was a blacksmith who made iron crosses. We quietly bonded over our love of family history. After I gave a dinner speech at the 2002 GRHS convention, he told me, "Your grandfather would be so proud." It's a compliment I'll treasure all my life.

I was going to treat myself to a long visit with him this summer. I'm working on a family history book commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year of the Millers arriving in America. But now he's gone, and with him, the answers to so many questions I still have. He was the youngest of eight children, all gone now except for one. I don't feel in any way competent enough to fill his shoes as the family historian, but out of his dozens of nieces and nephews, I'm the one

who shared his passion.

Unfortunately, this is an experience I suspect many of you have had, and the regret never gets easier. Even if you've heard this a million times, I'm going to say it again, especially since we have a wonderful opportunity with our March program. Please get your stories down. If all you can do is record the bare facts, do it. Please interview your relatives. Don't think you have time, or you'll do it next year. Pick up the phone, write a letter, take a drive, and do it now. I celebrate my uncle's life and am so thankful for the gifts he shared with me. But my heart sinks when I think of the information that now rests with him forever. I plan to honor his memory by making sure I get as many stories as I can recorded now, before it's too late.

## Happy Birthday

**April:** Gayle Hafner

**May:** Sean Beaton, Diann Bennin, Pat Ramberg

**June:** Robert Coates, Pat Current, John Hafner, Robert Suppan

**July:** Paul Bennin, Sharon Kleingartner, Rosemary Larson, Arve Moser, Martha Suppan, Paul Winter

## Happy Anniversary

**April:** Sara Sue & John Groh, Shirley & Albert Pfeifle, Virginia Morton & Paul Winter

**May:** Janet Lohberger & Mayo Flegel, Gayle & John Hafner, Norma & Gordon Herrboldt, Rosemary & Ken Larson, Marlene & Tom Schonebaum

**June:** Glorian & Ron Anderson, Diann & Paul Bennin, Sharon & Pete Kleingartner

# Spring Banquet Registration

Reservations needed by Tuesday, April 14, 2009

Spring Banquet: Saturday, April 25, 2009 — Entertainment: Twin Cities Harmonica Group  
Social Hour at 5:00 PM, Dinner at 6:00 PM

Fee: US \$17.00 per person. Make check payable to North Star Chapter

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people in your party: \_\_\_\_\_

Menu:

Baked chicken, roast pork & dressing, baby red potatoes, Caesar and broccoli sunflower salads, glazed baby carrots and green beans almondine, breads, coffee, punch and dessert.

Send form with payment to : Lil Ward, 5177 Red Oak Drive, Moundsview MN 55112

## When Great-Grandmother Was Young

Great-Grandmother, on a winter's day,  
Milked the cows and fed them hay,  
Slopped the hogs, saddled the mule,  
And got the children off to school,  
Did a washing, mopped the floors,  
Washed the windows and did the chores,  
Swept the parlor, made the beds,  
Baked a dozen loaves of bread,  
Split some firewood and lugged it in,  
Enough to fill the kitchen bin,  
Cooked a supper that was delicious,  
And afterwards washed up all the dishes,  
Fed the cat and sprinkled the clothes,  
Mended a basketful of hose,  
Then opened the organ and began to play  
"When you come to the end of a perfect day."

## President's Message

(continued from page 2)

of summer, whereas the GRHS convention is after Labor Day. We'll hardly be finished with the conventions when we'll be getting ready for our North Star Chapter fall meetings.

I sincerely hope I see all of you sometime before then!

**North Star Chapter  
of Minnesota-AHSGR and GRHS**  
Non-Profit Organization  
P.O. Box 583642  
Minneapolis, MN 55458

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## 2009 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 (\$40) to GRHS, 1125 W. Turnpike Ave., Bismarck ND 58501.**

**Please make your check payable to North Star Chapter and submit to:**

**Helen Kleingartner, 9513 Pierce St. NE, Blaine MN 55434 Questions: Contact Helen at 763-205-2297.**

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