



Texas German Society

Organized September 6, 1983 ■ Witte-Schmid Haus Museum
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 Spring 2024

Reporter

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President's Message

Herzlich willkommen Neues Jahr 2024!
 Liebe Mitglieder, liebe Freunde der "Texas German Society".
 Kaum zu glauben das wir dieses Jahr das 41. Jahr der TGS feiern werden. Seit ihr auch stolz auf unsere Vorfahren? Was immer ihre Gründe waren die Heimat zu verlassen, sie hatten Deutschland & viele Traditionen nicht vergessen in der neuen Heimat Texas. Ich bitte Euch alle, das weiter durchzuführen. Durch viele Generationen haben vielleicht viele von Euch die deutsche Sprache nicht gelernt? Somit möchte ich Euch ermutigen, für dieses Jahr etwas Neues für/mit TGS zutun. Zum Beispiel einige deutsche Saetze zu lernen, oder ein neues deutsches Essen zu kochen, oder einen Osterstrauch mit Ostereiern aufhaengen. Lass uns weiterhin Stolz sein auf unsere Deutsch-Amerikaner hier in Texas!
 Mit besten Wuenschen

Welcome New Year 2024!
 Dear members & friends of the "Texas German Society". It's hard to believe that we are celebrating the 41 years of TGS. Are you proud of our heritage too? Whatever their reasons was to leave their Hometowns, Germany & many Traditions was not forgotten in their new homes in Texas. I encourage you all to continue doing this. Maybe through many generations of your family, you haven't learned the German language? Hereby I like to motivate you all to do something new for/with TGS this year. As an example to learn couple German sentences, or to cook a new German recipe, or to set up an Easter Bouquet with hanging Easter eggs.
 Let us continue to be proud of our German-Americans here in Texas.
 With best wishes
Marion McClinton
 President, TGS

41st Annual Texas German Society State Convention

Guten Tag!

General information regarding the 2024 State Convention.

1. Date is April 6, 2024
2. Place and time - St. Michael's Catholic Church Family Life Center. The physical address is 9214 Main Street, Needville, TX 77461. Doors open at 8:00 a.m. Registration will be from 8:30 to 9:30. There will be refreshments of Kaffee (Coffee), Kuchen (Kolaches), Obst (Fruit), etc. during registration. The convention will start at 9:30 AM and will be finished around 3:00 PM. Lunch will be around 12:00 noon.
3. Menu will consist of pork roast, sausage, buttered potatoes, sauerkraut, green beans, homemade bread, desserts, and tea.
4. Silent Auction donations – We ask that each chapter donate/bring at least two (2) items for the silent auction. For questions, please contact Cathy Hanzik at 281-342-8243, 281-639-1051 (cell), or email at cathyhanzik@gmail.com. The money made from the silent auction will help offset the cost of hosting the State Convention.
5. Activities are being planned for Friday afternoon for those coming on the afternoon of April 5.

The Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society looks forward to seeing you in Needville for the 41 st Annual Texas German Society State Convention!

DIRECTIONS: St. Michael's Catholic Church Family Life Center ~ 9214 Main Street, Needville, TX 77461

From Sugar Land/Houston: Take Highway 59/69 South to Highway 36. Travel south 10 miles to Needville. Turn right at the 1st red light on School Street. Travel to the 4 way Stop on Main Street (FM 360). Take a left and St. Michael's Catholic Church is on the right with the Family Life Center to the left of the Church parking lot past the Parish Hall and CCD Building.

From Corpus Christi/Victoria: Take Highway 59/69 North. Exit FM 360 and travel into Needville. St. Michael's Catholic Church will be on the Right past the 4 way Stop. The Family Life Center is to the left of the Church parking lot past the Parish Hall and CCD Building.

From Austin/Columbus: Take Highway 71 to Highway 90. Travel east to Spur 10. Turn Right. Travel to Highway 36. Take a Right at the red light. Travel south to Needville. Turn right at the 1st red light on School Street. Travel to the 4 way Stop. Take a left and St. Michaels Catholic Church is on the right with the Family Life Center to the left of the Church parking lot past the Parish Hall and CCD Building.

From San Antonio: Take I 10 East. Take Highway 71 to Highway 90. Travel east to Spur 10. Turn Right. Travel to Highway 36. Take a Right at the red light. Travel south to Needville. Turn right at the 1st red light on School Street to the 4 way Stop. Take a left and St. Michaels Catholic Church is on the right with the Family Life Center to the left of the Church parking lot past the Parish Hall and CCD Building.

*****Avoid FM 2218 if you can. It is under construction. The bad part about the construction is that you have oncoming traffic on your left and a concrete barricade on your right with lots of lane changes.

*****St. Michael's will have a Saturday night Mass at 5:30 PM. Confessions are from 4:30 to 5 PM.

There are no hotels/motels in Needville; however, there are many hotels/motels in the Rosenberg/Richmond area which is only 10 miles north on Highway 36. Listed below are 3 choices that have been reserved for your convenience for Friday night, April 5, 2024. To make reservations, telephone the hotel/motel of your choice and provide the following information:

Itinerary #: 5136B426963689

Name: Cathy Hanzik

Super 8 by Wyndham Rosenberg TX +1-832-595-8700

3314 1st Street, Rosenberg, Texas 77471 King \$77 or 2 Doubles \$87

Amenities

- Free Coffee & Breakfast Item
- Free Wi-Fi
- Mobile Check-in
- Free Parking
- 100% Smoke-Free Hotel
- On-Site Guest Laundry

La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham Houston Rosenberg +1-832-595-6111

28332 Southwest Freeway, Rosenberg, Texas 77471 King \$109 or 2 Queens \$114

Amenities

- Free Breakfast
- Free Wi-Fi
- Mobile Check-in
- Meeting Room
- Free Parking
- Pet Friendly

Days Inn by Wyndham Rosenberg +1-281-232-7300

3555 Highway 36 S, Rosenberg, Texas 77471 King \$79 or 2 Queens \$89

Amenities

- Free Coffee & Breakfast Item
- Free Wi-Fi
- Mobile Check-in
- Free Parking
- Pool - Outdoor
- 100% Smoke-Free Hotel

FRIDAY AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES

Fort Bend Museum 410 S. Fifth Street | Richmond, TX 77469 281-342-6478
info@fortbendmuseum.org

General Admission Tickets & Info Tickets are available online or by phone at 281-342-6478. Tickets are also available at the door. The final ticket time is one hour before close.

Purchase tickets for general admission to the Museum Gallery & Grounds. Explore the diverse history of Fort Bend County in the newly renovated Museum Gallery featuring items from the Fort Bend History Association's extensive collections and then enjoy exploring nature on our Grounds. OPTIONAL: Guided house tours* of the 1855 Long-Smith Cottage and 1883 Moore Home are only available with the purchase of general admission to the Museum Gallery & Grounds.

- \$12 for adults (Ages 13-64)
- \$10 for seniors (Ages 65+)
- \$8 for children (Ages 4-12) · FREE Members of the Fort Bend History Association
- FREE Children (Ages 3 & Under)
- FREE Active-duty members and Veterans of the U.S. military
- Half-price admission for up to 5 family members accompanying the U.S. military service member

Guided tours of the Long-Smith Cottage and Moore Home are available at 1 & 3 PM on Friday, April 5, 2024.

- Explore the diverse history of Fort Bend County in the newly renovated Museum Gallery featuring items from the Fort Bend History Association's extensive collections and then enjoy exploring nature on our Grounds.
- The 1855 Long-Smith Cottage, built by Jane Long's grandson, is one of the oldest buildings in the county. Learn about life in Fort Bend in the 1860s.
- The 1883 Moore Home was home to Congressman John. M. and Lottie Dyer Moore and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2001.

Everyone's pace is different, but we suggest allowing at least 1-2 hours for your visit. Once checked in you are welcome to stay as long as you like until we close at 5 PM.

TENTATIVE PROGRAM (Subject to Change)

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| 8:30 – 9:30 AM | Registration ~ Light Breakfast |
| 9:30 AM | Willkommen (Welcome) and Silent Auction Opens |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Invocation· National Anthem and Pledges to the American and Texas Flags· Greetings from Needville and ???Fort Bend County· ???Greetings from Germany |
| 9:50 – 10:30 | Speaker ~ Erika Isham ~ Education and Engagement Coordinator, Fort Bend County Museum “German Influence in Fort Bend County” |
| 10:30 – 10:45 | Break ~ Door Prizes ~ Shopping with vendors |
| 10:45 – 11:30 | Speaker ~ Ed Geiger ~ Fort Bend Chapter Member “Why did the Great German Migration to the United States Happen.” |
| 11:30 – 12 Noon | Break ~Shopping with vendors. Prepare for lunch. Menu will consist of pork roast, sausage, buttered potatoes, sour kraut, green beans, homemade bread, desserts, and tea. |
| 12 Noon | Lunch |
| | Entertainment by The Happy Musicians Band from Needville |
| | Maybe another speaker?????? |
| 2:00 PM | TGS Business Meeting |
| | Election of officers Memorial Program |
| 2:45 PM | Break ~ Door Prizes~ Shopping with vendors |
| | Silent Auction Closes |
| 3 PM | Closing Remarks ~ Clean up |
| | auf Wiedersehen (until we see each other again) |

Registration Form

2024 Texas German Society State Convention

Hosted by the Ft. Bend County Chapter

At St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church Hall, 9214 Main St. Needville, TX 77461

April 6, 2024

Registration: Postmarked by March 15, 2024 - \$20.00 (After March 15th and at Door, \$25.00)

(Please print the name/names wanted on name tag – **Please print, no Cursive**)

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Chapter or indicate if visitor: _____

Please Indicate:

_____ Number of people by March 15, 2024 x \$20.00= _____ amount enclosed

_____ Number of people after March 15, 2024 x \$25.00= _____ amount enclosed

OPTIONAL DONATION TO HELP DEFRAY COST OF CONVENTION _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Make checks payable to: FT. BEND COUNTY CHAPTER OF TGS

**Return this form and check or money order to: PEGGY SCHULIN, TGS SECRETARY
1404 BAIRD AVE., KATY, TX 77493
Phone: 713-582-5210 Email: peggyschulin@comcast.net**

Please make copies of this form for all members. Families with last name and address can use same form but please list first names separate for name tags.

****Please check here if you prefer VEGAN OPTION for lunch (sides only) and number _____ x # _____**

IN MEMORIAM (DECEASED CHAPTER MEMBERS IN 2023)

Please respond to the first blank even if no memoriam is requested:

Memoriam Request (YES_____, NO_____). Please continue if checked YES.

Please print, no cursive. Please print multiple forms if more spaces are needed.

Name:

Chapter:

Please return this form with your registration. Any submissions after MARCH 1, 2024, may not make it to the program.

2024 Texas German Society State Convention Vendor

Exhibitor Rules

Date: Saturday, April 6, 2024

Place: ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

CATHOLIC CHURCH HALL

9214 MAIN ST.

NEEDVILLE, TX. 77461

(Sponsored by the Ft. Bend County Chapter of the Texas German Society)

Cost of space is \$25.00 paid in advance for profit booths. Non-profits booth rental is FREE.

Please make check payable to **FT. BEND COUNTY CHAPTER** and mail check and application to: PEGGY SCHULIN 1404 BAIRD AVE. KATY, TEXAS 77493. For questions you may call Peggy at 713-582-5210 or email peggyschulin@comcast.net.

1. Booth size is approximately 10' X 10'
2. Booth site will be assigned inside convention hall and each exhibitor will be provided with one (1) table (3'x 8') and two (2) chairs. Vendors are welcome to bring their own small table. The Texas German Society will not be responsible for any loss, damage, or injury.
3. Booths should be set up by 8:30 am and remain until the end of the convention which will be approximately 3:30 pm. Hall will be open for setup at 7:30 a.m.
4. Limited electrical outlets are available. Please let us know if you need electricity for your booth, and must be for reasonable use. First come, first serve, and may affect the booth location. Please bring an extension cord (20') as plugs may be a distance away.
5. Each participant is responsible for collecting and reporting STATE SALES TAX. You sell directly to the public.
6. **Deadline for submission of application is MARCH 15, 2024**
7. A catered meal will be available at lunch for \$10.00 per person (payable in advance).
8. Please write one check for cost of booth and lunch(es)

Texas German Society State Convention

Saturday, April 6, 2024

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church Hall
9214 Main St. Needville, Texas 77461

Booth Application – Please print, no cursive

Due March 15, 2024

Booth Name _____

Profit _____ (\$25.00) Non-profit _____ (no charge for booth)

Lunch = \$10.00 per person x _____ of people = \$ _____

Applicant's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____ Cell _____

E-mail _____

Items to be sold _____

Signed Agreement

I hereby release The Ft. Bend County Chapter of any responsibility for loss, theft, or damage to any work shown at the 2024 Convention. I agree to abide by the rules included with this application. I also agree that my booth name and items to be sold may be used to advertise the 2024 convention.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(Mail application and check made payable to **FT. BEND COUNTY CHAPTER** to Peggy Schulin,
1404 Baird Ave. Katy, Texas 77493



TEXAS GERMAN SOCIETY ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



State Christmas Party being entertained by Jason Keepers on the piano and also the accordion. Note the beautiful decorations, the Flags and Advent Wreath on the right.

BLUEBONNET CHAPTER

Sept 2023 The Bluebonnet Chapter of Texas German Society met on Sunday September 17, 2023 at Concordia Hall at 3 pm. Vice President Sandy Shuff called the meeting to order at 3:10 pm. She welcomed 13 members and 1 guest. Harold Remmert made a motion to dispense with the minutes and Herbert Schumann second it. Secretary Marie Herridge gave the treasurer's report and it will be filed for audit.

New Business- Sandy announced that the Concordia Gesang Verein singers would be performing for the Bellville 175th anniversary on November 4, 2023 at Huff Brewing. We welcome new members. The singers will also sing at St. John's Lutheran Church Octoberfest on Sunday, Oct 29, 2023.

She suggested a membership drive and asked for suggestions. Our next meeting will be Sunday, November 19, 2023 which will be our Thanksgiving meal. We will meet at 3 pm Concordia Hall. The chapter will provide the meat and members will bring sides and desserts based on last name.

She reminded everyone about the State Convention which will be on April 6, 2024 hosted by Fort Bend. Be sure to watch the newsletter for more information.

Sunday, Dec 3, 2023 will be the Christmas party at Witte Schmid Das Haus at 2 pm. Be sure to bring your favorite snack.

The Barbie movie came out this summer. Ruth Brooks was decked out in her Barbie attire and shared that Barbie has German roots. Ruth Handler, CEO for Mattel went to Germany in 1956 and took an interest in the Lily doll & brought her home. She created Barbie in 1959 and the rest is history.

Our guest speaker was Dr. Marge Blevins with the Texas German Dialect Project. The project started in 2001 to preserve the dialect and stories of the people for future generations. She had a portable museum with her. She asked for volunteers to participate in the program. You can go to the website to hear the stories and the different German dialects.

Jim Brooks made a motion to adjourn and Herbert Schumann second it. Refreshments were enjoyed and we thank Ruth Brooks for providing them.

Nov 2023 The Bluebonnet Chapter of Texas German Society met on Sunday November 19, 2023 at Concordia Hall. Vice President Sandy Shuff called the meeting together. She welcomed 33 members. Pastor Frank led us in prayer. We started the meeting enjoying our Thanksgiving meal. The chapter provided the brisket & sausage from Bellville Meat Market and the members brought the sides and desserts. And it was delicious.

Marie Herridge, secretary read the minutes from our previous meeting and Jim Brooks made motion to accept with a second by Arthur Remmert. Marie gave the treasurer's report and it will be filed for audit.

Joyce Bullard sent sympathy cards to Cecil Froebel & Grace Holtkamp families.

Old Business-Sandy reported the Concordia Gesung Verein sang at Bellville's 175th celebration in Huff Brewing and it went over very well. The St John's Octoberfest was a fun event also. She invited all to participate in the singing group. We meet on Tuesdays at 5:30 pm.

We had a moment of silence for our deceased members, Harvey Ashenbeck, Delta Marburger, Cecil Froebel and Grace Holtkamp.

BLUEBONNET CHAPTER - continued

Chapter dues are due for 2024. \$8 for single and \$15 for a couple. If you didn't pay your dues today, please be prepared to pay them at the January meeting.

Sandy reminded us about Das Haus Christmas party on Sunday December 3 at 2 pm in Shelby. New Business- Sandy asked for suggestion on a membership drive. Possible table at Saengerfest with information. Asked us to please give it some thought.

Laura Schumann volunteered for the nominating committee for 2024 officers. The following are nominated at the moment Sandy Schuff, President, Marie Herridge, secretary & Robert Herridge treasurer. The Vice President position still needs to be filled. The slate will be presented at the January 20, 2024 meeting.

We welcome new members Duane & Gail Schwettmann to our chapter. They were previously in the President's chapter.

The members asked if we could hold our meetings at Concordia in the future. We'll ask Robert Herridge to follow up with the Lions Club concerning this. Please watch for the meeting email for location confirmation.

Sandy asked for motion of adjournment and ending with singing Du, Du, Ligest Mir Herzen. and Karl Micklitz made motion to adjourn with second by Jim Brooks.

Jan 2024 The Bluebonnet Chapter of Texas German Society met Sunday, January 21, 2024 at Concordia Hall in Bellville. President Robert Herridge called the meeting together at 3:15 pm with 19 members present and the purpose of meeting is continuing our German heritage. Vice President Sandy Schuff led the pledge. Secretary Marie Herridge read the minutes from the last meeting and Jim Brooks made motion to accept with a second by Herbert Schumann. Motion carried. Marie gave the treasurers report and it will be filed for audit. Joyce Bullard, cheer committee wasn't present but President Herridge reported that Doug Mewis was in rehab recovering from Covid. He thanked refreshment chair Ruth Brooks and Linda Knesek for the refreshments.

New Business-If you haven't paid dues please do so. Getting ready for Fruehling Saengerfest on April 28th. We can have a booth at Saengerfest with information about our chapter to encourage members. Art Remmert volunteered to help. Our next meeting is March 17, St Patrick's day. Green beer anyone? State convention is April 6, in Needville. Registration is \$20 if received by March 15 or will be \$25 at the door. The forms will be in The Reporter which will come out in February. We will have Saengerfest work signup sheets at the March meeting. Laura Schumann, nominating chair gave list of new officers. Herbert Schumann made a motion to accept by acclamation and second by Randy Hegemeyer. Motion carried. The 2024 officers are President-Sandy Schuff, Vice President-Gilbert Franke, Secretary-Marie Herridge and Treasurer-Robert Herridge.

Herbert Schumann asked about chapter scholarship but at this time Sealy does not have a German class.

Robert Herridge gave the program about his Octoberfest season. He shared all the festivals that he played including Tomball, Muenster, Walburg, Addison, Fort Worth, Kansas City, Clyde, Tulsa, Ok and Galveston. He will start 2024 with Tomball March 22-24.

Art Remmert asked if we knew how to retire the American flag. He is making a box where we can place flag and he will pick up to retire the flag properly.

Art Remmert made motion to adjourn with second by Shelley Fahrenthold. We closed singing Du Du List Mir Herzen.



Robert Herridge



Front row President Sandy Schuff, Secretary Marie Herridge.
Back row Treasurer Robert Herridge, Vice President Gilbert Franke

COLORADO COUNTY CHAPTER

August 24, 2023 – Meeting held at the EMS facility with President Kathryn announcing a number of upcoming events namely German/American Day October 6, 2023, Chapter Christmas Party and the State Christmas Party. She also advised us of the move of Siegfried and Ursula Keierlebe to Katy, Texas, to be near their family. At this time Siegfried was involved in an automobile accident and injured. He is getting better, however is having some other health issues as well. We wish him a speedy recovery. The program was presented by Carolyn Heinsohn on the life and history of Heinrich Kreische, Stonemason and Brewmaster who had settled in the La Grange area.

October 26, 2023 – Met for our regularly scheduled meeting at the EMS facility. President Kathryn announced the upcoming Christmas Party to be held at Schobel's Restaurant December 14 and invited everyone to the State Party at the Witte-Schmid Haus Museum. Our program for the evening was presented by Jim Kearney. He spoke about a young man who actually came to America from Germany as a teenager in the early 1800's. He lived an exciting life and then returned to Germany writing about his time here in America. His name was Hermann Ehrenberg and the book is very factual and historically correct about the early United States. There has been several authors studying this book as well as now Jim Kearney.

December 14, 2023 – Colorado County Chapter met at Schobel's Restaurant for their annual Christmas Party. We were served a traditional German meal of Schnitzel, Rotkohl, Deutche Kartoffeln, Gruene Bohnen and Dessert. Gifts were exchanged and everyone enjoyed music by Elena Holub as well as singing familiar Christmas songs.

FORT BEND CHAPTER



Members of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society met on Friday, November 3, 2023, at the Immanuel Evangelical Church for a Senior Citizen Luncheon. The delicious lunch was cooked and served by St. Michael's Catholic Church in Needville. This was a wonderful opportunity for the senior citizens to get together and have fellowship.



On Sunday, December 3, 2023, several members of the Fort Bend Chapter of the Texas German Society traveled to the Witte Schmid Haus Museum "Das Haus" located in the country near Shelby, Texas, for the annual Christmas party. The State President, Marion McClinton, who was born in Germany and has lived in the United States for 24 years shared some of her fond memories of Christmas in Germany as a child. She shared that presents were opened on Christmas Eve with it starting with her father ringing a bell and the children having to figure out where to go by listening to the sound of the bell. She also shared the use of Advent candles to count down the 4 weeks before Christmas with a poem she recited in German. Songs were sung both in English and German. It was noticed that the

literal translations of English and German songs may not be the same. Snacks were brought and shared by those attending.

Pictured are:

Front Row: Marion McClinton, TGS State President, Carol Niemann, Joyce Greiger

Back Row: Cathy Hanzik, Delbert Niemann, Ed Greiger

Fort Bend Chapter Schedule for 2024

- 01/08/2024 Planning for 2024 ~ Albert George Library, Needville
- 03/?/2024 Meal at House of Blue, Needville High School Update on Convention Plans
- 04/06/2024 Hosting State TGS Convention, St. Michael's Family Life Center
- 05/14/2024 Tour of Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic Site in West Columbia
- 07/08/2024 Ice Cream Social/Movie ~ Albert George Library, Needville
- 09/10/2024 San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site ~ San Felipe
- 11/10/2024 Senior Citizens Lunch ~ Immanuel Evangelical Church
- 12/01/2024 Christmas Party at Das Haus Museum, Shelby
- 01/14/2025 Planning for 2025 ~ Albert George Library, Needville

HARRIS COUNTY CHAPTER

The Harris County Chapter had their January 2024 meeting & did something differently. Instead of having a speaker, we watched a great Documentary in English from YouTube. "A Day in destroyed German City Dresden in 1946".

This film includes true photos & scenes plus staged scenes, so that the audience can better understand the living of a widow with young children in a destroyed City. Below is the link to share.

We will meet again in March. Our speakers will be 2 members, who did a trip to Germany to explore more about their roots.

https://youtu.be/k0r5_KGayw?feature=shared

KATY TRI-COUNTY CHAPTER



Enjoying great German food luncheon at Rudi Lechner's on October 7, 2023, to celebrate German American Day



Annual Christmas luncheon, enjoyed by all, at Brookwood Café on Saturday, December 9, 2023.

LAVACA/DEWITT CHAPTER



The Lavaca/DeWitt Chapter meets on the second Thursday of every other month. In the summer/fall of 2023, our last business meeting of the year was in August. Members met at J's Burger Restaurant and after enjoying their meals, the business meeting was held. Following the business portion of the meeting, Thomas Bland gave a presentation explaining DNA.

The next gathering was in October to celebrate Oktoberfest. No business meeting was conducted. The members enjoyed socializing and dining at Central Station Bar and Grill in Yoakum.

The final activity of 2023 was celebrating Weihnachtsfest at the Harry O. Gibson Center in Yoakum. The meeting room was festively decorated with nutcrackers and other holiday decor. Chef Heinz Braun presented a menu centered around Kohlrouladen (cabbage rolls) and other winter vegetables. The dessert table overflowed with the sweet treats brought by the members.

We look forward to 2024.

NORTH HARRIS COUNTY CHAPTER

September 25, 2023

We hosted Corporal Christopher Plummer and K-9 Quinn of Klein ISD. Quinn joined the Klein Police Department in October 2019 as a scent detection K-9. He was trained in Germany before moving to Texas. Quinn has the honor of being the very first K-9 in the Klein ISD Police Department. His handler is Corporal Christopher Plummer who joined the Klein ISD Police Department in 2015. We welcomed both for keeping our schools and community safe!

November 2023 – No meeting was held in November.

January 22, 2024

For presentation at the January 2024 meeting, we watched the video “Aachen Cathedral: A Journey Through Time.” Discover the secrets and stories hidden within the majestic walls of German landmark Aachen Cathedral. The architectural masterpiece built by Emperor Charlemagne has witnessed centuries of history. Countless German Kings were crowned there. It was consecrated in the year 805 and became Germany's first UNESCO World Heritage site more than a thousand years later in 1978. Join us as we unravel the mysteries of Aachen Cathedral, including the legend of the devil and the wolf.

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**The TGS Witte Schmid Haus Museum
Information for Tour Leaders and Visitors**

Welcome to the Witte Schmid Haus! It is an unusual structure representing both Old World building traditions and the realities of pioneer life here on Texas prairies. The front façade, for example, is said to resemble the façade of the manor house on Dr. Ernst Witte’s large estate, Kleefeld (clover field), that is now a suburb of Hannover, Germany.

Dr. Witte (doctor of law) had been elected to the Reichstag, the upper house of parliament, but he became discouraged with politics and with his estate, after the railroad line from Hannover to Braunschweig cut through his lands, leaving some tenants on one side and some on the other. He sold the estate to the city of Hannover on September 1855, and sailed to America to join his sons. Three months later, he signed the deed to 1,422 acres of land near the community of Schoenau (beautiful meadow). He was 63 years old.

Construction began soon afterwards, but was drawn out, so the 1860 construction date is approximate. It began with a stone cellar and a large stone foundation on this deep sandy soil. All of the outside walls are of cut stone to the height of 11 feet above the floor, which marked it as a truly elegant mansion, compared to the usual log houses, huts, and small frame building of other immigrants. The stone was probably quarried from Ghost Cave, about 3 miles southeast of the house, and transported by ox wagon. All 18 windows on the first floor and the cellar entry are arched in stone, the window frames then squared off on top to provide for rectangular windows.

The interior walls are of Fachwerk construction, consisting of wooden beams joined by mortise-and-tenon joints secured by wooden pegs. This “framework” is filled in with adobe bricks for the most part, and then plastered on both sides of the wall. The use of adobe for the walls and chimneys is perhaps an adaptation to Texas or West Texas building methods. In Germany, the original Fachwerk houses and barns used daub-and-wattle (mud and woven sticks) for the infill,

which was then plastered. An example of this filling can still be seen in the cellar ceiling, where it is held up by wooden flats, but used as insulation. In more recent centuries, the infill was usually kiln-fired bricks or stone.

The second story of the Witte Schmid Haus is of the same Fachwerk construction with adobe brick infill. Bevel siding or lap siding boards protect the second story outside walls from the elements. Important architectural details of the original roof were the 2 Dach Gaube windows, or eyebrow dormer windows that have been added back recently. The roof was originally covered with hickory or cedar shingles, now a manufactured product is used that resembles historic shingles.

Room by Room Detail

Entering the Front Hall, note the almost balanced layout. Originally, each door on the right was matched with another door on the left. However, one door on the left is missing, and during restoration it was noticed, the original door was plastered over. It might be useful to the large meeting room (originally the Parlor), to have a second door to enter. The room layout is not quite balanced, because rooms on the left are 18 feet wide, while those on the right are 13 feet wide. The hall is 12 feet wide.

Note on the left side wall in the hall, a small section of the original plaster was left for visitors to see the original plaster work and how it delaminated through the years.

The hall was used as a breezeway for the family to sit down, with a table in the middle. There was a wood burning oven on the left side (see the chimney upstairs), to warm the house in the winter. The coal burning oven at its place was a donation.

Entering the Bedroom on the left, there is no plastering on the walls, so the visitors can see the stone construction. The stonework looks rough because it was not designed to be seen. It was designed to be plastered. The stones around the windows are of better quality, and are cut to form an arch, but rectangular for the opening. More common rubble fills the area between the windows. There are many small stones inserted to help support the masonry until the mortar cures. Mortars of the 1860 era were much weaker than current mortars, especially during construction before curing.

When removing the old plaster that was badly deteriorated, it was discovered that in this room the walls were partially infilled with stone as well as adobe bricks. No one knows the reason, perhaps they ran out of stone as it was hard work, maybe construction was interrupted by the Civil War, and when the men came home they switched to easier methods.

Three flues for stoves were built of adobe brick in the house portion, but had stone construction where they went through the roof. The stone foundation for one of the flues is still intact in the cellar, where it acts as a buttress for the stone wall.

The ceiling of this room is original, and the floor is the recycled boards from this room and the front hall. The floor and the floating joists underneath were badly eaten by termites and had to be removed. The boards seen here are of pecan and/or hickory and were ripped and trimmed to remove the badly deteriorated portions.

Note the hand carved window stops that lock the windows in raised position, and can also lock the windows in the down position when the wooden finger is rotated up to another notch in the window trim.

In the **Saal or Parlor** (now the meeting room), the floor is original. The boards are of quarter-sawn pine and the full length of the almost 24 foot room. The floor had to be leveled, working from the sides some boards were removed for access and re-laid. The ceiling is of thin boards 8 – 12 inches in width. All of the interior window sills on this floor were badly deteriorated and were replaced with native red cedar.

The **1872 Steinway Square Grand Piano** was donated by the Patrick Schmid Family in 2022. It was originally purchased by the Women's College in Independence, Texas, see narrative.

The **Flag from the Maennerchor Helvetia** with its many ribbons was used at festivities of the many singing groups in Texas, the Saengerfest. There used to be a store at the intersection of FM 1457 and Schoenau Road, where this group used to meet. The community of Schoenau was a Swiss settlement, and Helvetia is the Latin name for Switzerland.

The **framed flags** (the flag of Switzerland) used to be mounted on a stick for Fahنشwingen, a beloved artistry at these festivities.

The quilt hanging on the back wall was embroidered and quilted by Emily Bauer Zoch, who donated it to the museum in 1988. On the other wall is the Vater Unser or Lord's Prayer, crocheted by Viola Scheffer in 1989.

The **Room in the Back** across the hall in the other corner, the original use is unknown, but in the 1920's and 30's it held the cream separator. It was also used when butchering to make sausages and other food preparations. The original Chimney has been removed, but it's foundation can be seen in the cellar directly below. This room never had a proper ceiling until the present one was added in 2003. The floor was part of the house. The pie safe was made by a local craftsman, it is very heavy, and came from the Dockal Family (pronounced dutch-kall). The ice box is a forerunner of the refrigerator, an ice block in the top compartment that was waterproof, shelves in the bottom compartment for foods. This ice box probably came from Pennsylvania and was brought here by settlers.

In the **Kitchen** most of the original thick plank floor was saved by filling the deep gouges with glue and sawdust. The boards near the window have been replaced with old boards salvaged from another building.

The sink is mounted in a blue cabinet that has been in the house for years closing off the door to the next room. The 2 heavy cabinet doors appear to have been recycled from an earlier piece. In the olden days a wood burning stove was at this place, the chimney can still be seen upstairs. The old fashioned small oven was used in the 1920's and 30's, for baking pies. It was set on top of gas burners and worked by circulating the hot air.

In the **Front Room** on the right side of the entrance originally was a claw-foot bathtub that was removed. It was also used as a bed room, and today we call it the "Office". Water lines must have been installed some time ago, and so this was the place for an indoor bathroom. Inside the enclosure the chimney flue from the kitchen can be seen, now plastered over. The restroom is ADA compliant. The new bathroom wall made it possible to hide all the electrical conduits and air-conditioning pipes. The secretary was documented as being in the house when the historic American Buildings Survey was completed in 1977.

Proceeding to the back of the house, the single wall that closes off the back entrance has been in place for at least 100 years. Its purpose was in the winter to close off the drafts and keep the heat in. The floor is pecan/hickory recycled from salvaged boards from the hall. This back hall has no ceiling, revealing the red cedar joists. The rear door was rebuilt in the late 1900's, but the transom is original. A concrete slab leads up to this entrance, that is ADA compliant.

Wein Keller

The cellar is much as it always has been, with the addition of more posts to level out the floor upstairs. The stone arch was repaired during restorations. The most unusual aspect is the insulation in the ceiling. It is a mixture of straw and mud and secured by narrow wood strips nailed to the joists. Since this is the only insulation in the house, it is not known whether it was designed to protect the room above or the cellar below. While its use as a wine or root cellar is obvious, it was also used in its early life for hanging the meat and sausages on the overheard sticks. The smokehouse was the red building outside.

Upstairs Bedrooms

Going up the stairs to the second floor, this door was added in the past to close off cold air drafts and to keep the heat downstairs, now also keep the AC in. The balustrade is of typical German craftsmanship, flat with a cut design (not round).

When Ernst and Lizette Witte built this house, their 10 children were grown. Two of their sons, Victor and Bernhard, lived a few miles away. It was said Dr. Witte would take in immigrant families that just arrived and would stay a few months until they built their own abode. Burn marks on the floor of the front bedroom attest to the fact a stove must have been set up, either for cooking or heating.

The **Central Hall** never had a ceiling. Now it is useful to view the unusual features of the roof construction and the two diagonal chimney stacks. The purpose is to bring out the flue at the peak of the gable for best ventilation, the least water intrusion during rains and to have possible sparks blown away. The chimneys are of black adobe bricks, the part that went through the roof was of stone.

The floor is of native red cedar, and the walls were of plaster over the Fachwerk timber framing and adobe bricks. The room on the south side shows the construction in greater detail. The truss framing that supports the floor and the ceiling above the meeting room below, is typical northern German construction of that time. Nail holes indicate the original wall was of 1" x 6" boards.

Tante Millie's Room was restored to its original paint over 1" x 6" tongue-and-groove boards. Naming it Tante Millie's room is in gratitude for a generous bequest from her son, Everett Jacob and family. Millicent Schmid was born in this house on 26 May 1897, the youngest and eleventh child of John Schmid and Emily Witte, Ernst and Lizette's granddaughter.

The **Front Bedroom** has been modified to add the "window seats", which actually enclose the AC air ducts. All the floor joists for the upstairs run east and west, which made it easy to bring the air from one side of the house to the other. Most of the furniture/bedframes were donated to the museum. Some bedframes, the dresser and the bench are decorated with spoon carvings, called Eastlake design, see separate description.

Each of the four corners of the house upstairs has an unfinished storage room. Note the unique hardware at the doors, it is described as an "eye-and-hook", not the usual hook-and-eye. The hook attached to the door jamb appears to be the pintle portion of a small hinge for cabinets. The eye portion has an ornate twist.

We understand that the nails and hardware for this house were purchased in Houston. Freighting from there by ox wagon was a month-long trip. Forging the rivers sometimes required waiting for the waters to go down after a rain. All of the timbers for framing, as well as the rafters and floor joists were sawed in a local sawmill. Most of the wood is pecan, hickory, or other hardwood that is somewhat resistant to termite attacks. The limestone was cut in a quarry at the nearby creek and shipped up by ox wagons.

Termites totally consumed one floor joist adjacent to the chimney, and they ate their way across the south room and the east room. The floors in these rooms had to be replaced. The soft adobe bricks of the chimney stack are perfect for termites to climb up!

Family History

The house has been in the Witt Schmid Family continuously until 1986, when it was given to the Texas German Society by Mrs. Annie Dockal Schmid and son Sanford Schmid. It had been lived in until 1977.

The land is part of the William Burnett League. With his family William Burnett arrived in Stephen F. Austin's Second Colony in 1830. In 1831 the Mexican Government granted him title to one league of land, or 4428 acres. 2 years later he sold the eastern part of the league along the West Fork of Mill Creek to John York. In 1840 York sold 1422 acres to Captain Joel Spencer, who later resold it to Hiram Mansur. Dr. Ernst Witte bought the 1422 acres in January 1856 for \$ 5,500 from Mansur.

The construction of the house probably started in 1857. The farm was one of the most valuable in northwest Austin County. Dr. Witte's livestock included 160 head of cattle, of which 40 were milk cows. The 1860 census lists Dr. Witte and wife Lizette, one daughter 17 year old Johanna Witte living here, and possibly two older sons. Ernst Witte died in 1869 and is buried in the family cemetery on the property, which is a designated Texas Historic Cemetery. Lizette died in 1883 and is buried in the Shelby Cemetery because rains made the road to the family cemetery impassable. Her granddaughter Emilie Witte and husband John Schmid bought the house and 245 acres from Lizette's estate in 1884 for \$3,500.

The Schmid Family came from Ehrendingen, Canton Aargau in Switzerland. They came to the Schoenau community, which was a Swiss settlement. Many of those settlers are buried in the historic cemetery on the property, which was then called the Schoenau Cemetery. In early 1900 it became fashionable to name cemeteries after important persons buried there, so it was renamed Witte Schmid Cemetery.

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In Memoriam



Roy Worth Whitney

December 16, 1935 – November 29, 2023

Roy Worth Whitney, age 87, of Lytle, Texas died November 30, 2023 at Methodist Hospital – Sugar Land in Sugar Land, Texas. Roy was born in Comfort, Texas on December 16, 1935 to parents Milby Emma Camille Stieler Whitney and Herman Worth Whitney. Roy grew up in Lytle, Texas and attended Lytle High School. After high school, Roy joined the Navy along with 2 boyhood friends. After basic training, Roy was stationed in Guam as a Communications Operator during the end of the Korean War. Later, after serving proudly for nearly 2 years, he decided to join the Naval Reserves which allowed

him to go to college at South West Texas University in San Marcos, Texas to study accounting. While studying at SWT, he met Anita Greathouse. Within months they were married on December 20, 1958. Within a year they welcomed Karen Marie Whitney in 1959, Jarel Craig Whitney in 1963, Laura Jo Whitney Ferreira in 1966 and Elizabeth Anita Whitney in 1974. After graduation from SWT, Roy went to work for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) until his retirement in 1997. Roy retired from the Navy Reserves in 1982, achieving the rank of Lieutenant Commander. In addition, of leaving behind four children, Roy has 3 grandchildren, Anita MacKay Whitney, 20, Joshua Worth Whitney, 18 and Bruce Michael Ferreira, 13. Roy is also survived by his brothers and sisters Cullen Whitney, Hazel Thurston, Betty Faye Appelt and Troy Whitney along with nieces, nephews, cousins, friends and neighbors. Roy enjoyed his volunteer work with Mended Hearts, a charity for heart patients, Texas German Society and Texas Archaeology Society.



Grace Holtkamp

October 6, 1935 – November 10, 2023

Grace Holtkamp, 88, of Sealy was called Home on Friday, November 10, 2023.

Grace Virginia Schroeder was born October 6, 1935, in Bellville to Raymond Schroeder and Leona Ottmer Schroeder. Grace was a life-long citizen of Austin County and very proud of that.

Baptized and confirmed at St. John Lutheran Church in Bellville, Grace was also married to Elroy Holtkamp at St. John on August 30, 1959. They made their home in Sealy where Grace taught English and was the guidance counselor for Sealy High School until her retirement in 1997.

Being involved in community events and organizations was important to Grace and she was a member of Austin County Historical Society, Bellville Historical Society, Texas German Society, Cancer Angels–American Cancer Society, Delta Kappa Gamma and Retired Teachers, American Legion Auxiliary as well as several quilting groups.

Survived by her children Jeff Holtkamp and Deanna, of Groom, Tx and Kim Nichols of Katy, Grace was also very proud to be the grandmother to Clayton Holtkamp and Payton, Carter Holtkamp, Erin Nichols and Bradley Nichols and Riley. She was even more proud of her great-grandchildren Avery, Canon and Colt.

Grace was preceded in death by her husband, Elroy, her parents Raymond and Leona Schroeder, brother Aaron Schroeder, sisters Ilene Zander, Ruth Peters and Ona Lea Pierce and son-in-law Danny Nichols.

Karin Noack April 24, 1942 – July 4, 2023

No obituary available



Cecil Ray Froebel

July 27, 1931 – October 22, 2023

Cecil Ray Froebel of Sealy, Texas passed away on Sunday, October 22, 2023, at the age of 92 in Brenham, Texas.

Cecil was born in Cat Spring, Texas as a 4th generation German Texan on July 24, 1931. He was the son of Arthur, Sr. and Clara Marie (Leenen) Froebel. The land he was born on and the crops and livestock raised there, shaped his life and his character as much as the family he loved and nurtured.

The oldest of 6 children, Cecil was baptized and confirmed at St. John Lutheran in Cat Spring and was a member there for the rest of his life. He attended Cat Spring School until he took on the responsibilities of his family's farm at a young age when his father was injured.

In 1951, he enlisted, was trained at Fort Bliss, and then took Army Ranger training in Japan before serving in the Korean War at Pusan, Korea.

Prior to enlisting, he had met his future bride, Carrie Eileen Sens at a dance at Turner Hall in Cat Spring. When he returned home, they married on July 17th, 1955, started their family, and continued to waltz and polka dance over the next 6 decades. Carrie and Cecil celebrated their 68th wedding anniversary this past summer.

After getting married, Cecil moved to Houston where he worked in the steel industry for the next 30-plus years.

Cecil was as unique as he was strong and his legacy will become a permanent part of Austin County where the Froebel and Sens families have lived since the 1850's.



Delta Marburger

November 16, 1929 – October 24, 2023

Delta Marburger was born to Elo and Emily (Hartmann) Marburger in Sealy, Texas on November 16, 1929. She was baptized in the Lutheran faith on Oct. 20, 1930, in Sealy and confirmed at St. John Lutheran in Wallis, Texas on Feb. 25, 1945, by Pastor Sager. She is a member of St John Lutheran Church in Wallis taught Sunday School and served in

numerous Counsel positions.

Delta attended Sealy Public Schools and graduated in 1947. After graduation, she moved to Houston and attended Massey Business College.

Upon graduating from Massey Business College, Delta was hired by Dow Chemical Company as Secretary to Dr. Buetel's son for many years. In 1950 she transferred to Dow Brazos Oil & Gas Company, responsible for compiling drilling and production activities for The Gulf Coast Production. She received numerous awards and was in the top 3% of employees for Dow Worldwide. Delta was well known by many divisions in Dow and the Louisiana District chose to name their boat the "Miss Delta". In 1982, Delta retired from Dow and transferred to Apache Corporation but was privileged to continue with Dow insurance which was quite an honor. At Apache, she compiled the drilling reports. Delta retired from Apache in 1992.

After retirement, Delta returned to Sealy, residing in the same house in which she was raised. She enjoyed traveling and seeing most all the U.S. states. She traveled to Alaska, Canada, and Mexico



Harvey Ross Aschenbeck

June 28, 1947 – November 5, 2023

HARVEY ROSS ASCHENBECK, 76, of Bellville, Texas, passed away Sunday morning, November 5, 2023, in Bellville.

He was born June 20, 1947, in Houston, Texas, the son of Albert and Clara Bravenec Aschenbeck. Harvey grew up and attended schools in Houston in his early years. His family later moved to Bellville, where he attended high school, graduating in 1965. He was involved in many different activities and sports, but football was the highlight of his life and his love of this sport showed. Harvey played guard during his high school years. After graduation, he was recruited to play football at Texas A&M University..

In 1973, Harvey was employed by Exxon Company, and in 1979, he went to work for Exxon Development as a Drilling Supervisor. He traveled all over the world with his company to places like Norway, Malaysia, Nigeria, Scotland, Ivory Coast, and one of his favorite places was Argentina. Harvey retired in 2007 and then started working for Haney Consulting in the Gulf of Mexico.

Harvey was united in marriage to Lyndell Brandt on December 27, 1970, at St. John Lutheran Church. They made their home in Bellville, where they were lifelong active members of St. John. In his spare time, he enjoyed being outdoors fishing, and hunting, dancing, singing, drinking beer, doing family activities, and the love of his life was hanging out with his grandchildren.



Dorothy Lee Halfmann Button

July 29, 1940 – January 23, 2024

Dorothy Lee Halfmann Button of Frelsburg, Texas passed away Tuesday, January 23, 2024. She was born on July 29, 1940 in Frelsburg, Texas to Leo Robert Halfmann and Maybell Virginia Hermsdorfer Halfmann.

Dorothy is preceded in death by her husband of 54 years, Richard Donald Button, her son Eugene Robert Button and both of her parents.

She is survived by her son Richard Allen Button and wife Kelly; daughter Cheryl Button Gold; daughter-in-law Jennifer Button; sisters Jean Ellis, Leona Marshall, and Patsy Henderson (husband Steed Henderson); grandchildren Brittany Button, Christopher Button, Scarlett Ann Button and Riley Red Button.

Dorothy was a graduate of Columbus High School and Nursing School. Dorothy retired after 50 years of devoting her life as a nurse.

ROBERT FRANK CHANTLOS – April 25, 1934 – July 17, 2023

No obituary available



CAROLYN NELL VIBROCK

July 30, 1930 – August 29, 2023

Carolyn Nell Bacon Vibrock 93, passed away peacefully in her home on August 29, 2023. Carolyn was born July 30, 1930, to Carl Albert Bacon and Katie Nell Sullivan Bacon in Palestine, Anderson Co. TX. Carolyn was the middle child of the seven siblings (Kay, Vee, Lou, Carolyn, Ann, Sonny & Pete) and moved to Houston, TX at age 12. She graduated Reagan HS '48 in Houston Heights and soon worked in the Audit department of Houston National Bank. Carolyn loved to dance, make her own dresses,

and travel to Galveston with friends. In 1951, Carolyn met Charles Vibrock and they married in 1954 in Houston, TX. They were married almost 60 yrs. until Charles died in 2013.

As an Air Force officer's wife, Carolyn was always busy. Crafts, kids, fund raising, social events, family time. She traveled to many locations all over the world starting in Waco TX, then off to Dover DE, Biloxi MS, Austin TX, England, Papillion NE, Midwest City OK, Houston TX. Her 3 boys, Mike, Tim, and Charlie were her center of attention. In 1957, Charles and Carolyn bought a lot in a north Houston pecan grove that became the site of their Air Force retirement home in 1976.

Charles continued his work in sales and Carolyn worked odd jobs and began volunteering at what is now HCA Houston NW Hospital. She worked in the hospital gift shop for over 30 years making gift baskets to raise money for healthcare scholarships for students pursuing medical careers. Carolyn's other hobbies included painting, stained glass, brass rubbings, art, and her 3 favorite TV shows, The Wheel, Bold & The Beautiful, and of course Houston Astros baseball so she could watch the "little guy".

Carolyn joined the Lutheran Church when she married Charles and Trinity Lutheran Klein became their cornerstone church in 1976. Together they were active in the Texas German Society, the Bethesda Thrift Store in Tomball, and Carolyn loved assisting with the Trinity's Ladies Aide. Carolyn's pursuits also included the genealogy of her family. She was a very proud member of both the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and the Daughters of the American Revolution. She always hoped that one of her relatives would continue the work she started to tie the lineage to William Bradford (governor) of the Mayflower.

LARRY TIEDT August 18, 1943 – December 27, 2023

No obituary available