



# DANK Chapter 71 German Heritage Society of Erie Mitteilungsblatt



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March 2017

March certainly has come in like a lion to say the least. It has been strange having temperatures in the mid 70s one day and snow the next. The winds have been fierce with gusts of 50 mph or more and then the rain moves back in. Today the sun is shining, rather gusty and in 50 with a chance of snow tomorrow and Friday. Oh well – this is Erie! We'll leave our Weather Alert up yet this month because who knows what next week will bring!



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. No email on file? Please call Bev at 456-9599

*Our next meeting will be on March 15<sup>th</sup>*, and it would be nice to have you join us for supper at the club prior to the meeting. The food has been very good and you will enjoy it. Chef Michelle has been making the Kartoffelpuffer (potato pancakes), spaetzli, and many other items from scratch. My daughter said it was the first time she really enjoyed a Sauerbraten sandwich. We need your reservation. Plan to arrive for dinner around 5:30 P.M. Don't forget...send me an email ([erieoma@verizon.net](mailto:erieoma@verizon.net)) or call me at (814) 456-9599. Looking forward to sharing a meal and conversation with you.



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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. So please...drop me a line at [DANK71@gmail.com](mailto:DANK71@gmail.com) 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.



Visit us on Face Book at *DANK - 71 German Heritage Society of Erie.*  
and follow our

German Festival FB page at *German Heritage Fest 2017 Erie, PA.*

## Bißchen und Stückchen – Bits and Pieces



*We extend our sincere best wishes and prayers to our members who are struggling with health issues. If you know someone we have missed, please let us know.*

Robert Brabender  
Emil & Gretel Daeschner



It's also a good time to invite friends to join DANK. (\$40 or \$50 with spouse), College students are \$10. Children 18 years and younger are free. They will enjoy membership in the largest German cultural organization; receive six bimonthly issues of the German American

Journal Magazine; and join in our social activities. Applications available at our meetings, or on-line at [www.DANK.org](http://www.DANK.org)

Send your payment to:

Our next meeting will be at **7 PM on Wednesday, March 15th** at the Männerchor club. Make it an evening and join us for dinner at 5:30 PM. Call 814.456.9599 for more information. We look forward to welcoming many new faces who come to learn more about our German Heritage organization.

Visit us on Face Book at *DANK - 71 German Heritage Society of Erie*. and follow our German Festival FB page at *German Heritage Fest 2017 Erie, PA*.



### Special Greetings



Mar 4	Beverly	Huttel, Jr.
Mar 18	Melissa B	Lesniewski
Mar 29	Frank	Swiderski
Apr 5	Gerald	Koos
Apr 14	Janice	Zuschlag
Apr 24	John	Becker

### Happy Anniversary



Mar 27	Charles and	Susan	Roehrl
Apr 26	Anne and	Steven	Hipwell
Apr 27	Steve and	Jacki	Seib, Sr.
Apr 28	Siegfried and	Carole	Wunner
Apr 29	Daniel B.and	Judith	Koza



# Erie Männerchor Gesangverein – our DANK German Chorus



On **October 1, 1997** the North American Singers Association (NASA) officially became recognized the Erie Männerchor Gesangverein, as a member once more. It had been 50 years since there were singers in residence at the Club. No one can recall what led to the dissolution of the original groups, the Männerchor (Men's chorus), the Damenchor (ladies chorus) or the Gemischterchor (mixed chorus). There were speculations it had to do with the anti-German hysteria that tore across our nation. Our Gesangverein (singing group) is a member of the Pittsburgh District of the NASA. Every three years, there is a national Sangerfest held in various cities across the country, last year it was in Pittsburgh. Members of our group began attending these magnificent 'conventions' of singers, singing as part of a 1500+ member chorus. Carol Snippert, Margaret Potocki and Bev Pochatko represented Erie as part of the national chorus in San Antonio, TX, Milwaukee, WI and In Pittsburgh PA. The next Sangerfest will be in Peoria IL in 2018.

This past week we welcomed James von Lowe and Bill Bisbee back to our group. They had taken a break due to their schedules and we are so happy to have them back. We all enjoy singing and learning the meaning behind the German songs that are taught phonetically by Margaret Potocki. We provide a 45 minute program of English and German songs at senior retirement and assisted living centers. It's such a great feeling and I wish more could understand why it's important to do these programs and keep our music alive.



The group has resumed practice for the upcoming spring season on Tuesdays at 5:00 P.M. until 6:30 P.M. (The first Tuesday of each month we start at 5:30 to accommodate the Ladies Auxiliary.) Our current membership requirement is that you are a member of DANK or the Erie Männerchor Club and pay a one-time fee of \$25 after the 4th practice. If you or anyone you know would like to come and see how we work, give Carol Snippert (455-7009) or Bev (456-9599) a call for information and we will have a practice folder ready for you.

## German Butter Cake Recipe – Butterkuchen



This original German cake recipe is popular throughout Germany. You can vary the recipe by adding sour cherries, apricots or peaches. Just place them into the dough or on the bottom of the baking tray. Happy Baking!

### Ingredients

some butter for the baking tray	1 pinch salt
250 g heavy cream - 1 cup	400 g flour
4 eggs	300 g sugar - 1 1/4 cup (if you like the cake sweeter use 500g or 2 cups; the (original recipe is using this amount, a bit too sweet for my taste )
200 g butter - 2 sticks	
1 Package baking powder (.5oz)	
1 package Dr Oetker Vanilla sugar (.32oz)	
250 g sliced almonds - 8.8oz	

### Instructions

- preheat oven to 350 F.
- grease a deeper baking tray, dust with flour. You also can use a high side sheet cake pan (see below) and layer it with parchment paper.
- mix heavy cream with half of the sugar and salt, mix very well by using a hand mixer.
- add eggs, sieved flour, 75 g soft butter, 1 vanilla sugar and baking powder, mix well.
- spread the dough on the baking tray and bake for about 12-15 min.
- melt remaining butter, add remaining sugar, milk and almonds, mix well.
- spread this mix on the cake and bake for another 20-30 min until the almonds show a golden color.

Although, Karneval (Fasching) ended on Shrove Tuesday, I thought you might like to learn more about some traditions associated with all the craziness that accompanies the closing of Fasching.



Anyone visiting the **Alpenwelt Karwendel** during carnival (*Fasching*) is in for a unique treat. Here, customs and traditions are still a central part of everyday life. This is particularly clear during Fasching when the "*Maschkera*" parade through the historic village centers of Mittenwald, Krün and Wallgau .

These scary figures wearing wooden masks and colorful costumes run around the alleyways, restaurants and taverns of Mittenwald. With plenty of music and gruff voices and hidden behind their elaborate masks, these figures are acting out a unique custom from ages long gone. With music and hijinks their aim is to drive out the winter demons in the darkest months of the year. They can be seen right through from 6th January to Shrove Tuesday which in 2017 was on 28th February mainly in Mittenwald

**Waking up the spirits of spring with a farewell to winter – in short Lederhosen** This 500 year-old custom dates back to cults from the pagan times. It is intended to drive out winter and ring in spring.

Every year it is a very special moment on *Unsinniger Donnerstag*, when the "*Schellenrührer*" (bell ringers) spring from one of the historic doorways in Mittenwald's richly traditional town center to strike midday for the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul. When the parish church bells ring at noon, the Schellenrührers jump out of one of the oldest house entrances in Mittenwald. Wearing short Lederhosen, green hats and wooden masks and carrying heavy cowbells the men form a long line and dance through the streets. Their cacophony is said to drive out the winter and awaken the spring. Led by the harbinger, who symbolizes the spring awakening, the twelve "*Schellenrührer*", each of which represents a month of the year, wake the first spirits of spring with heavy cow bells.



The "Maschkera" are not the only group that practice this custom, but also the "*Goaslschnalzer*" (whip performers), "*Pfannenzieher*" (panhandlers), "*Bärentreiber*" and "*Jacklschutzer*". and many other gnarly costumed characters who announce the arrival of spring in Alpenwelt Karwendel. They all wear decorative hand-carved masks and heirloom costumes that are handed down from generation to generation.

The *Schellenrührers* run and dance through the towns of Mittenwald, Krün, and Wallgau and let their heavy cowbells clang loudly following the leader who symbolizes spring and are accompanied by traditional characters such as *Bärentreiber* who drive a bear before them, *Pfannenzieher* pulling their friends in a huge frying pan, and groups of *Jacklschutzer* dressed in short lederhosen, long

white underpants, kerchiefs and sheeps' wool jackets. They use a stretched blanket to launch a straw puppet or rag doll (the Jackl), symbolizing winter, high into the air.



*"Goalschnalzer"* (whip performers),  
*"Bärentreiber"*



*"Pfannenzieher"* (panhandlers),



*"Fosanegl", "Fasenickl" and "Schecken"* all cause havoc in the Altmühltal during the Fasching carnival season. Dressed in bright patchwork garments, and with carved wooden masks, they charge through the towns and villages, cracking their



*"Goaßln"* whips in the air, and giving out pretzels and *"Guatsln"*. If they catch someone, they paint their face with soot.

The costumes worn by the wild men and women are carefully created by hand: Around 6,000 dark red felt diamonds are sewn onto rough hessian, then gold braid and small bells are added, along with hand-knotted green woolen lace. The masks are carved and designed by a local artist. The Altmühltal natural reserve is renowned for its Fasching carnival traditions. The customs have been traced back to the 18th century.



Die Gröllratscher springen mit Schellenklang begleitet von Rätschen schwingenden Maschkerä durch Mittenwald.



DANK Chapter 71  
 German Heritage Society of Erie  
 750 East 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Erie, PA 16503-1414

**TIME SENSITIVE**



**Meeting – Wed. the 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Solving the Puzzle**



Puzzles? What type of puzzle?  
 Crossword? Word Search? Suduko? or  
 just plain picture puzzles?

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. March 15<sup>th</sup>.  
 Can I count on your support?

*Jeff Chase*  
 Chapter President  
 Jchase8@gmail.com



**Mark Your  
 Calendar**

*Don't sit on the sidelines..Get involved!*



- March 15 - Meeting
- April 19 - Meeting
- May 17 - Meeting
- June 21 Chapter Meeting
- July Family Picnic
- Aug 16 - Meeting and volunteer sign-up
- Sept. 2-3 German Heritage Festival
- Sept. 20 - Meeting
- Oct 13-15 National Convention in Chicago IL
- Oct 18 - Meeting
- Nov 15 - Meeting
- Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> Christmas Celebration