

# Trentoner Donauschwaben

Volume 2 Issue 1



January-March 2002

*Special points of interest:*

- Did you know that German missed out as being the official language of the USA by 3 votes & 1 vote in PA in the late 1700s?
- The Club published an 81 page Donauschwaben Recipe book in 1980.
- The Volkswagen Bug (old version) is the most mass produced auto in the world.
- Did you know the PA Germans (referred to as the PA Dutch) settled in PA around the same time as our Donauschwaben ancestors settled in Hungary?
- There were about 5,000 Donauschwaben in Yugoslavia today per their 1990 census.

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**TRENTON DONAUSCHWABEN GOODS**

Show your Club spirit! The Club has the following items for sale to members; golf-style shirts with the Club color logo in green or white in large, x-large... for \$25.00, Club color logo patches at \$3.00. Sew the patches on jackets, ball caps, coats, etc. Items can be shipped, so call for the shipping price.

If you are interested in purchasing these great Club items contact Secretary, Hans Martini or President, Joe Brandecker.

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**DEUTSCHE KINDERSCHULE**

It looks good for the re-start of our children's German language class. The registration date was Saturday 12 January 2002 at 9am. The cost is only \$30. It's not too late to register!

Classes will run until May on Saturdays from 9-11am and Frau Brigitte Kleinmann will be the teacher. This is a great opportunity for your children to start learning German. Please do not hesitate, support the club's Language School and provide your child with a great experience to learn a foreign language in a friendly, familiar atmosphere.

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Some of the 'Bratwurst Boys' (see "Club Matters" next page)



**KRAMPUS  
DRIVEN OFF AT  
CLUBHOUSE BY  
ST. NICK!**



Okay, so this isn't the kind of news that will get anyone dumping their stocks or something. But for the youngest of our members at the St. Nikolausfeier, it was still a great relief when good 'ol St. Nick drove away bad 'ol Krampus. Aably portrayed by Steve "St. Nick" Brandecker and Bob "Krampus" Walter, the appearance of the dynamic duo was actually only an enjoyable finish to what was an activity-filled day. The early December event is always fun for young and old, but this past 2001 edition was surely among the best in recent memory.

Poems by Brittaney Brandecker, and Anna & Luisa Martini as well as by Frau Eva Martini set the tone, interspersed with enjoyable sing-a-long Christmas songs (special thanks to Frau Liz Tindall for her keyboard accompaniment, it certainly made a big difference!). We also had fine performances by Lyla Lenyo and Brittaney B. on violins and Anna M. on the keyboard. Indeed, by the time Krampus began rattling his chain (and sending our youngest members scrambling for safety), the spirit of Christmas was everywhere evident at the Trentoner Donauschwaben!

The St. Nikolausfeier is among the Donauschwaben's most tradition-oriented events. We, as a club, are most gratified that it turned out to be such a big success. Many thanks to all, including Frau Caroline Brandecker for the decorating the hall so nicely and to the kitchen staff for all its efforts (love those cookies!). Thanks to everyone for coming. See you next time!

Hans Martini

## Club Matters

### FALL 2001 SCHLACHTFEST

The Fall 2001 Schlachtfest was another success! Over 200 individuals showed up on Sunday, 18 November at the 1pm and 3pm sitting to dine on Bratwurst, Sarma (stuffed cabbage), roast pork and Leberwurst.

The kitchen crew showed up on Saturday to “do their thing” and make the homemade sausage and stuffed cabbage. The sausage guys, under the watchful eye of Ludwig Jakober, “dug” right into their chores, cutting, grinding, mixing and stuffing! We are one of the only clubs that make our own wurst!

The ladies were busy making the other items for the fest. We can not forget the ground crew who raked, mowed and mulched the thousands of leaves around the Clubhouse. As in the past, we always have to make sure the end product is “sehr gut”.. So a tasty lunch to sample our finished products was necessary. And, as usual, the labor of love turned out excellently.

Those that attended the next day, surely agreed. We served about 200 diners during the two sittings. The Fall and Winter Schlachtfests continue to be a great success for the Club.

See you at our next Schlachtfest on Sunday, 10 February 2002. Better yet, show up the Saturday morning before and give us a hand in the preparation of this meal of our ancestors!

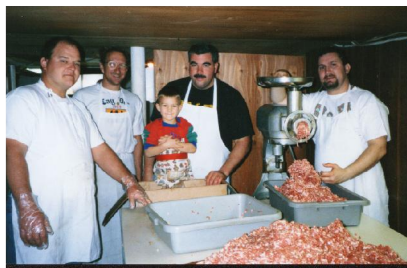


Some of the Sunday's (18 Nov. 2001) Schlachtfest Crew (left to right) Josefa Brandecker, Eva Martini, Steve Brandecker, Lyla Lenyo, Kim Walter, Brittaney Brandecker, Joe Brandecker, Caroline Brandecker, Anna Martini, Nicole Lenyo, Adam Martini, Ulrike Pietzke, JoAnn Martini, & Käthe Pfann. Ulrike Pietzke is from München, Germany. Her aunt, Ulrike DeVictoria, was a German language teacher here at the Club in the 1970s. Herzlich Willkommen!!

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### HELP NEEDED WITH MEALS

Preparation and service of these meals require a lot of time and effort from those who volunteer. Please, please consider helping out in the future. The number of helpers is growing smaller. Not only will you help the Club out, but you will have a lot of fun and fellowship with other members!



Some of the Schlachtfest Preparation Crew on 17 November 2001 (Top /Left-right): Ludwig Jakober, Käthe Pfann, Eva Martini, Josefa Brandecker, Ludwig Jakober, Eva Martini, Käthe Pfann, Joe Brandecker, Josef Brandecker, Tess Pinkerton, Rose Kernast, (Bottom/Left-right) Harold Paar, Dennis Bauer, Walt Suttman, Robert Walter, Hubert Pinkerton, Chuck Pinkerton, Stefan Brandecker, Dennis Bauer, Hubert Pinkerton, Stefan Brandecker & Walt Suttman.

## Genealogy & History Section

### Life in Banat and Batschka as told to me by my Grandparents by Jim Lieblang

As a child, I remember hearing stories from my Oma and Opa about life in the "old country". To better understand the following story, first a little background to understand their local rivalries.

My Grandmother (a Rohrbacher) was born and lived in Palanka (Batschka). She came directly to the US from there. My Grandfather Lieblang's father came from Molidorf (Banat). They had moved to Wekerledorf (8 km n of Palanka) about 1890. My Great Grandfather had previously married a woman from Obrovatz (Batschka), about 30 km n of Palanka.

About 1895, the Lieblang's moved from Wekerledorf to Orolik/Rollitsch (Syrem), just south of Palanka. They came to the US in 1905.

Thus, my family had lived in three of the five German settled provinces (except for Baranja just west of Batschka and Slavonia, just west of Syrem). In their hearts, the Lieblang's always considered themselves BANATER's and the Rohrbacher's always considered themselves BATSCHKA'S". The seeds were planted for rivalries that always exist throughout the world.

Just as we nowadays tell jokes or stories about PA versus NJ, or Mercer versus Burlington, or Hamilton versus Ewing Township, so did our grandparents have their own rivalries.

It still continues, but as good natured humor for those involved. I am also a member of the German American Club. The first time I went to the bar there, I was told by one of the Herdt's (or Bohn's) that the "Batschka people sit on one side of the bar and the Banaters sit on the other side of the bar" still to this day!!!!

As a child, Oma and Opa would occasionally kid each other about how there province was better than the others.

One day, Oma (who was from the progressive modern metropolis of Palanka) was kidding Opa telling him how all Banater's were just poor farmers compared to those in Batschka. Well, Grandpop would not take that lying down! He replied, "Maybe others were poor, but we were rich. We were NOT poor." Grandmom laughed and said "You were just as poor as all the other farm families there".

Grandpop hesitated, said nothing for a moment and then played his "ace card"....

"We were too rich" he said, "and I can prove it!" Grandmom's eyebrows raised. Maybe she should back down.

But no, she defiantly said to Opa "Prove it!". Grandpop, who was not much of a talker, showed his ace for all to see..... "We were rich because WE OWNED A HORSE!"

Game over. Set, game and match I thought. Grandmom can not top that one ever!

Wrong! Oma began to smile.... Her grin got bigger and bigger. Finally, she looked at Grandpop and played her secret card....."YOU MAY HAVE HAD A HORSE, BUT IT WAS BLIND !!!!!"

Grandmom won.....or so I thought.....We all laughed. Poor Opa, just retreated and said nothing. A cute story. Funny punch line. It is over. But it was not!.....

This is not the end of the story. I must have heard that story around 1955 or so. I had to wait until 1992 to find out that Grandpop was actually right! They were rich! How did I find out?

My wife and I are friends with an Austrian historian named Dr Erwin A Schmidl. He has written several books on 17<sup>th</sup> thru 20<sup>th</sup> century European history. He is also the Assistant Director of the Austrian Military Museum in Wien. One night at dinner I told him the above story. I got to the last part and told him how Grandmom had "snuckered" Grandpop and won the argument with her "blind horse" comment.

Erwin shook his head and laughed. "I am sorry to tell you this" he said, "but your Grandfather was right! Hardly anyone could afford to buy a horse in good condition. The cost was out of reach for just about everyone. Once in a while, the Army would get rid of its remounts that were lame or blind. The lucky farmer who had saved up money got to buy one of the ex-army horses. It was a status of wealth because even though blind, the horse could still pull a plow and a cart! Your Granddad's family had an envious possession. Anyone would have loved to had a blind horse to help in the fields."

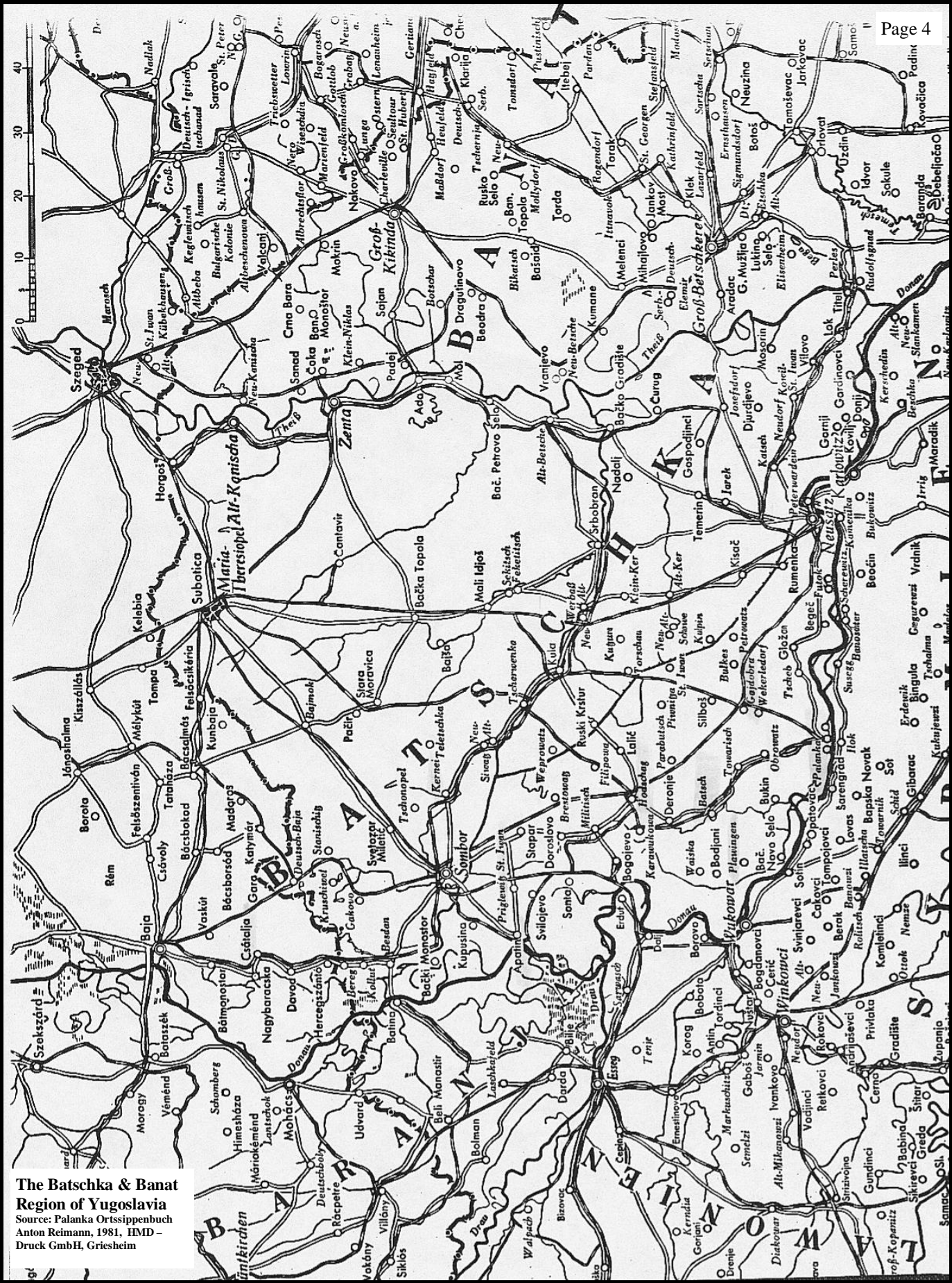
So Opa, you were right all along! Your family was rich in a material sense with the purchase of their blind horse. Sorry Oma, but you were wrong.

In today's life with Pokemon's and Sony DVD players, it is probably difficult to have our children relate to a story about life four generations ago. But the story does reflect our roots and who we are and what we are and where we come from. We are the children and grandchildren of these poor farmers who settled the "wild east".

And we should never forget it or not be proud of our heritage. Read the story to your children. If you have some of your own, send them in to our editor, Dennis for others to share.

**In this issue of the newsletter (page 4) we have included a map of the Batschka/Banat area of Yugoslavia for your reference and use while reading several of the articles included in this edition of the newsletter.**





**The Batschka & Banat  
Region of Yugoslavia**  
 Source: Palanka Ortssippenbuch  
 Anton Reimann, 1981, HMD -  
 Druck GmbH, Griesheim

# Membership News

## 2002 Club Officers & Staff

Joseph Brandecker— President  
 Kim Walter— V.P. for Human Resources  
 Eva Martini— Recording Secretary  
 Josefa Brandecker— President Ladies' Auxiliary  
 Harold Paar— President of German Language School  
 Dennis J. Bauer— V.P. for Cultural Affairs, Genealogist, Newspaper Editor  
 Dana Miles— Web Master

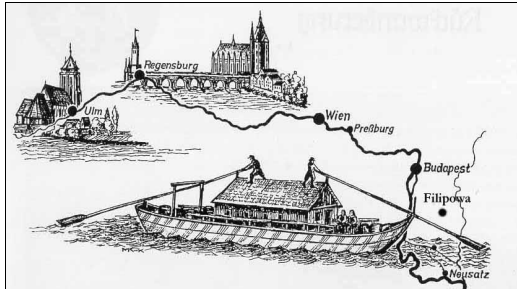
Robert Walter— V.P. for Facilities  
 Hans Martini— Corresponding Secretary  
 Ludwig Jakober— Treasurer  
 Adam Martini— Newspaper Staff Writer



### WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Herr Erich Haratsch of Bradley Beach, NJ. Club member Hans Martini was Erich's sponsor. He is a young immigrant from Munich who works as a certified engineer for a firm in Holmdel, NJ.

Herr Kurt Müller and his wife, Elizabeth of Yardville, NJ, recently became members. Kurt, who is a retired U.S. Army Colonel, now ably teaches our adult language education class. The Müller's, who have two grown children, Christa and Evan, and were brought into the Club by member Harold Paar.



Voyage of our Ancestors from Germany to Hungary

### PALANKA HISTORY NOW IN ENGLISH

Member John E. Feldenzer and wife, Myrtle, of Montana just completed a labor of love. They asked Oskar Feldtänzer (original contributor to the book) and daughter, Doris, to translate the Palanka history section of the *Ortssippenbuch Palanka* into English. Permission was then obtained from the late Anton Reimann's (original author) family to publish this document. John and Myrtle then retyped, edited the translation and then published it in a soft back book.

The book also contains color pictures of Donauschwaben traditional customs and maps of the Batschka area. The book can be yours for only \$20, which includes postage and handling. For those of us with roots from Palanka, it is a great reference to hand down to our children. It also contains historical information common to all Donauschwaben, so it is a great gift to you to purchase also.

You can send your order to; John Feldenzer, 6419 Kootenai River Rd., Libby, MT 59923.

Danke, John

## Membership Happenings (births, engagements, weddings, deaths, anniversaries, vacation trips, graduations, etc.)

**Gute Besserung:** The Club wishes Dennis J. Bauer's father, Jacob A. Bauer, a continued recovery. He had major surgery in 2001.

The Club also wishes a continued recovery to one of our Language School teachers, Lou Romolo. Lou had surgery in the Fall of 2001.

**With Sympathy We Note:** Belated condolences to members, Carl & Sue Conrad of Cape May, NJ, on the passing of Carl's mother late last year.

**Hochzeit:** Belated congratulations to Lori Walter & Jim Lostetter of Tabb, VA. They were married 2 April 2001. The club wishes them all the very best as they embark on their new life together! God's speed. Jim is in the U.S. Navy.

### CLUB NEWSLETTER RECOGNIZED

The Club's newsletter was recently recognized in the December 2001 issue of the *Donauschwäbische Familienkundliche Forschungsblätter*. The Club sends the Arbeitskreises donauschwäbischer Familienforscher e.V. (AKdFF) a courtesy copy for its library. The article, by Dr. Günter Junkers, points out that Dennis J. Bauer (a AKdFF member), Hans Martini and other club members contribute to the Trenton Donauschwaben Club newsletter, which includes articles about Donauschwaben genealogy, historical events, club events and member news. He notes that the articles can be found in English and/or German.

The Club wishes to thank Dr. Junkers for his kind and thoughtful article about our newsletter.

# Deutsche Ecke, Seite 1

## Poem by Luise Baumgartner, Hörsching, Austria

(Sister of Member, Ludwig Jakober, permission granted)

Lebt wohl Ihr lieben Donauschwaben  
Ich will Euch allen auf wiedersehen sagen  
Lebt wohl in diesem für mich so fremden  
Land.  
wo Euch das Schicksal hat hingesandt.

\*

Doch euer nettes Donauschwabenheim  
soll für Euch immer ein Stückchen Heimat  
sein

Haltet fest zusammen seid froh und munter  
Ein echter Donauschwabe geht nicht unter.

\*

Die Zeit verging schnell, sie war kurz und  
schön

Und ich hoffe es gibt nach Jahren ein frohes  
wiedersehen, bleibt alle Gesund.

*Written in 1987 after her visit to the Club*  
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## DIE FLUCHT – Adam Martini

Es war im Jahre 1947, im Lager Kruschiwil, dicht an der ungarischen Grenze, als wir mit der Idee spielten nach Gara in Ungarn zu fliehen und somit unser Lagerleben in Tito's Reich, zu beenden. Es war aber nicht leicht, obwohl Kruschiwil und Gara eigentlich nicht weit auseinander sind, so macht die Grenze dort doch eine grosse Aufwärtskurve und wenn man nicht aufpasst dann endete man wieder in Jugoslawien. Das war aber nicht alles. Meine Grossmutter hatte damals Wasser in den Füessen und tat sich sehr schwer beim gehen. Ich hatte "Malaria" oder so etwas ähnliches. Es war ein hohes Fieber und auch teilweise ein Schüttelfrost. Meine Schwester war damals drei Jahre alt und unsere Mutter musste täglich aufs Feld arbeiten gehen. Wir waren also nicht die ideale Gruppe für eine lange nächtliche Flucht. Es ist aber interessant, dass, wenn man fast am Ende ist, dann kommt auf einmal irgendwie Hilfe. So war es auch mit uns. Die Hilfe kam von drei jungen Burschen, die Leute über die Grenze führten. Meine Tante, eine Nonne, die damals in Gara Schullehrerin war, hat erfahren, dass wir in Kruschiwil sind und hat dann diese jungen Männer gebeten, uns

zu finden und dann nach Gara zu bringen. So war es dann, dass es auf einmal nach langer, langer Zeit der Trostlosigkeit und Angst, die Hoffnung wieder aufflackerte und der Gedanke, lebendig hier rauszukommen, seinen Anfang hatte. Natürlich als der junge Mann meine Grossmutter, meine Schwester und mich das erste Mal sah, da hat er nicht viel gesagt, nur murmelte er dass ich zuerst stärker werden müsste, sonst geht es nicht. Ich war nämlich dürr wie eine Bohnenstange und konnte fast nicht mehr gehen. So gab es dann periodische Besuche von einem der drei Burschen, der auch immer Brot mitbrachte für uns, damit wir **s t ä r k e r w e r d e n**. Nach einigen Wochen wurde dann die Flucht geplant. Es war an einem Wochentag an dem meine Mutter draussen auf dem Felde arbeiten musste und dann anstatt zurück in's Lager zu kommen, uns dann ausserhalb des Lagers treffen sollte. Alles war abgesprochen und der grosse Tag stand vor der Tür. Ich wurde total lebendig, denn die Idee, hier endlich rauszukommen, war schon lange begraben, aber jetzt gab es eine Möglichkeit zur Freiheit und Gara war der erste und wichtigste Schritt. So kam es dann das meine Grossmutter meine kleine Schwester Maria und mich zum Mitgehen aufforderte. Die Idee war irgendwie über den leeren Streifen Land zu kommen und dann in den Feldern an der anderen Seite zu verschwinden. Ein leerer Streifen gab es um ganz Kruschiwil, das half den Posten, die in regelmässigen Abständen standen, das fliehen aus den Lagern zu verhindern. So Grossmutter sagte zu uns, wir sollen so tun als ob wir Sachen zum Brennen sammelten und dann ganz langsam immer weiter in den leeren Streifen Land zu wandern, wenn das Feld an der anderen Seite nahe genug erscheint, dann schnell dort hineinlaufen und nur weiterlaufen. So kam es zu unserem ersten Versuch das Lager zu verlassen. Wir drei wanderten langsam in den leeren Streifen Land, schauten auf die Erde und sammelten kleine getrocknete Stängel und Zweige. Doch das laute Wort "Stoj" schreckte uns und der Posten mit seiner Puschka stand nicht weit von uns und wir rannten so schnell wir konnten zurück in's Lager.

Unsere arme Grossmutter mit ihren dicken Füessen hatte es nicht leicht, aber war doch kurz hinter uns und wir mussten wieder zurück gehen zu unserem Zimmer und Lagerleben. Die Mutter war aber draussen auf dem Treffplatz und wartete auf uns bis spät Abends und kam dann wieder **z u r ü c k i n ' s L a g e r**. Somit kam es zum zweiten Versuch. Alles wurde wieder mit den drei Burschen geplant, die Mutter trifft uns nach der Feldarbeit auf einem gewissen Platz ausserhalb des Lagers. Wir sollen dann im Kukuruzfeld sitzen, so ungefähr in der Mitte des Feldes. Das Kukuruzfeld grenzte an den leeren Streifen an einem Ende und hatte einen Fahrweg am anderen Ende. Die Jungs hatten immer eine Gruppe von zirka 14 - 20 Personen, die sie dann über die Grenze nach Ungarn vielmehr Gara führten. Das Signal war zwei laute Pfiffe von den Führern und wir mussten dann innerhalb zehn Minuten am anderen Ende des Kukuruzfeldes sein um mitzugehen. Die Jungs sagten sie könnten nicht länger warten, denn der Pfiff alarmierte auch die Straschars, die dann auch reagierten. Nach zehn Minuten piffen sie wieder, und wenn man nicht dort war verpasste man den **G r e n z ü b e r g a n g**.

So unser zweiter Versuch aus dem Lager über den leeren Streifen Land zu kommen war wieder auf der Tagesordnung. Grossmutter, Maria und ich sammelten zur Mitte des leeren Landstreifens. Immer auf den Boden schauend, hin und wieder einen Zweig oder was immer aufheben und langsam sich der anderen Seite nähern. Wenn man "Stoj" hört dann entweder zurückrennen oder in die Felder laufen. Diesesmal waren wir aber über der Hälfte, als wir das laute "Stoj" hörten und wir rannten in's Feld. Es war aber nicht das Kukuruzfeld sondern ein Hanffeld, das ist nicht wie ein Kukuruzfeld. Es ist dicht und der Blütenstaub ist. (continued on page 8)



# German Ethnic Foods & Recipes

## Grumbiera Suppe—Sour Cream Potato Soup (Tejfeles krumpli leves in Hungarian)

Submitted by Dennis J. Bauer, prepared by my grandmother, Theresa Helleis Bauer

- 2 tsp. salt
- ½ pint sour cream
- 6 medium potatoes diced
- 1 carrot sliced
- 1 onion
- 3 cups water
- 2 tblsp. flour
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 2 tblsp. butter

Cook diced potatoes, carrots with onion in deep pot in 1½ cups water for 15 minutes, add salt.

In skillet, brown flour in melted butter. Add 1½ cups cold water & stir until smooth. Pour this mixture into cooked potatoes, boil a few minutes. Add sour cream just before serving. Six servings. Enjoy!

You can also cook several eggs in the soup by floating them on top of the soup broth until done. The soup can also be served over cooked noodles.

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## Vanilla Kränze (Vanilla Wreaths)

Submitted by Karin Burger, prepared by my grandmother, Mary Bohnert Sherer

- 1 lb. Flour (3 ¾ cups)
- 7 oz. Powdered sugar (1 ¾ cups)
- 2 T. sour cream
- 1 T. vanilla
- 1 egg
- ¾ lb. Shortening (1 ½ cups)

### Top Halves

- 1 egg white plus 1 T. water (for tops)
- Finely chopped walnuts

### For Assembling

- Powdered sugar
- 1 or 2 jars best-quality seedless jam

Mix together the flour, powdered sugar, sour cream, vanilla, egg and shortening. Knead until smooth. Wrap dough

in waxed paper and chill for around an hour. Roll out to about 1/8" thickness and cut out with a round wreath-shaped cookie cutter. In half the cookies, also cut out center holes using a lipstick tube or small round hors d'oeuvre cutter. These will be the "top" halves.

**Top Halves:** Beat 1 egg white with one tablespoon water. Brush on the cookie, then sprinkle it with chopped nuts, then granulated sugar.

Bake the cookies for around 10 minutes, till *light* golden, at 350 – 375.

Sift powdered sugar onto top halves with holes.

Assemble cookies by spreading each bottom half with a small amount of jam and pairing it with a top half containing a hole. Let cookies "cure" overnight in an airtight container before serving.

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## Stuffed Cabbage (Sarma)

From the Book of Danube Swabian Recipes, Trenton NJ, 1980

- 2 lbs. Ground pork
- 4 T. rice
- 1 large onion (chopped)
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp. Salt
- ½ tsp. Pepper
- 2 tsp. Paprika
- 1 head cabbage
- 1 lb. Sauerkraut
- Add water

Remove core and steam cabbage in large pot of boiling water. Place cabbage in colander and separate leaves.

Mix meat, rice, onion, egg, salt, pepper and paprika. Put large spoonfuls of meat mixture in each cabbage leaf and roll; tuck in the sides. Spread leftover cabbage on bottom of pot. Place cabbage rolls and sauerkraut in layers. Add water. Cover, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for about 1½ hours.

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## Fastnachts (Raised Doughnuts)

Dawn Bicht, Schuylkill County, PA  
Website ([www.rootsweb.com/~paschuy/cooling.html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~paschuy/cooling.html))

Eating Fastnachts on Strove Tuesday (Fat Tuesday) is an old Pennsylvania German custom. Submitted by Dennis J. Bauer

For the Sponge:

- 1 cake yeast
- 2 cups lukewarm water
- 4 scant cups sifted flour

At night break and soak yeast in lukewarm water for 20 minutes. Mix with flour to a thick batter. Cover, let rise in warm place overnight until doubles.

For the Dough:

- 1/2 cup shortening
- 3/8 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 2 eggs
- 5 cups or more of flour

In the morning cream together the shortening, sugar and salt. Add this to the risen sponge, with the beaten eggs and spice. Stir in as much flour as mixture will take up readily, making a rather soft dough. Mix well. Let rise until doubled in bulk. If desired, stir down and let rise again until nearly doubled in bulk. Turn onto floured board, pat or roll until 1/2 inch thick and doubled.

Fry in deep hot fat about 375 degrees. If no thermometer is at hand, test temperature with 1 inch square of bread, which should brown in 1 minute.



## Deutsche Ecke, Seite 2

**(Continued from page 6—Die Flucht)**

betäubend. Wir aber rannten für unser Leben. Immer tiefer ins Hanffeld bis wir nichts mehr hörten von den Straschars. Wir sassen dort für Stunden bis zum späten Nachmittag. Ich bekam meine ersten Kopfschmerzen damals von dem starken und schweren Hanfduft. Wir mussten aber in's Kukuruzfeld um unsere Mutter zu treffen. Und so gingen wir am späten Nachmittag in Richtung des Kukuruzfeldes. Dort angekommen warteten wir auf unsere Mutter, die sich wieder nach der Feldarbeit wegschlich um uns dort zu treffen. Endlich war sie da, Gott sei Dank. Wir gingen dann mehr in die Mitte des Kukuruzfeldes, damit wir nicht von einer Patrolle erwischt werden, denn das ist auch oft vorgekommen. Wir mussten aber bis zehn Uhr abends warten. Ohne Uhr weiss man nicht wenn es zehn Uhr ist, so jemand musste auf die ersten Pffiffe warten. Die Mutter schlief ein und auch Maria. Grossmutter und ich aber waren wach wie die Wachtel. Die ausserordentlichen Umstände, sowie die Möglichkeit wieder frei zu sein, peitschte uns beide auf. Nach langer Wartezeit, eine kleine Ewigkeit, hörten wir zwei schrille Pffiffe. Wir weckten Mutter und Maria um dann sofort an's andere Ende des Feldes zu ghen. Wir standen auf und unsere Mutter, noch etwas verschlafen, fing an zu gehen, aber es war die verkehrte Richtung, sie ging wieder zurück in Richtung Kruschiwil. Grossmutter und ich sagten ihr nein wir müssen die andere Richtung einschlagen, aber wir konnten sie nicht überzeugen. Sie war wahrscheinlich müde von der Feldarbeit und der Schlaf disorientierte sie total. So gingen wir ihr nach und erreichten das Ende des Feldes. Nach einigen Minuten hörten wir wieder die Pffiffe, aber wir waren am verkehrten Ende. Da bestand keine Möglichkeit die Gruppe zu erreichen, das Feld war zu lange. Also wieder zurück in's Lager, nur aufpassen musste man, dass man nicht erwischt wird, beim zurückschleichen.

**Fortsetzung folgt.**

**MY ESCAPE TO FREEDOM... by  
Adam Martini**

**(Editor's note: The following article is an English translation by Hans Martini of "Die Flucht" - the true-life experience of a 10-year-old Donauschwabe from Bukin during the ethnic cleansing of Germans from Yugoslavia in the aftermath of WWII. This story is not unlike that of many other Donauschwaben who survived similar ordeals. Sadly, some 126,000 others did not.)**

In 1947 my mother, grandmother, sister and I found ourselves in the "detention" camp of Kruschiwel situated near the Yugoslav - Hungarian border desperately trying to figure a way to escape. It was a daunting prospect despite the close proximity of Kruschiwel to Gara, Hungary. In fact, the border was shaped in such a fashion that if one wasn't careful one could end up right back in Yugoslavia! To make matters worse, my grandmother had a great deal of trouble walking, I had a form of malaria with its accompanying high fever and cold shakes, my little sister Maria was just three and my mother worked every day in nearby fields. We were not the ideal group to attempt an escape! Our prospects were not good and we had little hope.

It's interesting that a real opportunity to escape came just when it seemed things couldn't get any worse and the end appeared near. Our salvation came in the form of three young men hired by my aunt, a schoolteacher and nun stationed in the aforementioned Gara. These men made it possible for a number of Donauschwaben to flee and secretly visited us to discuss the plan. Upon seeing us for the first time - my ailing grandmother, my little sister and myself, a skinny bean of a kid almost too sick to move - they determined that we would have to be much healthier if our escape would have any chance of success. They then began to bring us bread during each successive visit to help make us stronger. And so it was that at the very depths of our hopelessness and despair, there now flickered a glimmer of hope that we might yet survive this hor-

rendous ordeal.

After a few weeks our escape was set. It was a day on which my mother would be working in the fields nearby, allowing her to come directly to a meeting point outside of camp. Everything was in place and soon the moment arrived. I was completely energized by the possibility of survival! My grandmother grabbed my sister and me and proceeded to the "no man's land" strip of cleared field, which surrounded Kruschiwel. This clearing aided the sentries posted all around the perimeter and were meant to prevent anyone from escaping. The idea was that we would work our way to the other side of the clearing by collecting firewood and when we were close enough, run into the nearby cornfield. Slowly we worked our way over, keeping our heads down all the while pretending to be intent on our task.

A loud "stoj!!" (halt!) stunned us as we looked up to see a sentry with his menacing weapon. We then ran as fast as we could back to camp, even my grandmother managed to keep up! My mother returned to camp later after waiting in vain at the designated meeting place for many hours.

Our second escape plan was similar to the first. We had a strict schedule to adhere to once we made it through the clearing and into the cornfield. A whistle would signal us to move to the end of the cornfield and another whistle would signal the move toward the Hungarian border and freedom. Of course, the whistle would also alert the sentries so precise timing and swift movement were required. Those who were not fast enough would be left behind.

Our second escape attempt found the three of us in the same clearing making as if we were collecting firewood just as before. Always looking down, we stopped here and there to pick up a twig or something and slowly eased our way through the clearing.

(Continued on page 9)



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(Continued from page 8—My Escape to Freedom...)

The shrill command “stoj!!!” was again heard but as we were more than halfway, we decided to make a run for it! We ran for our lives with little regard that the field we ran through was a hemp field and not corn. Hemp is planted in dense, thick rows with pollen that makes you dizzy (I would suffer from an intense headache as a result). Onwards we ran as our lives truly hung in the balance. We ran until the shout of the sentry could no longer be heard and then sat hidden in the hemp for hours until late afternoon. The three of us proceeded to the meeting place with my mother who had stolen away from her work detail. Our joy upon seeing her, however, was tempered by the need to move to the cornfield and avoid the frequent patrols whose path our little group couldn't afford to cross.

We waited many hours in that cornfield and listened like hawks for the sound of the whistle. While my mother and sister dozed, my grandmother and I sat fully awake. Partially because of the excitement of the moment and the idea of being free at last, there was no way I could sleep. Then after a small eternity the whistle finally sounded! We awakened my mother and sister, both of whom rose quickly knowing that time was of the essence. My mother, perhaps disoriented from malnutrition, the long hours of hard fieldwork and lack of sleep, proceeded in the wrong direction! Try as we might, my grandmother and I could not convince her otherwise, and we all headed to the wrong end of the field. The sound of the whistle at the other end of the field meant we would not be escaping to freedom that night. It was with great care (and not a little disappointment) that we had to steal our way back into the camp at Kruschiwel.

*(to be continued in the next issue)*

# Club Events for the Winter 2002

## EVENTS— DATES & TIMES

- \* *Winteressen— Sunday, 1pm*  
*20 January 2002*
- \* *Annual Meeting— Sunday, 1pm, 27*  
*January 2002*
- \* *Schlachtfest— Sunday, 1 & 3pm*  
*10 February 2002*
- \* *Osteressen— Sunday, 24 March 2002*
- \* *Donauschwabenessen— Sunday, 1pm, 14*  
*April 2002*
- \* *Muttertagessen— Sunday, 1pm, 5 May*  
*2002*

*Please call Frau Josefa Brandecker at (609)  
585-8460 for meal reservations.*

## Vielen Dank !

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One of President Joe Brandecker's duties?  
Mulching leaves at the Club 17 Nov. 2001

