

# North Star Chapter

March 2008

<http://www.northstarchapter.org/>

Volume 33 Number 2

## **Soup Luncheon**

**Saturday, March 15, 2008, 12:00 PM**

**Berea Lutheran Church, 7538 Emerson Ave. S., Richfield, MN**

If this cold winter weather has you craving hot, homemade soup, you are in luck! Our March program is a soup luncheon featuring knepfla soup and borscht, bread, and dessert, including kuchen. The luncheon will kick off our Youth Essay Contest, with its aim at getting young people interested in German-Russian heritage. After lunch, Sam Brungardt will have a short presentation on the different cuisine of the Volga Germans and the Black Sea Germans. Ten-year-old Cody Cosman, grandson of Lil and Dayton Ward, will give a speech about his great-great-great-uncle John Heck. If you have younger family members, this would be a great event to attend to give them exposure to German-Russian culture and family history.

Lunch will cost \$3.50 for your choice of soup and bread, and \$1.50 for dessert. Drinks such as coffee, tea, water, and lemonade will be provided. Warm your hearts and your stomachs with an afternoon of homemade goodness, interesting information, and support for the youth of our heritage.

## **North Star Chapter Annual Spring Banquet**

**Saturday, April 26, 2008, 5:00 PM-8:00 PM**

**Berea Lutheran Church, 7538 Emerson Ave. S., Richfield MN**

Our annual spring banquet will be a special time this year as we celebrate 30 years of the North Star Chapter. This catered event will include entertainment by the Concord Singers of New Ulm, who sing festive German songs. Punch will be served starting at 5:00, with dinner to follow at 6:00. The menu is baked chicken, roast pork & dressing, baby red potatoes, Caesar and broccoli sunflower salads, baby carrots and green beans almondine, breads, drinks, and dessert. The cost is \$20 per person; you'll find a banquet registration form to mail in further in the newsletter. Please get your reservations in by Tuesday, April 15. Guests are always welcome!

## **Upcoming Dates**

September 13, 2008: lunch at a local German restaurant; see the next newsletter issue for place and time

October 18, 2008: program to be determined

November 15, 2008: genealogy meeting

December 6, 2008: Weihnachtsfest

## President's Message By Duane Stabler

Our North Star Chapter 2008 season has started and we are now moving along nicely with meetings and a spring banquet planned. I'll not steal Lil's thunder and will make you go elsewhere in this newsletter to find the details of our local meeting plans. I encourage you all to make sure you mark your calendar with the dates so you don't miss any meetings.

At the national level, the joint AHSGR/GRHS convention is shaping up to be an amazing event. It will be held at Casper, Wyoming, and if you go to either of the national websites you'll see something like this:

**2008 CONVENTION  
CASPER, WYOMING  
"CELEBRATING OUR COMMON HERITAGE"**  
Parkway Plaza Hotel and Convention Center  
Casper, Wyoming  
July 28 - August 3, 2008

*The 2008 International Convention of Germans from Russia activities of the week will begin with AHSGR board meetings on Monday, July 28. The convention program will begin on Wednesday, July 30. The planning committee is working hard to try to incorporate the traditions and cultures of the societies' two separate conventions into one exciting event. The committees for the convention will be co-chaired by one member from each society and staffed by members of both societies. Co-chairs of the convention will be Patti Sellenrick, who is representing AHSGR and Al Feist, who is representing GRHS. A preliminary schedule has been laid out and convention committees have been selected. Now volunteers will be needed to work on the details of the committee. We need you! To make this historic event successful, many volunteers are needed to act co-chairpersons of committees and to help with committees. The following are the committees that have been set up: registration, publications, publicity, finance, workshops, meals, facilities and equipment, special events, entertainment, youth program, door prizes and special promotions, bookstore/library/photocopying, tours and transportation, hospitality and volunteers, photography, and museum and wall of honor.*

If you do plan to go, I encourage you to book your hotel now as I know that many people are doing it earlier than  
**(continued on page 3)**

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## Library Corner

By Bernie Becker

Thanks to Carol Just for the donation of the Ashley ND Diamond Jubilee 1888-1963 and Wishek ND Diamond Jubilee 1898-1973 books. Diamond, Jubilee, and Century books of the small towns contain information about many people. They are highly prized by our members. If anyone has such books you no longer want, or somehow ended up with doubles, our library will be happy to receive them.

Carol also is donating the Thurn Family History Book 1740-1987. There's a lot more than family statistics in family history books. You'll find interesting anecdotes of family living, small town life, clothing styles of the era, etc. Leafing through the large collection we are privileged to have can be fascinating.

Our library owes a big vote of thanks to Jaci Williams. She has transferred the VHS tapes of our past meetings to DVD disks. Disks take up much less space. I've brought some of them home to catalog and while doing that, have played bits and parts of them. If you missed a program, or want to refresh your memory on one, don't hesitate to check it out to view at home on your DVD player.

I particularly enjoyed seeing again the January 13, 2007, program entitled "The Public Land Survey System." I wasn't able to grasp it all at the presentation. Interesting information. Gwen Pritzkau is featured in two different programs we had. Gwen was a veritable spring of genealogical knowledge. Our recordings of her programs with us are a particular treasure.

Someone recently asked me where she could find a book to help her record her life story. We have several good books on our shelves to help you. And, we have a DVD

of Cindy Miller's presentation "Write Now!" from October 11, 2003.

I could go on, but suffice it to say, our library is a valuable resource for your research. You'll find books on our shelves you won't find at the public library, or even at Borders or Barnes and Noble. Some are out of print and valuable. It's here for you to use. I'm at your service to help.

## Member News

Our condolences to Sharon Chmielarz on the death of her husband Tad on December 16, 2007. Tad immigrated to Minnesota at age 15, and served in the U.S. Army. He taught high school German and English for over 30 years. He is also survived by his sister.

Those of you who are AAA members may have enjoyed an article in the Sept/Oct 2007 issue called "Dakota Deutschland," written by Ginny Prior, daughter of member Virginia Prior. If you missed it, you can read the article online at [www.autoclubgroup.com](http://www.autoclubgroup.com). You have to click on "North Dakota," then click on "AAA Living Magazine" at the bottom of the page. It will take you to the current issue, but from there you can click to past issues to read Ginny's article on traveling in the Sauerkraut Triangle.

## **(President's Message, continued from page 2)**

usual. I would expect this to be an exciting convention since both libraries will be there, computers to do research will be there, and many speakers will be there. I would like to think that the North Star Chapter is well represented since we are affiliated with both national organizations. See you at our local meeting and at the joint convention.

# NORTH STAR CHAPTER OF MINNESOTA – AHSGR and GRHS

**TO:** Members and Friends of the North Star Chapter

**FROM:** Gwen Schock Cowherd, Youth Committee

**DATE:** February 2008

**RE:** AHSGR International Youth Membership Program

**Young people are an important resource for any organization. They bring curiosity, vitality and inspiration wherever they go!**

The **AHSGR Junior Membership Program** is made up of two divisions: **Youth Members** ages 14 and under, and **Student Members** ages 15-24. As part of their membership, **Youth Members** will receive an initial membership packet, four quarterly issues of the *Kinderzeitung* newsletter and an official membership card. Youth Membership materials are targeted to the specific age group. **Student Members** will receive an initial membership packet, the regular four quarterly issues of the AHSGR *Newsletter*, four quarterly issues of the AHSGR *Journal*, and an official membership card. Both receive an initial \$5.00 coupon good toward purchases from the society's bookstore.

**A Junior Membership** offers a great opportunity for you to share the joys of AHSGR membership with your children, grandchildren or great grandchildren and to let them know how much your membership means to you. **A Junior Membership is a great gift for any occasion and a lasting investment in the future!** The annual dues are nominal: Youth Membership \$8.00; Student Membership \$15.00. Don't miss this opportunity to pass the torch of German-Russian Heritage onto the next generation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please send this portion and payment to \_\_\_\_\_

AHSGR, 631 D Street, Lincoln, NE 68502-1199

Name of Youth Student \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Grandparents Names: \_\_\_\_\_

GR surnames of interest: \_\_\_\_\_

GR ancestral village of interest: \_\_\_\_\_

What AHSGR Chapter do your parents/grandparents belong to? \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership dues enclosed:** \_\_\_\_\_ Youth \$8 \_\_\_\_\_ Student \$15

VISA/MC/DISCOVER (circle one) # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ **Make checks and money orders payable to AHSGR.**

# January Program Dives into North Dakota History

By Carol Just

Saturday, January 12, 2008, kicked off the new year of North Star Chapter educational programming. Jim Gessele, former editor of GRHS Heritage Review and Past President of the North Star Chapter, gave an excellent presentation about politics in McLean and Sheridan counties in North Dakota in the early 20th century.

Much of the information came from German-language newspapers with their colorful and opinionated editorials. Information the average researcher would not be able to access without translation skills, and time and patience to read miles of microfilm.

Jim gave excellent background information about the area; early territorial boundaries (with maps), settlement, political movers and shakers, the development of political parties -dating back to territorial days, party bosses and the ethnic mix of European immigrants and "old stock" Americans who came from the East to make their fortune. Newspapers played a large role in the world view of that era, sometimes serving as a venue for editors to "jab" one another. Newspaper ads were sometimes provocative, making it all very interesting information a century later.

Who knew that a 1906 blizzard at Denhoff, ND, could detain Fritz Kehrer (born Teplitz, Bessarabia) a young newspaper reporter for the Wishek (ND) "Nachrichten," giving him the opportunity to start his own newspaper, the "Staats Zeitung"? That turn of events was timely in that Kehrer then translated North Dakota's new political primary law into German and published it in his newspaper. Who would have dreamed that the "Scandinavian American League" and the Kehrer's newly formed, 1200-member "German Good Government League" could switch the wave

of power from "old stock" political leadership to grass roots leadership at that year's elections?

This information challenges the long-held opinion that Germans from Russia were not involved in local politics for decades following immigration. For those who missed this presentation, a recording of it will be available in the chapter library.

## Happy Anniversary!

### April

Sara Sue & John Groh  
Shirley & Albert Pfeifle  
Virginia Morton & Paul Winter

### May

Janet Lohberger & Mayo Flegel  
Gayle & John Hafner  
Norma & Gordon Herrboldt  
Rosemary & Ken Larson  
Marlene & Tom Schonebaum

### June

Glorian & Ron Anderson  
Diann & Paul Bennin  
Sharon & Pete Kleingartner

## Please Take Note

The South Dakota State Historical Society has created a searchable index to a database of cemetery records online. The data are from a Works Progress Administration effort known as the Graves Registration Project. The inventory included the name of the deceased, the grave, lot, block and section number, date of death, age at death, gender and whether or not the person was a veteran. The website is <http://apps.sd.gov/applications/DT58Cemetery>.

The Germanic-American Institute in St. Paul will be having a sauerkraut dinner on Sunday, March 30, starting at 11:15 am. To **(Please Take Note, continued on page 9)**

## Happy Birthday

### April

Gayle Hafner

### May

Sean Beaton

Diann Bennin

### June

Robert Coates

Pat Current

John Hafner

Robert Suppan

### July

Paul Bennin

Sharon Kleingartner

Rosemary Larson

Arve Moser

Martha Suppan

Paul Winter

## Postcards Illustrate the Past

By Cynthia Miller

Despite another frigid winter day, over 30 people gathered on February 9 to hear another installment of Duane Stabler's presentation "Through Grandfather's Eyes: Postcards are a View to the Past." Duane is an avid antique postcard collector, a pastime he took up after getting interested in genealogy. In order to add to the dates and names in his family tree, he found that using postcards of places his family lived and things they might have done filled in for missing photographs. This is the second time Duane has shared his postcard collection and told us how we can use it to catch glimpses into what our grandparents might have seen.

Sending a family photo cards each Christmas is not a new concept. Our German-Russian ancestors may have had a photo taken when a traveling photographer came to town. That photo was printed as a postcard that could be

mailed to faraway friends and family. The traveling photographer also took photos of towns across the Midwest, along with buildings and countryside for business owners to purchase and sell to citizens to collect or send. Duane also has postcards of places his ancestors may have seen, such as Ellis Island in New York. Duane now finds many postcards on eBay, but he also looks in antiques stores, trades with other collectors, and attends postcard shows. A DVD of Duane's presentation will be available in our library, and those interested in learning more about the local postcard collectors club that Duane is involved with (he's the newsletter editor) can visit [www.twincitypostcardclub.com](http://www.twincitypostcardclub.com).

## When Great-Grandmother Was Young

Great-Grandmother, on a winter's day,  
Milked the cows and fed them hay,  
Slopped the hogs, saddled the mule,  
And got the children off to school,  
Did a washing, mopped the floors,  
Washed the windows and did the chores,  
Swept the parlor, made the beds,  
Baked a dozen loaves of bread,  
Split some firewood and lugged it in,  
Enough to fill the kitchen bin,  
Cooked a supper that was delicious,  
And afterwards washed up all the dishes,  
Fed the cat and sprinkled the clothes,  
Mended a basketful of hose,  
Then opened the organ and began to play  
"When you come to the end of a perfect day."

## Recycle Printer Cartridges and Cell Phones

Don't throw away your used inkjet/laser cartridges and old cell phones. A recycling company will take them and forward the money for them to AHSGR. For mailing envelopes, please call 1-800-368-5881.

## Spring Banquet Registration

Reservations needed by Tuesday, April 15, 2008

Spring Banquet: April 26, 2008 — Entertainment: The New Ulm  
Concord Singers

Punch at 5:00 PM, Dinner at 6:00 PM

Fee: US \$20.00 per person. Make check payable to North Star  
Chapter

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people in your party: \_\_\_\_\_

### Menu:

Baked chicken, roast pork & dressing, baby red potatoes, Caesar and  
broccoli sunflower salads, baby carrots and green beans almondine,  
breads, drinks, and dessert.

**Send this**

**completed**

**form with**

**payment to:**

Lil Ward

5177 Red Oak Drive

Moundsview MN 55112

763-884-8626

wardday@foxinternet.net

## IHRC Cookbook Puts in Good Word for North Star Chapter

By Sam Brungardt

Opportunities to promote our chapter and cookbook as well as AHSGR and GRHS sometimes arise and when they do, it pays to take advantage of the situation.

Last year, a friend who works for the University of Minnesota's Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) called. Would I send her some German-Russian recipes for possible inclusion in a cookbook the center was compiling? She knew about our *Sei Unser Gast* cookbook because I'd given her a gift copy and had also given one to the IHRC library on behalf of our chapter.

Only problem was, the deadline was imminent. Luckily, I had a *Sei Unser Gast* at the office and Carol Just had recently sent me her recipe for *kuchen*. I hurriedly typed up several recipes from our cookbook that I knew to be winners, added Carol's recipe and a few notes to put each recipe in historical or cultural perspective, and e-mailed the works to my friend. Of course, I included plugs for *Sei Unser Gast* and our chapter's website.

So, what made it into the IHRC cookbook? Four recipes, three of which mentioned the Germans from Russia or our chapter. At the end of my mom's recipe for Cucumber and Onion Salad, the editor/compilers included the following: "Among the many immigrants to Minnesota were Germans who had lived in colonies along the Volga River in Russia. Many of these Volga Germans worked in the packing houses and railroad shops in St. Paul and in the sugar beet fields around Hutchinson."

With my recipe for Volga German Roast Beef Dinner (*Broda*), they included: "When I was growing up in western Kansas, roast beef seasoned with pickling spices and

onions was served at Volga German weddings, funeral dinners, and at parish bazaars, which we called parish picnics...."

And at the end of Carol's recipe for Black Sea Coffee Cake with Custard Topping (*Kuchen*) was the real plum: This recipe makes 8 pie-sized kuchen, a dessert so loved by Germans from Russia that they have succeeded in getting it named the official dessert of South Dakota... Many Germans of Russian descent live in the Twin Cities. Most are the descendants of Germans who emigrated in the late 1800s and early 1900s from South Russia (now Ukraine), Bessarabia, and the Crimea to the Dakotas. Locally, their heritage — including foodways — is kept alive by the North Star Chapter of the Germans from Russia (see [www.northstarchapter.org](http://www.northstarchapter.org)).

Not all promotional opportunities will be so obvious; but if we're smart, we'll make the most of them. If you see an opportunity to promote our cookbook, call me at 651-488-9681 or e-mail me at [sam739is@hotmail.com](mailto:sam739is@hotmail.com) and we'll discuss it. By the way, you can order a copy of the Immigration Heritage Recipe Collection if you go to [www.ihrc.umn.edu](http://www.ihrc.umn.edu) or phone the IHRC at 612-625-4800.

## What Do German Surnames Mean?

Reprinted from the Lincoln Chapter Newsletter, May/June 2007

Bauer: from German "bur" (farmer or peasant)

Eckhardt: from German "agi" (edge) and "hard" (hardy, brave, strong)

Gerlach: from German "gur" (spear) and "lach" (sport or play)

Klein: from German "klein" (little); a

descriptive name given to someone short  
Kohler: from German "koler" (maker and seller of charcoal)

**(What do German surnames mean?, continued on page 9)**

## **Book Review: 900 Miles from Nowhere: Voices from the Homestead Frontier**

By Gwen Schock Cowherd

If you are an American history buff and long for a look in the rearview mirror of your early predecessors, you can thank Steven R. Kinsella for researching and writing "900 Miles from Nowhere: Voices from the Homestead Frontier." Kinsella, a South Dakota son now residing in St. Paul, is a great-grandson of North Dakota settlers. Spurred by his fascination of abandoned farm buildings on his drives through the Great Plains, his book brings life to past homeowners' hardships and successes.

The author's research road-tripped him to historical societies, state archives and libraries in the states of Nebraska, Colorado, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Montana, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wyoming. The book includes letters, diaries, and photographs documented from 1860-1910 (most never before published) describing the torments of life on the prairie. Some of the letters are heart wrenching when describing the many adversities, but many are also uplifting when revealing the camaraderie and positive attitudes of better times to come.

I read with special interest the lives of the women who came from varied backgrounds including eastern United States homes of comfort. A few admirable women staked claims of their own while others came reluctantly following a partner's dream of prosperity and thirst for adventure. One young bride wrote a letter describing her new life on the prairie and her loneliness. She signed the letter, Mrs. Frank Wintrose, Cottonwood, South Dakota – 900 miles from nowhere.

Tears came to my eyes for the hardships

and unacceptance my ancestors endured when I read this in a letter written by a Leipzig, North Dakota, woman: "You get so sick of seeing Russians and hearing them spiel Dutch. You ask them anything and it's always "ich nicht fur stehe[verstehe]" and they shrug their shoulders and look idiotic. Sometimes you fool them and try to ramble off a little Dutch and then they can't do enough for you. Ah! We don't live in the US any more for this is 'Little Russia'."

This book is a fascinating study of the early settlers and the pictures exceptionally telling. I envision this book being extolled by American history teachers for its period thoroughness and ease of read. The hardcover book is 194 pages and can be purchased at any major book store.

**(Please Take Note, continued from page 5)**

make a reservation, please call 651-222-7027. For more information, visit <http://www.gai-mn.org>.

Did you know that Cosco sells beet pickles like Mom used to make? They are Safie Hand Packed Home Style Sweet Pickle Beets, a USA product from Chesterfield, MI. Bernie Becker reports that they are quart jar size, delicious, and worth the price of \$5.00.

**(What Do German Surnames Mean?, continued from page 8)**

Schafer: from German "schaefaere" (shepherd)

Schmidt: from German "schmied"; an occupational name for "blacksmith"

Schneider: from German "schneider" (to cut); one who makes outer garments

Schwartz: from German "swarz" (black); a descriptive name for someone with dark hair

Weber: from German "weber" (weaver)

**North Star Chapter  
of Minnesota-AHSGR and GRHS**  
Non-Profit Organization  
P.O. Box 583642  
Minneapolis, MN 55458

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Return Service Requested

## 2008 Membership Form

New     Renew     Individual     Family

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note that a membership directory might be provided to North Star Chapter members that would include your name, address, phone, and email. If the chapter chooses to publish a membership directory:**

I **agree** to have my name, address, phone and email in the published directory.  
 Please **exclude** my information from the published directory.

**National Membership:**  AHSGR     GRHS     Both AHSGR and GRHS

**Local dues are \$12.00 per year per family, plus membership in either AHSGR or GRHS. AHSGR members please submit \$62 (\$50 for AHSGR, \$12 for North Star membership). GRHS members please submit \$12. GRHS requests that you send your national membership (\$40) to GRHS, 1125 W. Turnpike Ave., Bismarck ND 58501.**

**Please make your check payable to North Star Chapter and submit to:**

**Helen Kleingartner, 9513 Pierce St. NE, Blaine MN 55434 Questions: Contact Helen at 763-205-2297.**

For newsletter greeting only: Birthday Month(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding Anniversary Month \_\_\_\_\_