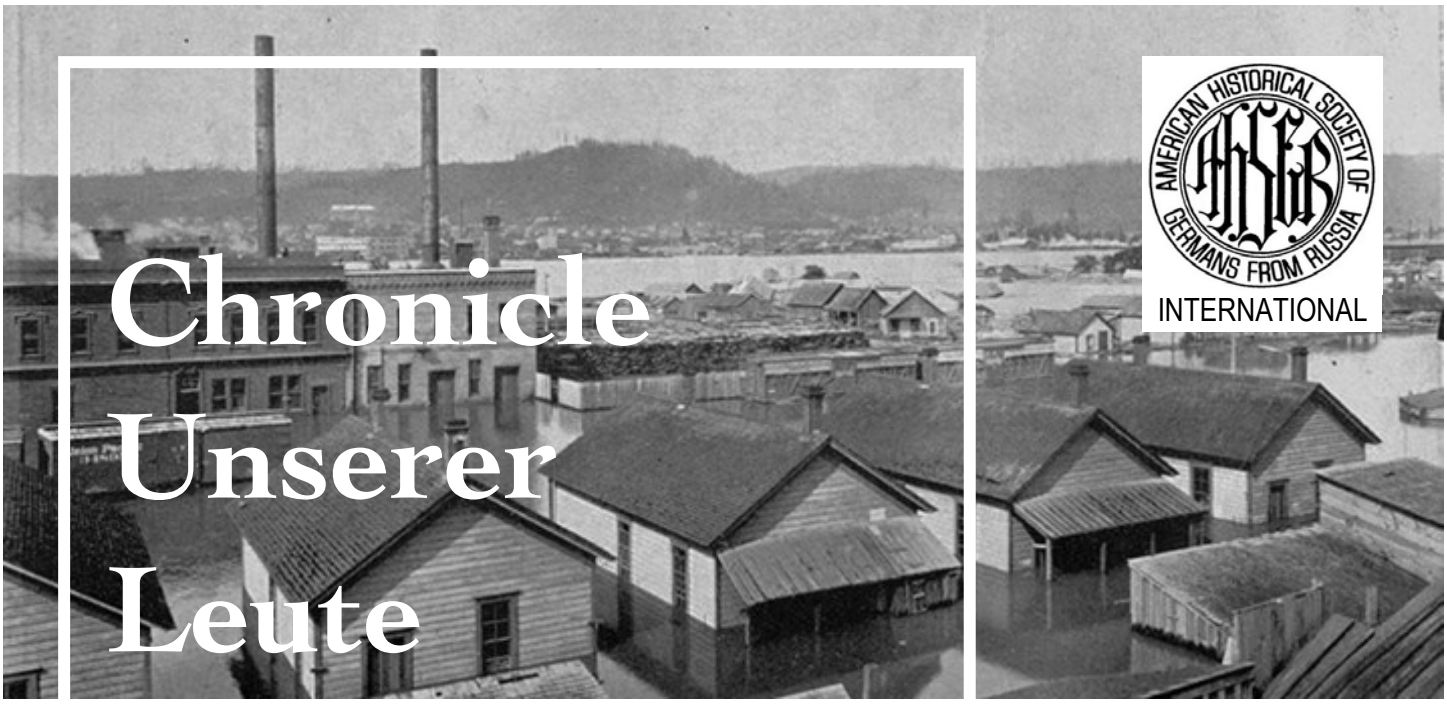

Chronicle Unserer Leute

Oregon Chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

Volume 46, Issue 3
July—September 2022

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Catherine II, the Great

President's Message

Hello everyone!

I hope this finds everyone well and healthy! I also hope this finds us all enjoying some summer sunshine. As I am writing this it is raining, and haven't we had a lot of rain this spring! Hopefully, by publication time the sun will be out, and we will be enjoying the summer grandeur of our beautiful Pacific Northwest. It seems a little slow in coming this year.

I am looking forward to attending the AHSGR Annual Convention in Lincoln in July and am so happy that it's back! The convention planned for 2020 had to be canceled because of covid, and the 2021 was virtual only, also because of Covid, so I'm excited to go and meet in person again. The first time I attended a National Convention was here in Portland in 2012. I had retired shortly before then, and with it right here close to home, it made attending very easy. It was held at Concordia University and was so well organized with outstanding speakers and outstanding food! Up to that point my involvement with AHSGR and with the Oregon Chapter had been fairly limited. I enjoyed it so much! That was ten years ago, and I have been to several more conventions, but that one was definitely memorable. Our chapter members did an awesome job as the hosts. And, as you can see, it inspired me to become more involved.

So, what makes attending these conventions worthwhile? Lots of things!

- There is so much interesting stuff to learn. There are presentations on the history, culture, food, folklore, genealogy, DNA studies, the deportation, etc., with presenters from around the world.
- There are opportunities to learn about the latest research developments from newly acquired records from Russian archives to the latest discoveries of German ancestral origins.
- There is social time to meet other Germans from Russia. There are afternoon *kuche* breaks and evening programs of dancing or movies.
- There are meetings with the village coordinators and others who share our same ancestral village. Plus displays of many of the German villages and what they looked like and the research being conducted for each one.
- There is a research room and a bookstore, a quilt raffle and sometimes a silent auction.
- I like the feeling of belonging to something interesting and important.
- There is always the chance that you might be able to get your picture taken with Catherine the Great!

The Convention runs July 27-30. Registration is still open, and all the information can be found at ahsgr.org. Those of us who attend will fill you in on what you missed when we meet again in the fall, but I hope to see some of you there!

Have a great summer!

Fondly,

Carole

From the Editor

An unending war in Ukraine and a housing crisis in our own country. Attacks on reproductive rights and the laws that protect our water and air. Mass shootings, one after the other. Oh, and yet another coronavirus variant. The past six months or so have been a firehose of dismal news, and in times like these it's all too easy to give up hope. But not only am I an optimist, I'm an historian; and history has many lessons to teach us, not the least of which is that we have endured worse. Humans are intelligent, yes, but our greatest strength is that we're adaptable.

Our own people adapted — we adapted to life in more than one new country, finding ways to keep some things the old way while embracing new ways too. We shared our knowledge and skills while learning to get by in different landscapes, with different languages. Although we're a strong-willed (some might say stubborn) people, we learned to "go along to get along" without sacrificing our core beliefs and values. Sometimes it comes faster than is comfortable, but this is how evolution happens.

As we speed through another summer, I hope we all find moments to reflect on the traditions we want to preserve and give ourselves permission to let go of the beliefs and habits that no longer serve us. For me, that means letting go of some of my rigidity but keeping my work ethic. I know the best way to honor our ancestors is by living well — though they're no longer here to witness it, our people's struggles were not in vain. If my son grows up knowing who he is, the story of his family, and how to make bierocks from scratch, nor will mine have been.

Nothing engenders feelings of security like a well-stocked pantry.

There's one tradition I'll never let go of, and that's preserving food. This summer I'll be canning my homemade pickles to share at next month's Summer Potluck (find my recipe in the back of this issue), some Schwartzbeeren preserves (I have quite the bumper crop this year!), and maybe I'll even put up a few jars of watermelon syrup too, as was done by generations of our womenfolk.

Warm regards and cold biers,

Heather

In Memoriam

Dennis Lee Zitterkopf (April 24, 1939 - July 9, 2022)

We're sorry to report the passing of longtime AHSGR member and Huck village coordinator, Dennis Zitterkopf.

Dennis Lee Zitterkopf died peacefully in his sleep on July 9, 2022. He was preceded in death by his parents, Ben and Marie (Kliewer) Zitterkopf and a brother, Larry. He was born in Hutchinson, Kansas on April 24, 1939. Dennis spent most of his early life on a farm west of Durham, Kansas, where he attended public school. He loved many aspects of rural life: riding horses, the Cottonwood River, fishing, cattle roundups, breaking ponies, helping with chores, playing sports, playing Hop Along Cassidy and the closeness of neighbors who supported one another in difficult times. Nevertheless, Dennis knew that he "didn't want to be a farmer" and he also knew he "probably couldn't be a cowboy." So he was in the right place at the right time when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik in Oct. of 1957 and the space race began. After graduating from high school, he enrolled at K-State, majoring in electrical engineering. He was a top honors student who funded his college education largely by scholarships and summer employment as a roughneck in the local oil fields.

After attaining his BS, Dennis was recruited by the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory Space Program (between Baltimore and D.C)—a dream job for a young engineer. Among other responsibilities, he was the design engineer for a joint US/UK submarine project in the Virgin Islands. He traveled to Kenya, Africa as a telecommunications engineer and program manager for a NASA Small Astronomy Spacecraft to map the universe for X-Ray sources. He contributed to the NASA Skylab Team by designing and building a rotating chair to test astronauts' inner ear function in space. He was a designer for a number of classified projects during the Vietnam War and traveled extensively because of them. His last major project at APL was the recently declassified Big Bird program, a multi-channel receiver system using the Navy Navigation Satellite system (the precursor to what is now the GPS system.) In the midst of all of these projects, he also earned a MS in engineering from Johns Hopkins.

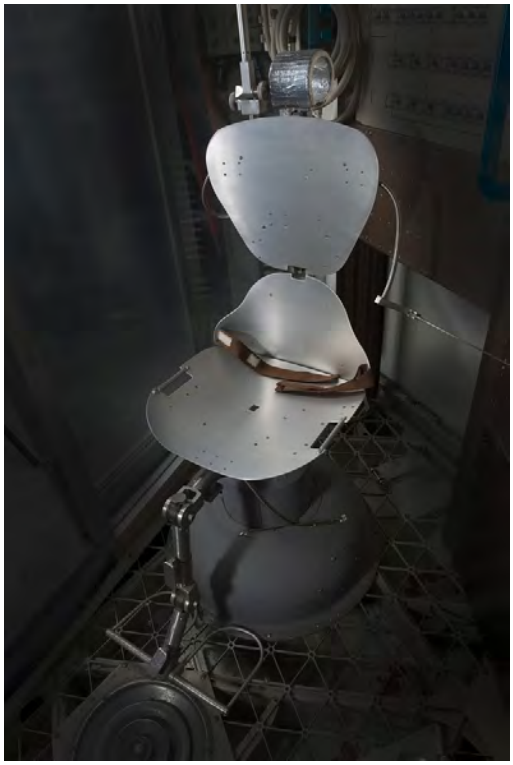
Wanting to be closer to his aging parents and also wanting his children to know their grandparents and Kansas culture, Dennis moved his family in 1978 to a rural home outside of Clearwater and then Wichita in 1987. He was in management at Boeing from 1978 to 2001 and responsible for the B52s' electrical wiring systems, keeping them in the sky for decades and protecting our freedom, as well as weapons integration, and their simulator program.

In his life's journey as an adult, Dennis was accompanied by his wife Deanna (Atkinson) whom he met during a bridge game between classes in the K-State Student Union. They were a well-matched pair in interests and values, and were planning to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary next month. Dennis was a loving husband and a wonderful father. A friend described him as a brilliant, witty, elegant and steady man who anchored his family. In his kids, he instilled a love of science, space and learning – and happily would climb on the roof to drop various sized balls to prove that acceleration due to gravity was a constant. He was the quintessential well-rounded man who also loved music, especially Bach and Bob Dylan. While living in Silver Spring, Maryland, he enjoyed singing in amateur Gilbert and Sullivan

performances. His favorite artist was Van Gogh; in his travels in the US and Europe, he always made it a point to track down versions of Van Gogh's "Sunflowers." He loved traditional German food as well as gourmet dishes. He eventually learned to make fancy desserts. Good Scotch was his favorite drink. He and Deanna enjoyed travel—everywhere from the Rocky Mountains to the mosques of Istanbul.

His kids were the joy of his life. Ann, Benjamin and Karl deeply appreciate the values their dad instilled in them: the love of country, the importance of family, and the necessity of loyalty and kindness to others. He also adored his two grandsons, Andrew and Thomas, who now live in London – when they were younger he tirelessly built Brio and Lego; then when they were older, he joined them playing pool , doing science experiments , making hand-cranked homemade ice cream and playing family bridge games.

Dennis was civic minded, serving on various boards in the community, including the Lakepoint Board and the Wichita Daylily society. He was a strong supporter of his wife's efforts in Women for Kansas.



The rotating litter chair at Skylab, developed by Zitterkopf during his time at Johns Hopkins University. The chair was used to test astronauts for motion sickness.

Dennis's special passion was the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia; his grandparents emigrated from the Volga region of Russia in the 1880's, settling with other immigrants in small Kansas farm towns. Dennis was deeply committed to the history and genealogy of these people. He was both the village coordinator for Huck (where his family had lived) and served on the National Board of AHSGR. This group and their work ethic shaped his heritage. Because prejudice against the German-Russians was commonplace, Dennis always supported those who likewise struggled against racism and prejudice. Needless to say, he was very upset by the recent invasion of Ukraine. If he were still alive, he would ask us to remember that we are a nation of immigrants and we should treat everyone equally and with dignity.

Dennis will be deeply mourned by his friends and family. He lived a full, interesting life and leaves a gigantic hole in our hearts and lives. [*Note: His memorial was held in Wichita on July 14. — Ed.*]

A Message From Ed Wagner

Commemorating the Tenth Anniversary

of

The 43rd International Convention

of the

AHSGR

At the Center for Volga German Studies

Concordia University

June 14-17, 2012

Ten years have flown by since our amazing 43rd Annual AHSGR Convention here in Portland, hosted by the Center for Volga German Studies at Concordia University (held from June 14-17, 2012).

The event was the brainchild of Dr. Brent Mai, Director of the Concordia Library, and his family. The general purpose or goal of hosting the AHSGR Convention was to showcase the collections of scholastic assets related to our Volga German history to the national AHGR membership and beyond. The events were varied, extensive, very well-attended, and appreciated by those who came.

While a formal list of attendees documents only 440 people, many more folks came from surrounding areas to reflect on the German-Russian roots. One of the favorite and best-attended venues was lunch each day. The German food was beyond excellent. It was prepared by the German ladies of our local German American Society. The "Frankenverein" — the German Ladies Relief Society — was founded in 1886 to provide assistance to German immigrants in time of need. The leader of the German ladies' group was Ruth Werner; she and her husband Karl committed a major part of their lives for many years to the German American Society and the preservation of German culture, foods, and history. They provided all the food and preparation of all the convention meals. They were assisted by the Loyal German Ladies, other members of the GAS, three generations of the Gerry and Hannelore Schleining family, and an evolving cast of volunteers in helping out in the dining rooms and beyond. They worked hard and long every day.

The convention included numerous programs, presentations, and activities. A strong favorite was Bruno Reule's personal story of his life as a young German boy during World War II. Each session generated a standing room-only attendance.

These are only a brief summary of one of the most dynamic AHSGR conventions I have ever attended.

We invite everyone to share their memories of the magical event over the next several months' meetings in an effort to formally memorialize this wonderful segment of our chapter's own German-Russian history. Hopefully we'll have more to share and tell.

Ed Wagner

Concordia University

and the

Center for Volga German Studies

Welcomes the

43rd Annual International Convention

of the

American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

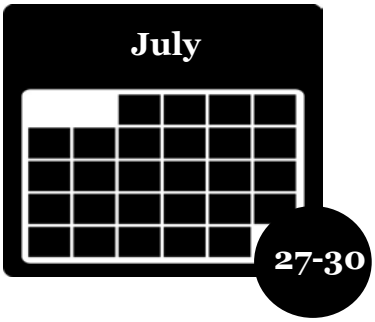
June 14-17 , 2012

"Living Our Heritage Through Concordia"

Note: a limited number of these commemorative pins are available for $10 each. Contact Ed for info, at (971) 282-6435

Upcoming Events

Note: programs are subject to change because of COVID. Please check our website, Facebook page, or email/call a board member to find out about any changes.

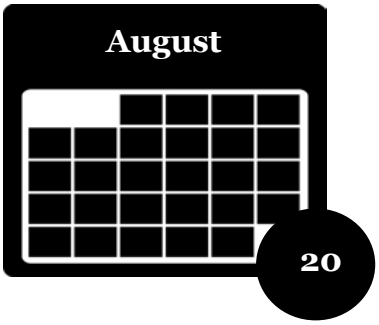


2022 AHSGR International Convention

July 27-30, 2022
Embassy Suites Hotel, Lincoln, NE

The 2022 Convention will be held July 27-30 at the Embassy Suites hotel in downtown Lincoln, NE. Pre-convention tours and activities will take place July 26 and 27. This is a hybrid in-person/virtual convention with Zoom access for select sessions. Online Registration ended July 21st.

While the convention is primarily in-person presentations, it is a hybrid event which offers Zoom accessible sessions for virtual participation for some presentations. Go to ahsgr.org/convention to look at the event program.



Summer Potluck Picnic

August 20, 2022 Noon
10201 NE 269th Street, Battle Ground, WA

Come join us and enjoy some German from Russia fellowship as well as some delicious food. Bring your favorite picnic dish to share. Lela Miller has graciously invited us all to meet in the beautiful setting of her backyard.

Treffen Tuesdays

Last Tuesday of every month on Zoom (3:30-5:30pm Pacific Standard Time)

Join AHSGR's monthly speaker series on a variety of topics. For more information and to register for attendance, visit the Treffen Tuesday registration page (linked in the email every month).

Recipe: *Gurken*
(German-Style Dill Pickles)

Recipe and photo by Heather Arndt Anderson

This pickle recipe has a lot of garlic and spices, which means tons of flavor. It can be altered to your taste, but follow it to the letter and you'll always get compliments on your pickles. It also makes exquisite dilly beans — see the notes at the end. *Makes 2 quarts*

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups water
4 cups vinegar
1/3 c kosher salt (or 8 tsp pickling salt)
8 garlic cloves, smashed
4 flowering dill heads
4 tsp dill seed
4 bay leaves, whole or crushed
8 juniper berries, lightly crushed
2 tsp peppercorns
2 tsp cumin seed
2 tsp coriander seed
2 tsp mustard seed
2 tsp celery seed
2 tsp red chile flake (optional)
3 pounds pickling cucumbers, washed and ends trimmed
½ tsp Ball Pickle Crisp (optional; see note)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Sterilize two quart jars, their lids, and bands in boiling water (or using the sanitize setting on your dishwasher). **If you're canning your pickles**, start a boiling water bath in a stock pot large enough to cover the quart jars by at least an inch. If you don't have a rack for your pot, lay a clean washcloth in the bottom of the pot to keep the jars from rattling around.

2. Bring the water, vinegar, and salt to a simmer in a small pot, stirring to dissolve the salt. Divide the garlic, dill heads, and spices evenly between the two jars, then stuff in the cucumbers. **If you want to make refrigerator pickles**, you're pretty much done — just pour in enough brine to cover the cucumbers, tightly affix the lids and refrigerate for at least 24 hours to allow the flavors to develop.

3. To process these for pantry storage, add a rounded 1/4 teaspoon of Pickle Crisp to each jar after stuffing in the cucumbers, then pour the hot brine over the cucumbers up to the neck of the jar, leaving an inch of headroom. Gently tap the jars to knock out air bubbles, wipe the rims with a paper towel dipped in hot water, and securely affix the lids and rings. Carefully set the jars into the boiling water bath with rubberized jar-grabbers. Add enough water to cover the jars by at least an inch, and when the pot comes to a boil, start a timer for 10 minutes.

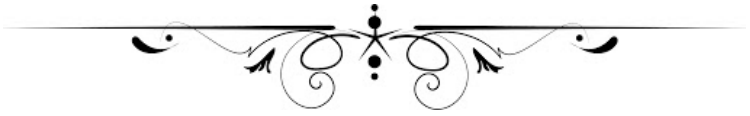
4. Process for 10 minutes in a boiling water bath, then remove the jars and set on a double-layer of towels on the counter. As they cool to room temperature, be cheered by the merry sound of lids pinging as the internal vacuum seals them! Check the lids the next day; any jars that didn't seal should be stashed in the refrigerator. Pickles will be shelf-stable for at least one year.

Notes:

To make dilly beans, use 2 pounds of washed, trimmed green beans, reduce the garlic by half and adjust the chile flake as desired. Follow the same directions as for cucumber pickles, but if you're making fridge dilly beans, blanch the beans first by dunking them in boiling water for one minute and then shocking them in ice water to ensure a tender-crisp texture.

Ball brand "Pickle Crisp" is a granular calcium salt that dissolves completely in hot pickling brine, replacing the traditional step of soaking cucumbers in lime. It ensures a crisp pickle that can endure the heat of boiling water bath canning, is a safe and effective convenience step, and most importantly, won't interfere with the pickles' flavor. It's available at Fred Meyer, Bi-Mart, Sheridan's, and other stores that sell canning supplies.

If you have leftover brine, just keep it in a jar to use next time you make pickles — this salt-to-vinegar-water ratio is a blank slate for a variety of pickles. And since dill flower heads have a pretty short shelf life, you can stash them in leftover brine (or plain vinegar) to add to future pickles. Waste not, want not!



AHSGR Oregon Chapter Membership Renewal Form

Membership fees are for a calendar year that renews each January 1st. Annual dues for the AHSGR **Oregon Chapter** membership are $25.

Membership Year 20___

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

I want my Oregon Chapter newsletter delivered electronically. Yes _____ No _____

I want to receive my Oregon Chapter newsletter in the mail (paper copy). Yes _____ No _____

In order for us to serve our membership more effectively, please list all of your German-Russian family surnames and all of the villages that you believe your ancestors are from:

Villages	**Surnames**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Annual Dues:	$25.00
Annual Donation:	$
Total Enclosed:	**$**

Please make all checks payable to **AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER** and send your membership dues and application to:

AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER
P.O. Box 55218
Portland, Oregon 97238-5218

You can also send dues and donations electronically via PayPal to our chapter email address:

oregonahsgr@gmail.com

The Oregon Chapter of AHSGR is a tax-exempt non-profit organization organized under the Internal Revenue Code 501 (c)(3). As such, your dues are tax deductible to the extend allowed by law. (Federal Tax ID # 93-1313164)

PLEASE NOTE: Additional dues are required for membership in the AHSGR International Organization. (See www.ahsgr.org/membership.htm for current International membership levels and dues.) Please remit International dues directly to AHSGR Headquarters at: 631 D Street, Lincoln,

AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER

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The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia is an international organization dedicated to the discovery, collection, preservation, and the dissemination of information related to the history, cultural heritage and genealogy of Germanic settlers in the Russian Empire and their descendants.

The Chronicle Unserer Leute (Chronicle of Our People) is published quarterly the Oregon Chapter of AHSGR. Keep up to date with the latest news and events from the Oregon Chapter of AHSGR on our website: www.oregonahsgr.org
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