January, 2018 Program:
Mark your calendars! The January program for the Oregon Chapter will be Sunday, January 21st at 2:00 pm in the Concordia University Library (3rd floor). We will have a special viewing of the recently released Prairie Public Broadcasting documentary “Gutes Essen: Good Eating in German-Russian Country”.

**GUTES ESSEN: Good Eating in German-Russian Country** by Prairie Public Broadcasting, 2017. Visit the kitchens of 10 local cooks who make strudels, sauerkraut, kartoffel-kurbis strumbus, fleischkuechla, borscht, rahmnoedla, pickled beets, stirrum, kneophla soup, and kuchen. Spend a morning at the historic Model Bakery in Linton where kuchen is hand crafted, and tour Grandma's Kuchen in Ashley to see a mechanized method for mass marketing. Learn the tricks of making sausage at Schmitt Locker in Napoleon and the Supervalu Grocery in Zeeland; and explore the church fair and supper in Strasburg, and the 91st annual Sauerkraut Days in Wishek. The DVD can also be purchased through GRHS at [www.grhs.org](http://www.grhs.org).

As a special treat, Randy Woehl will introduce the film and talk about how he volunteered his mother to participate in the film and unknowingly roped himself in as well.

Randy will bring with him for viewing the accompanying cookbook as well as the three books made by Tri-County Tourism for Germans From Russia Country in North Dakota: “Women Behind the Plow”, “Ewiger Saaz”, and “Ready For School”. We hope to see you there!

February, 2018 Program:
The program for February: Discussion by members of the future of our Oregon Chapter of AHSGR.

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2018 AHSGR Convention

SAVE THE DATES:  It may be the dead of winter, but here is something warm to think about: The 49th Annual AHSGR Convention is scheduled for July 30 - August 2 in Hays, Kansas. Convention setup and Board of Directors meetings take place Sunday July 29.

Plans are just now starting to take shape, but you can expect an outstanding lineup of compelling speakers, both domestic and international, as well as our extensive bookstore and research rooms, top-notch entertainment, and a chance to meet new friends and to reconnect with old this convention. This has all the makings of a great time.

More details are to come, so watch your email and your snail mail as they firm up. For now, make sure to get this important event on your calendar.

Hays Kansas is the largest city in Northwest Kansas at the crossroads of Interstate 70 and US Highway 183. This city, which has approximately 20,000 residents, was incorporated in 1885.

AHSGR looks forward to seeing you in Hays in 2018!
My Farewell Message for January/February 2018

This issue of Chronicle Unserer Leute will be my last for the Oregon Chapter of AHSGR. As Newsletter Editor for the past five years, I have enjoyed the challenges it provided and the rewards also. As with many jobs, it’s not been a one-person effort. I had a lot of help along the way, from ideas on content to distribution. Thank you to those who contributed their time and talents.

I will now be able to devote more time to my duties as AHSGR village coordinator for Kautz and Merkel and help with the genealogy of Dietel. In this regard, there is still much work to do.

For Christmas, I received multiple books on the Russian language, Cyrillic. I will better be able to decipher Russian records in the future.

My tentative replacement, Devon LaSalle, has kindly agreed to take over newsletter editor duties this year. She lives in Australia currently, but has Portland/Norka connections/ancestors.
(devon.lasalle@gmail.com)

Thank you.

Michael Frank
Newsletter Editor
AHSGR Oregon Chapter

Welcome

Please join me in welcoming two new individuals to AHSGR’s Oregon chapter leadership.

Kirsten Holstein is the chapter’s new secretary and is the wife of Jim Holstein, our distinguished Treasurer.

Carole Hayden is a new chapter Board member. She and her husband joined me and others in Russia in August, 2016, a tour hosted by Brent Mai and Mila Koretnikov.

2018 Oregon AHSGR Chapter Dues

Oregon AHSGR Chapter dues of $25.00 are due now. Please submit your payment soon through our treasurer, Jim Holstein, or through PayPal (details on page 10 of this newsletter).
A Genealogist’s Life

By Michael Frank

A look into how I fell into a life of genealogical research.

Many know about my aunt Elaine Frank Davison. She was the spark who ignited research on her (and my) ancestors, first with her father (Johann Conrad Frank) and mother (Maria Catharina Knaub). Both were Volga-German from the small village of Kautz. Her research showed that my grandfather’s ancestors came from Germany, the village of Schriesheim, near Heidelberg. She devoted decades of personal research, phone calls, interstate and foreign visits, personal interviews, conventions, etc. From 1985 to 2001 I helped her transition into the digital age. Her prolific accumulation of genealogical information was a great source of inspiration for me.

Much of what she did and what I now do are not necessarily taught. You learn from experience. You learn by example. You learn by doing. These ‘doings’ can be categorized.

Start with a baseline
After years of research and interviews, my aunt published the first volume of *Unsere Leute von Kautz* in May of 1979. There would be 9 more volumes by her hand. These gave me a good pulse of her ideas and methodology. After her death in 2001, I started development of the next and last volume, a mega-volume, now at 300 pages and counting. In the process, her previous volumes jumped from paper to the wide screen of computers. If you don’t have a baseline, you develop it by gathering and organizing your information. You find a way to mesh common information from different sources together. When you have that base, then it comes down to adding to it over many years.

Technological Change
In the ‘good old’ days, you had microfilm, rotary telephones, libraries, and copy machines. Computers were just coming into vogue, evolving seemingly every year. Many people did not realize the full potential of computers for years. Telephone calls used to be expensive. Talking to a potential interstate relative for hours at a time was prohibitive. Mailing paper back and forth was expensive. Now you have ‘unlimited’ phone and data plans on cell phones. You aren’t tethered to a landline. You can talk to and see another person on Earth for free using the Internet. For me, copy machines became a thing of the past. Now you have the ability to produce a page as a file and distribute it anywhere on earth to be read in seconds. You can communicate using eMail or in many forms of social media, getting ideas or giving same in real time. Such progress in a seemingly short period of time.

Use good software
The software of choice for me is an older version of *Family Treemaker*, the one before many of the confusing electronic bells, whistles, and thing-a-ma-jigs were thought up. With my software, I can easily enter new information, find information, and develop a large number of quality reports. If I see new software I want to try, I don’t have to re-enter all previous data. I transcribe Kautz and Dietel church records using *Microsoft Excel*. One spreadsheet for Births, Marriages, and Deaths. Then these records can easily be put into Family Treemaker or the software of your choice.

Identify Sources of Material
A large source of materials for my village of Kautz (and the new village of Merkel) are Volga-German church records, census records, German church records, and other Russian information from a variety of sources. My Volga-German church records so far have come from the archives in Volgograd. I have checked out LDS rolls of microfilm related to one relevant church in Schriesheim, Germany.
Find-A-Grave
Most cemeteries in the United States have their permanent ‘guests’ identified. In Find-A-Grave information may include birth and death dates, spouse, parents, and children of the deceased.

Rootweb / WorldConnect Project (http://wc.rootweb.ancestry.com/)
This website is currently going through an upgrade. I have used it previously to identify members of multi-generational families related to me.

Facebook
Facebook social media deals not only with individuals, but also groups. Each group has their own set of devotees. Some group names: Kautz Russia Genealogy, Oregon Chapter of AHSGR, Dietel / Dittel / Tittel - a Volga German Colony Russia, Hussenbach (Linevo Osero) and Neu-Hussenbach (Gashon) Russia Descendants, Germans from Russia, VolgaGerman’s. Thousands of groups are out there. You can also create your own to link up with those of similar interests.

Non-English Inquiries
I often get letters from overseas. Mostly typed in German or Russian. I translate using an online translator such as Google Translate (https://translate.google.com/). Translations are pretty straight-forward. Once I do research on the request, I am able to translate my research back to the foreign language. Before I send however, I translate my foreign reply back into English to avoid hard feelings or an international incident. If the English looks fine after translation, then I’m free to finish the reply.

American Inquiries
American and Canadian inquiries by far, are the most common type of genealogical work I do. Most of the time, a name given in an inquiry will match against my Kautz database of almost 32,000 individuals. If I have a lot of information on the families related to the inquiry, the requestor can be surprised and overjoyed. A large impediment to their knowledge has been lifted. Sometimes a name and date of birth is given which doesn’t match. In that case, if the person is related to Kautz or a neighboring village, their information provided is a goldmine of new family relationships, to be mined extensively by me. Some inquires are fishing expeditions. They have a surname which is common to 10 villages and they hope YOUR village is the one containing their ancestor.

Trips
Occasionally my wife and I will meet relatives in different states or countries. Together we have been to Montana, Schriesheim, Germany, and the Czech Republic (her family). In August of 2016, I visited Russia and walked the land of my Frank ancestors. I got first-hand knowledge of where critical records are kept. Genealogical trips invigorate the soul.

Miscellaneous
In addition to friends and relatives providing information, conventions and family reunions are a great way to add to knowledge. Take advantage of those who have done research before so you don’t have to reinvent the wheel. Libraries, millions of electronic records and newspapers can keep genealogists busy for a lifetime.

Currently I am focused on completing the examination of Kautz church records and census records, making certain each has an entry in my Kautz database. Since taking on the village of Merkel as Village Coordinator, I am also scrambling to identify family groups from multiple sources and get them entered. A founder and first mayor of Kautz moved his family to Merkel after a decade in Kautz. Since Kautz and Dietel and Merkel were geographically close, many marriages among them ensued. I am helping Dietel information get recorded and I work with other VC’s, sharing information.

If you visit, allow ample time for me to answer the doorbell. I’ll be busy.
Herman Ostwald

LAUREL — Herman Ostwald decided to start the New Year by relocating to Heaven. Herman passed away Jan. 1, 2018, after a brief illness. Dad was born March 9, 1922, in Laurel. He was the seventh child of eight kids to Phillip and Katherine Ostwald.

Dad grew up in Laurel, graduating from Laurel High School. Dad was taken out of school during sugar beet season to work the fields. Dad graduated in 1941. Dad started working for the Northern Pacific Railroad. He then enlisted in the Army Air Corps from 1942-1946. Dad returned to Laurel and worked for the Burlington Northern Railroad for 38 years.

Dad was an avid fisherman, hunter and woodcrafter. He loved the outdoors. Herman loved spending time with his two grandchildren and three great-granddaughters. On July 31, 1948, he married Melvina Hein, of Billings, in Billings. They lived in Billings for five years until moving to Laurel, where he resided until his death. They were married for 54 years, until Melvina’s passing in 2003.

Herman was preceded in death by his parents; siblings, Mollie Haun, Emily Brester, Alex Ostwald, Emma Reiter, Henry Ostwald (infant), Hank Ostwald and Elsie Frank; his wife, Melvina and great-granddaughter Claire Marie Lee.

Survivors include son Steve (Radene) Ostwald, daughter Vicky (Robert) Hettinger, granddaughter Chandra Hettinger, grandson Jesse Hettinger, and great-granddaughters Alexis Hettinger, Rylie and Kynzie Mallow.

Visitation will be at the Smith Funeral Chapel in Laurel on Friday, Jan. 5, from 5-7 p.m.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, Jan. 6, at the First Congregational Church in Laurel. Smith Funeral Chapel is in charge of arrangements.

Editor’s note:

This is but one of many obituaries I receive during the course of a year. Most of the time, the source of these memorials to life come to me electronically from my good friend, Henry Schmick, who scours the newspaper obituaries of many pockets of Volga-German descendants throughout the country. Most of my closest relatives are clustered either in Walla Walla or the many communities centered around the Laurel/Billings Metroplex of Montana.

In developing this page of the newsletter today, I came across this electronic copy of a memorial to a 4th cousin in Laurel, Montana. I never knew Herman, unless he was one of hundreds who attended events I attended, such as genealogy conventions or family reunions. Though I didn’t remember Herman personally, you can guarantee he meant a lot to others.

Herman’s father was Philipp Ostwalt. Philipp was born in Kautz, Russia 18 March 1886 and worked at a lumber mill near the Volga, hence his nickname ‘Mill Philipp’. He immigrated to the United States in 1906, landing in Lincoln, Nebraska. After two years he and his family moved to Laurel, Montana. He worked for the Northern Pacific railroad for 17 years before transitioning to carpentry thereafter. How do I know this? Philipp’s family, including his son Herman and seven other siblings are listed in Volume 2, page 42 of Unsere Leute von Kautz (Our People from Kautz). Volume 2 was published in May of 1980 by my aunt, Elaine Frank Davison. Nine additional volumes were produced in the series including the last, produced by me, which consists of 300 pages (and counting).

I continue to work on the genealogy of Kautz, Russia and will hopefully pass this legacy on to another family member, either known or currently unknown to me. For the pox baton of genealogy research there is no vaccine.

~Michael Frank
Historical Volga German Photo

Eurich, David. "Historical Volga German Photo." Volk auf dem Weg, January 2014.

Translation from the original German-language text to American English is provided by Alex Herzog, Boulder, Colorado, with editorial assistance from Dr. Nancy Herzog.

This photo was taken in 1930 in Schwed on the Volga soon after the collectivization of agriculture. It shows a brigade of farmers ready to work on the spring seeding. Judging from the many cheerless faces, it appears that the people on the photo are not exactly filled with enthusiasm.

In the background we see a farmstead typical for Volga German villages. We can be fairly certain that its [onetime] owners were dispossessed, their property now serving as the seat of the brigade leadership.

Shown on the platform is the management of the kolkhoz [collective] and, of course, a portrait of Lenin must not be lacking. The fence is covered with written directives and regulations. Clearly legible on the placard is the following: "Schweder Kollwirtsch ‘Neue Bahn,’ ‘Brigade Nr. 2.’" [See note below.]

At the upper left one can make out two uniformed men. Did they really have to be there, too? Except for my uncle Gottlieb Eurich (far left, third from the left), I recognize no one else. When we were deported in 1941, I was just four years old. I hereby ask anyone who recognizes any of these older Schwed residents to call me at 011-49-7031-272491.

David Eurich

Translator’s Note: My source in Germany indicates that Kollwirtsch is very likely a contraction from the German term Kollektiv-Wirtschaft (collective farm; Schwed means “Schwed’s” or “of Sched”); Neue Bahn means “A New Course;” and Brigade Nr. 2 is “Brigade # 2.”

Appreciation is extended to Alex Herzog for translation of these articles.

By Permission of the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, NDSU Libraries, Fargo, ND – www.ndsu.edu/grhc
c/o Michael Miller
CVGS Pledge Campaign

(Reprint)

Dear Friends of the CVGS,

Thank you very much for your generous support of our recent Five Year Pledge campaign! Unfortunately, we were unable to meet our fundraising goal to hire a Director for the Center for Volga German Studies. The Center is transitioning to a less active status staffed by volunteers, and will become a special collection of the Concordia University Libraries.

The Concordia University Foundation office has a copy of your pledge form. Please contact Rebecca Kottler in the Concordia University Foundation office and let her know if you would like your pledge to continue, or if you would like to rescind it. Future pledges would be deposited into the CVGS General Operating Fund, as opposed to the CVGS Director Fund. Rebecca can be reached at:

rkottler@cu-portland.edu or 503.493.6459 (email preferred).

Today is my last day at Concordia University and the CVGS, so please be sure to reply directly to Rebecca Kottler with your pledge decision.

With gratitude,

Tanya Bushnell
Center for Volga German Studies
Concordia University
cvgs.cu-portland.edu
Cyrillic Script

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<tr>
<th>A а</th>
<th>a as in father</th>
<th>K к</th>
<th>k as in class</th>
<th>X х</th>
<th>h as in loch</th>
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<td>l as in love</td>
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<td>В в</td>
<td>v as in van</td>
<td>М м</td>
<td>m as mother</td>
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<td>ch as in chess</td>
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<td>g as in get</td>
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<td>o as in bottle</td>
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<td>shsh in fresh chat</td>
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<td>Е е</td>
<td>ye as in yesterday</td>
<td>П п</td>
<td>p as in paper</td>
<td>Т т</td>
<td>&quot;hard sign&quot;</td>
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<td>Ё ё</td>
<td>yo as in yonder</td>
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<td>r as in error</td>
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<td>Ж ж</td>
<td>zh as in measure</td>
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<td>s as in smile</td>
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CYRILLIC SCRIPT
The Cyrillic script is named after Saint Cyril, a missionary from Byzantium who, along with his brother, Saint Methodius, created the Glagolitic script. Modern Cyrillic alphabets developed from the Early Cyrillic script, which was developed during the 9th century in the First Bulgarian Empire (AD 681-1018) by a decree of Boris I of Bulgaria (Борис I). It is thought that St. Kliment of Ohrid, a disciple of Cyril and Methodius, was responsible for the script. The Early Cyrillic script was based on the Greek uncial script with ligatures and extra letters from the Glagolitic and Old Church Slavonic scripts for sounds not used in Greek.

LANGUAGES WRITTEN WITH THE CYRILLIC ALPHABET
The Cyrillic alphabet has been adapted to write more than 50 different languages, mainly in Russia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe. In many cases additional letters are used, some of which are adaptations of standard Cyrillic letters, while others are taken from the Greek or Latin alphabets.

Мы все связаны
We’re all connected
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:

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<th>Villages</th>
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Please make all checks payable to **AHSGR OREGON CHAPTER** and send your membership dues and application to:

**AHSGR Oregon Chapter**
PO Box 55218
Portland, OR 97238-5218

You can also send dues & donations electronically via PayPal to our chapter email address:  
oregonahsgr@gmail.com

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

Additional dues are required for **membership in the AHSGR International Organization.**
(See [http://www.ahsgr.org/membership.htm](http://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, NE. 68502-1199.
### January 2018

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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.

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