



DANK Chapter 71

German Heritage Society of Erie

Mitteilungsblatt



Volume 27 No. 8

October / November 2017



Your National Executive Board –
2017-2019

2nd VP Christel Miske of Chapter Milwaukee, Treasurer Robert Miske Chapter Milwaukee, . National President: Roger Herod of Long Grove, Il a member of Chicago Northern Suburbs, 1st VP Erik Wittmann of Cleveland, OH

NATIONAL CONVENTION

The convention activities began at the Chicago South's DANK Haus with a welcoming party on Friday evening. On Saturday morning, the Convention was called to order in a meeting room of the Hollywood Casino. Following the general business meeting, the election of officers procedures were begun. Three incumbent officers declined to seek reelection: President Mike Ianni, 2nd VP Ron Kabitzke, and Beverly Pochatko retired after 23 years of service on the national board. Honestly, there were few nominees and they were not contested. The results were: National President: Roger Herod of Long Grove, Il a member of Chicago Northern Suburbs; 1st VP Erik Wittmann of Cleveland, OH; 2nd VP Christel Miske of Chapter Milwaukee; Russ Knoebel no chapter affiliation; and Robert Miske of Chapter Milwaukee. They will serve for the next two years. Following a champagne toast to the new board, we enjoyed a delicious lunch buffet. There were tours scheduled for the afternoon, but heavy rains quickly dampened those activities. We then attended the Oktoberfest celebration at the host chapter's Haus...where we met with guests and members of their chapter. It was good to see the many familiar faces of friends made over the year, especially our former secretary, Eva Timmerhaus who was accompanied by her son, John. Eva was and still is the 'heart' of our national office. The evening programming began with the Donauschwabian Youth Dance Chor, then a delicious dinner. Dancing filled the dance floor all evening and everyone enjoyed themselves. Rounding out the evening was the raffle of gift baskets donated by the chapters. On Sunday morning, the first meeting of the new board was held and it was a good sharing of ideas by the delegates. By noon, the meeting closed and it was time to say 'auf wiedersehen' to everyone.



It is with much regret that we announce that our Chapter President Jeffrey Chase has sent us a notice of resignation that was effective October 31, 2017. We thank him for taking the helm after the resignation of Margarete Potocki three years ago. It has been at times, a thankless job, especially since he had moved to Rouseville where he was employed. Jeff dutifully made the trips into Erie for the meetings, sometimes to be disappointed that only three or four persons were attending. This was discouraging especially when he drove in, in the winter months. When he stepped up as

President, he asked me to be his Vice President. Now I am stepping up as Acting President until we hold our election. This will be discussed at our November meeting.

WOLFAUSLASSEN IN THE BAVARIAN FOREST
(WHEN THE WOLF RUNS THROUGH THE VILLAGE)

A deafening noise. A loud crack of the whip. The clanging of bells. Once a year in the picturesque village of Langdorf (population 2,000) in the Bayerischer Wald, strange things start to happen. On the weekend before St. Martin's Day in November, they "drive out the wolf".



Around 50 men and women move through the village at night, ringing huge bells as they go. It's no easy task, as some of the bells weigh more than 20 kilograms. The **Wolfauslassen** ceremony is a noisy spectacle and a unique, ancient custom that only lives on in a few places in the forests of Bavaria. The event is exciting for locals and visitors alike.

Hans Wenzl who acts as "herdsman" to lead the Langdorf pack. "My grandfather brought the custom back to life in Langdorf", he explains. "It had been forgotten for many years". Hans has been

helping to "drive out the wolf" since he was twelve years old.

The origins of the Wolfauslassen ceremony

The Wolfauslassen was started by herdsmen in Lower Bavaria in the 18th century. It stems from a time when wolves and bears were common in the forests of Bavaria. In order to scare the wild beasts away, the cows wore bells round their necks. When the herdsmen brought the cattle down from the mountains, they flicked whips through the air to make a loud crack. This whip-cracking, or "**Goßlschnalzen**", is still an essential feature of today's Wolfauslassen ceremony.

However, the custom was not just about scaring away the wolves and bears: The herdsmen were also celebrating the end of a successful year up on the mountain pastures. Nowadays, in many places the cattle are not driven to and from the pastures as they once were, but the custom is still alive.

Wolfauslassen is an old herdsmen tradition. Ringing bells and cracking whips, the local people parade through Langdorf. As darkness falls it all gets going. The Langdorf "Wolfauslasser" meet at the town hall where the bells are handed out. "It's a matter of honor to carry as big a bell as possible", says Wenzl with a grin. They start by sounding their bells: "We stand in a circle and find our rhythm. That way our younger members learn how to do it", explains Wenzl.

The town hall is the first station of the actual Wolfauslassen, where the mayor is on hand to receive the group. They ring their bells and head herdsman Wenzl recites a saying: "With a knife we'll stab them, with a stick we'll hit them, so no wolf will dare to come close." Then they leave the town hall and parade in rows of three or four through the village, clanging their bells and cracking their whips. The exhausting tour draws to a close at around one in the morning.

The people of Langdorf identify themselves with the custom of their ancestors and therefore keep the tradition of the Wolfauslassen alive. This traditional event gives visitors an authentic insight into what makes Bavaria and its people so distinctive. The participants are delighted to attract a big audience: "Everyone is welcome to come", Wenzl says proudly. "There's always a huge crowd, especially at the beginning. In 2015 there were around 100 spectators at the town hall". Many then accompany the parade some of the way. Children, in particular, love the noise of the bells and the whips.



Bischen und Stückchen - Bits and Pieces



Willkommen, neue Mitglieder

(Welcome New Members)

This month we are happy to welcome five new members to our Chapter. We look forward to seeing them at our meetings and other activities.

Amanda Mikesell (July 10th)
Kevin Hart (December 19th)
Allison Janke (December 21st)
Kendall Janke (April 14th)
Langston Hart (Nov 16th)

703 East 37th Street
Erie, PA 16504

Raymond Luniewski
Edith Luniewski
Anniversary:
Roman Luniewski

909 East 35th Street
Erie, PA 16504-1827



Sunday, November 19th - In Germany, this is a national day of mourning, a time to remember all victims of war and tyranny. Today, we commemorate all those victims, past and present, who suffered at the hands of others.



On November 11th, we honored all Veterans, living and deceased for their service. And to those presently serving, Thank You for your service!



There is always news to share and this one is great...We kind of got behind the times and forget that everything old sometimes needs to be made "new" again. So it is with our on-line media. By the end of December, we will have a new, improved web presence! If there are things that you would like to see included, let me know and we will see if it is possible. It would be great to have our newsletters included, a Member's alert, photo sharing etc. It takes time, but we will work on it.



Your safety is first and foremost during the winter months. Meetings will be cancelled if the weather conditions are deteriorating as reported on the news. We will notify you of a cancellation via email or check our FaceBook Site **DANK Chapter 71** No email on file? Please call Bev at 456-9599



Thanks to those of you who have shared your email address with me. We have been "green" to help conserve our trees/environment for two years, and we still are missing some email addresses. It will only be used to send you our newsletter in a pdf format that takes less space when sharing and to keep you updated on the happenings in the chapter, such as cancellations. Be assured that we will never share or sell our email list to any outside organizations or individuals without your permission. It will be 'blind-copied' to you so no one can see your info. So please...drop me a line at erieoma@verizon.net so we can get our list up to date. If you haven't got an email account, we will continue to send information to you via the postal service, but remember it can take 4-5 days to reach you.



I can already hear your thoughts...correct me if I am wrong....Already? We haven't even gotten into January. It's always good to remind you to renew your membership before the holiday rush begins. Our National office sends out the dues renewal notices in November as the membership year is from January to December. They are working on a way for you to renew your membership dues on line, but it's not in place as of this date. You can send your renewal check payable to DANK to our Chapter and we send in a group check or you can send it directly to National. Head of Household \$40 - Spouse \$10 – Children under 18 years are free; College/dependent children living at home \$10. Let's get 100% chapter renewal before January 1st. If you just joined since October 1st, your dues are already paid for 2018!



Actually we need to solve the problems facing not only our Chapter, but that of preserving our heritage. We need your input! We are looking at various ways to improve attendance at our meetings and social functions; providing programs of interest; plan special events such as locally historical tours; bus trips, and social events. We are overdue for our election of officers! Without your input, we cannot grow or sustain as a community.

Please plan to attend our meeting on Wed. November 15th. Can we count on your support?

All members and guests are invited join our DANK family and

Celebrate St. Nicolaus Tag und Christmas

Sunday, December 3rd, 2017

Erie Männerchor Club

12:00 PM – Gathering – CASH BAR

12:30 PM – Lighting of the Advent Wreath followed by

Brunch Buffet (Beef Tips over Noodles, Stuffed Chicken Breast, Mashed Potatoes and Gravy, Copper Coins (Glazed Sliced Carrots), Fruit, Rolls & Coffee.)

BUFFET COST: \$ 8.⁰⁰ – DANK Member

\$14.⁰⁰ – Non-member / guest

\$ 3.⁰⁰ – Children 3 to 12 years of age**



WEIHNACHTSFEIER: beginning at 1:30 PM

Prefer not to come for Dinner? Then feel free to join us at

1:30 PM Opening thoughts and Christmas Program

1:45 PM Traditional German Christmas Music & Sing Along with
The Erie Männerchor Gesangverein

2:15 PM - Cookies, Desserts* & Hot Beverages will be served

- *Members are asked to please bring 2 dozen homemade cookies or baked goods to share.*

** (Please bring a gift for your young guests)

OUR HOLIDAY PROJECT:

Remembering it is better to give than to receive, we ask that everyone bring a donation of canned coffee, tea, hot cocoa mix, coffee mate or sweeteners, we will take to the Upper Room on West 11th and Peach Streets for those who seek shelter from the cold. Cash donations also accepted.

All reservations must be made by Wednesday – Dec 1st, 2017

Please return this portion with your check a.s.a.p.



DINNER RESERVATIONS

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Number of DANK adults: _____ @ \$ 8.⁰⁰ Total: \$ _____

Number of Adult Guests: _____ @ \$14.⁰⁰ Total: \$ _____

Number of Children guests: _____ @ \$ 3.⁰⁰ Total: \$ _____ (name and ages please!)



WEIHNACHTSFEIER CELEBRATION 1:30 – 2:30 PM - Free – but Reservations also required!

DANK Member _____ Non Member Guests _____ Children (Name and Age) ** _____

Paid by Check # _____ payable to DANK # 71 in the Amount of \$ _____

Send to: **DANK Christmas**
750 East 10th Street
Erie, PA 16503-1414
Phone: (814) 456-9599

All reservations must be received by December 1st .



DANK Chapter 71
 German Heritage Society of Erie
 750 East 10th Street
 Erie, PA 16503



MEETING November 15th



Veranstaltungskalendar & *Calendar of Events*

*All Chapter gathering times unless noted otherwise.
 3rd Wednesdays of the month
 Erie Mannerchor Clun
 7:00 – 8:30 P.M.*

- *November 15th Chapter Meeting – Decision on the future of the chapter programming; Setting our social calendar and a slide show program presented by Fred Huttel, Jr. Dessert will be served*
- *December 3rd – Annual Family Christmas Brunch 12:30 – 3:00 P.M. See Page 5 for details.*

