



DANK Chapter 71 German Heritage Society of Erie Mitteilungsblatt



ume 28 No. 8

Sept /Oct 2018

*Danke
schön*



WE had a cast of star-studded volunteers for the German Heritage Festival. We put out the call and almost met our quota so that we could keep it to working just 3 hour shifts. We did have some outside volunteers, for which I know most of us were grateful.

**Heading up the 2018 festival were
Ray Luniewski, Melissa Lesniewski.**

The spot light is on our “star studded” list of volunteers included:

Parking: John Lesniewski, Brian Hutzelman, Jeremy Jaeger and Pete Berry.

Greeters: Margaret Potocki, Kendall Janke

Admissions Gate: Jeff & Bridget Chase, Tom Schlaudecker & Pat Munz. Joe Sinnot*, David Ridge*, Tim & Melissa Lesniewski, Amanda Mikesell, Kendall Janke, Jim & Debbie Kooser. Chris Myers, Bob Weber*

ID Bands: The Gannon University Travel Club*.;

Beer Ticket Sales: George Stefanovski, Sue Roehrl, Allison & Kendall Janke, Chris Myers and Bob Weber, Charlie Roehrl

Souvenir Glasses: Janice & Roland Zuschlager. Barb Hutzelman, Brian Matthews, Tim & Melissa Lesniewski, Chris Myers and Bob Weber.

Information and DANK Raffle Booth: Bev Pochatko, Charlotte Chase, Jeff & Briget Chase. Margaret Potocki*, Mace Bowerssox

Programs: Edie Luniewski,

Grounds Crew: Fred Huttel, Jr., Charles Roehrl, George Stefanovski, Tom Kliber, Jason Jaquith, Kevin Hart.

National Flag Bearers: Fred Huttel, Jr., Roland Zuschlag, Jeffrey Chase; German State Flags: George Stefanovski, Tom Kliber, Charlotte Chase, Carol Snippert, Jason Jaquith, Jim & Debbie Kooser, Charles Roehrl, and Gannon Univ. Travel Club*,

Our sincere thanks to those non-DANK members who, generously devoted their time to help make this festival another success.

Our September gathering was our Volunteer Appreciation Night, So many of us were so busy that we really didn't get to see much of the activities on the fest grounds. Fred Huttel took a lot of photos and we got a chance to see them!



The Festival is all about preserving our German heritage including music via songs. We are desperately holding on to our Chorus, but it needs your help to find and bring in those who enjoy singing. It's not alone fun, and entertaining, but relaxing as well. Please read below...

SINGERS URGENTLY NEEDED!

Back in 1996, DANK took on the challenge of bringing back the music to the halls of the Erie Männerchor, forming the Erie Männerchor Gemischterchor (mixed chorus). Even with the closing of the club's facilities, the group continues to meet and sing in nursing homes and senior retirement facilities. We were struggling financially and thanks to the DANK Education Fund, we are able to keep going for the time being. Singers have been hard to get and we have had three members drop out for health reasons. Paul Martinson (93 yrs young), was recently hospitalized after a fall and an injury to his hip. Now we are down to four singers...but we are not ready to give up. We recently acquired a new pianist-director, Bruce Gingrich, who has given a whole new life to the group – even with our small number of singers! Since most of the places we sing for prefer us to be there earlier in the day, we have begun practicing and singing out from 2:30-4:00 P.M. on Fridays. Our **music** ranges from songs of the 40 and 50s to traditional German folk music. (You don't need to speak German – Margaret will teach you phonetically!) We currently are meeting at the **First United Methodist Church, 707 Sassafras St. Park in back of church off Sassafras. Please call Bev (746-8882), Carol (455-7009) or Margaret (835-1939) for more details.**

Over THE summer months we were privileged to entertain the residents at Independence Court, as well as Elmwood Gardens, Golden Living-Walnut Creek, Fairview Manor, Niagara Village, Schmidt Towers and Friendship Towers. It is such a pleasure for us to share our music with them and to brighten up their day. Won't you consider joining us and bring a little sunshine into the lives of the residents in these senior retirement, assisted living residences. You will be glad you did!



ur audience at Independence Court



*We extend our sincere best wishes
and prayers to our members who are
who have been under the weather or
unable to join us. If you know someone we
have missed, please let us know.*

*Dale Arndt
Margaret Carter
Emil & Gretel Daeschner
Beverly Pochatko
Paul Martinson (sings with the
Gesangverein – hip injury)*



Our next meeting will be on
**Wednesday, October 17th 6:30
PM at the Watson-Curtze
Mansion, 356 West 6th Street. Parking in
rear. Use rear entrance to access building.**

Program: *So you want to search your family's
tree roots?*



While reservations are not
necessary, it will help us planning
Call Bev at 814.746-8882 or send
an email to our chapter email
account dankerie1990@gmail.com

We look forward to welcoming many new faces
who come to help us preserve our German Tradition



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.*

**Robert Weber and his sons, Aiden, Nolan, and Simon Weber
and David Fratz.**



In Memoriam...

*Sympathy to the Family of Dale Wallin, who passed in September. Dale's wife,
Sharon died several years ago and they were both staunch supporters of DANK.*

**This may possibly be the last newsletter that I can put together. I have asked for help and
someone to take it over with no response. For 28 years I have kept up this line of
communication, but that is coming to an end. Some of you are aware that I am losing my
eyesight and it is difficult to read, etc. I have kept trying, but I can only work at the most 10
minutes a day, and it was a struggle, to put this newsletter together. I will help our new editor
by providing the resources I have and help in any way I can. The newsletter format is done in
MS word and can be redened to the writer's choice. It's important that we can keep this line of
communication to our members. If you can help, please contact me at 814-746-8882.**



SUMMER HAPPENINGS

FAMILY PICNIC AT THE HUTTEL'S HOME...



Beverly Huttel, Margaret Potocki



Charlotte Chase and Bev Huttel



Audrey & Jerry Munzi



Tom & Barb Hutzelman and Tom Greene



Margaret Potocki, Carol Snippert, Fred Huttel

VOLUNTEER'S SIGN-UP

These are just some of the members who made it happen!



Starting Your Family Roots Search



So you are interested in finding your families roots. There are some things you need to know when starting out and here are a few pointers for you so you won't feel overwhelmed or discouraged. The ESGR (Erie Society for Genealogy Research) can and will help you. Our October program will be a presentation to help you understand and to get started. Some pointers that helped me along were...

1. When searching for the origin or etymology of your surname it is also important to consider that your last name may not have always been spelled the way that it is today. Even through at least the first half of the 20th century it is not unusual to see the same individual's last name spelled in many different ways from record to record. For example, you might see the seemingly easy-to-spell surname Kennedy spelled as Kenedy, Canady, Kanada, Kenneday, and even Kendy, due to clerks, ministers, and other officials spelling the name as they heard it pronounced. Sometimes alternate variants stuck and were passed down to future generations. It is even not that uncommon to see siblings passing down different variants of the same original surname..
2. Research into your German ancestors will have to start in the States. The important link is the ancestor who emigrated. You must, as a starter, have this person's name. If you don't know it, start by using the resources within your own family. Contact relatives, even distant ones, starting with the oldest.
3. Obituaries, typically found in newspapers, report the death of people who have recently passed away. If you're lucky, they may also include a brief biography of the person's life, and information on the funeral service. This detailed information about an individual can be very useful to anyone hoping to learn more about their relatives and ancestors, even if you already know when and where they died. An obituary may include the individual's birth place, final resting place, occupation, religious affiliation, community activities, street address, the names of friends and relatives, and other details which can help you learn a great deal about the people from your past. The program Find a Ggrave can be helpful, but be aware that the info may not always be correct.
4. Germany, as we know it today, is a much different country than it was during the time of our distant ancestors. Germany's life as a unified nation didn't even begin until 1871, making it a much "younger" country than most of its European neighbors. This can make locating German ancestors a bit more challenging than many think.
5. Prior to its unification in 1871, Germany consisted of a loose association of kingdoms (Bavaria, Prussia, Saxony, Wurttemberg...), duchies (Baden...), free cities (Hamburg, Bremen, Lubeck...), and even personal estates - each with its own laws and record keeping systems. After a brief period as a unified nation (1871-1945), Germany was again divided following World War II, with parts of it given to Czechoslovakia, Poland and the USSR. What was left was then divided into East Germany and West Germany, a division that lasted until 1990. Even during the unified period, some sections of Germany were given to Belgium, Denmark and France in 1919.
6. What this means for people researching German roots, is that the records of their ancestors may or may not be found in Germany. Some may be found among the records of the six countries which have received portions of former Germany territory (Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Poland, and the USSR). Once you take your research prior to 1871, you may also be dealing with records from some of the original German states.
7. Many people assume that Prussian ancestors were German, but this isn't necessarily the case. Prussia was actually the name of a geographical region, which originated in the area between Lithuania and Poland, and later grew to encompass the southern Baltic coast and northern Germany. Prussia existed as an independent state from the 17th century until 1871, when it became the largest territory of the new German empire. Prussia as a state was officially abolished in 1947, and now the term only exists in reference to the former province.



As more and more families are becoming mixed ethnic blends, it is important that you start your family's history for your grandchildren. They will be able to watch just how far your family roots have spread and where they fit in. Join us Wed., Oct 17th at 6:30 pm at the Watson-Curtze Mansion - Parking in rear. Use Back Entrance. We will be in the Dining Room.



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

Address Correction Please



Next meeting – Oct 17th

Searching for your family tree roots?

Visit our web page at: <http://www.dankerie.org>
 or on Face Book at
DANK - 71 German Heritage Society of Erie,
 and follow our German Festival Face Book page at
German Heritage Fest 2018 Erie, PA.

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2018

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If you are interested in helping plan any Chapter activities,
 please contact Fred or Beverly.



Meetings begin at 6:30 P.M.

Oct 17 Membership Meeting and Program: Searching Your Family Roots – at the Watson-Curtze Mansion – 356 W 6th Street. Parking in rear.

Nov Volkstrauertag Service/Memorial

Nov 14th Meeting/ Election of Officers
 \Nov 22nd Thanksgiving Day

Dec 2nd Christmas Celebration- tba

Dec 7-8 – Trop to Pittsburgh for Christmas Celebrating & Khristkindl Markt.