



**German-American Society
New Braunfels, Texas
Monatsblatt**



*In Neu Braunfels
ist das Leben schön*

Juni 2019

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Vorstand

President: Eric Tennyson—eric.tennyson@gmail.com
1st V.P: Cindy Tennyson—cindy10yson55@gmail.com
2nd V.P: Larry Alexander—lalexander12@satx.rr.com
Secretary: Linda Coker—lscoker@gmail.com
Treasurer: Linda Eichberger—lindaeic@yahoo.com
Member-at-Large: Diane Moltz—dianemoltz8001@att.nett

**SOMMER IST DIE ZEIT, IN DER ES ZU HEIß IST,
UM DAS ZU TUN, WOZU ES IM WINTER ZU KALT
WAR.**





**Herzlichen Glückwunsch
zum Geburtstag**

*Zum Geburtstag viel Glück!
Zum Geburtstag viel Glück!
Zum Geburtstag alles Gutes,
Zum Geburtstag viel Glück!*



June Birthdays (Juni Geburtstagen)

6/1 Karen McCarthy

6/3 Ursula Ehman

6/6 Cindy Coers

6/7 Sylvia Schonholz

6/15 Rick Meyer

6/17 Jennifer Laffery

6/18 Pearly Sowell



German Freidenker

By Rodney van Oudekerke

In the late 1800s, Germans left Germany to settle in Texas for numerous reasons. Some reasons were for political, economic, and social, causes. Some were running from something while others were running to something. One group of settlers is known as “Die Freidenker” or “The Freethinkers”. For some reason, even today this group of German intellectuals gets their story pushed to the back of the history books. (The pen is mightier than the sword, right?) The photograph below is of Johannes Hoerner and his wife Wilhelmina Ahlemeyer, who were Freethinkers and just happen to be my 5th great grandparents from Heppenheim, Germany.



According to the Texas Handbook online, “...the Freethinkers made up the majority of the population of Kendall County in the communities of Comfort and Sisterdale. Many of the early Freethinkers in Texas were neither true agnostics nor true atheists. Better stated, they considered the notion of Deity irrelevant and opposed clerics and churches. If they acknowledged the existence of a traditional Judeo-Christian God, they did not do so with friendliness or affection, but as the impatient successor of such a belief system. A Freethinkers' Society held regular meetings in Sisterdale during the 1850s. Freethinking, which had various sources, among them early nineteenth-century Romanticism and science as well as the Turner movement and early communism, lasted in Comfort until the 1970s.” Growing up in Boerne, I remember writing a history paper in high school which explained why the two main churches there at that time, the Catholic and the Episcopal churches, were on opposite ends of town and, when they were built, they were outside of town. The reason is the good Freethinking people of Boerne did not want any churches coming into the community to brainwash the citizens. Freethinking was more than just a religious movement, though. Education was very important to the Freethinkers, and odd for the time - important not only for the men of the society, but also the women. The Freethinkers founded communities what are referred to in the history books as” Latin Communities”. These Latin communities were communities that, in order to be accepted into the community, you had to speak not only Latin but also Greek. (continued...)

German Freidenker (continued)

Latin and Greek were the languages of only the highly educated people. If you were not a member of the Freethinkers, one of them would approach you and ask you a question in either Latin or Greek. If you knew how to respond in the language, they spoke to you and you would be accepted. If not, they would turn you away. They were also communist, but not political communist. The Freethinkers set up communes to best benefit the society, rather than the individual.

A few years ago, I remember talking to a local Texas historian from the University in San Marcos. I told him a little about my family and he smiled, saying, "Oh, you're one of those." I replied, "What do you mean?" He said, "The Freethinkers were such Elitists that they have all but bred themselves out of existence."

Oma and Opa Hoerner would be so disappointed in the family or at least me. I try and try to always honor my ancestors, but these two, who could speak Latin, Greek, German, and English, has a grandson who is trying to learn German and maintains a high C in English classes. And, if that were not bad enough, their daughter married into my Austrian side of the family, who were staunch Catholics. So, that church in Boerne that they did not want to have built now serves as a place of worship for their descendants.





DIE FRÖHLICHE TANZGRUPPE



Our local German Dance Troupe “Die Fröhliche Tanzgruppe” practices the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at Cross Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall. We represent the German American Society and promote the German culture and heritage in New Braunfels. Die Fröhliche Tanzgruppe had a busy schedule this spring. We danced at Folkfest sponsored by the Heritage Society at Heritage Village, and at the Wein-und-Sängerfest, und at the Seekatz Opera Haus, and did the Maibaum-Tanz at Krause’s. We also performed for the Texas Public Radio Program also at the Seekatz Opera Haus. Our last performance was June 1st at a restaurant in Corpus Christi to help raise funds for the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. The Secular Institut was severely damaged during Hurricane Harvey in Rockport. Secular Institute was founded on October 1, 1926 by Father Joseph Kentenich in Germany, close to the city of Koblenz on the Rhine. THE Dance Group also presented a \$200 check to the Sisters to help restore their chapel’s blown-out windows (picture below right). Teh Dance Group will be on a Summer break until September and start then to practice for our performance at the 2019 annual Wurstfest.



The first Shrine-located in Germany near Koblenz on the Rhine.





WIR SINGEN!!



New Braunfels Gemischter Chor Harmonie

Established in 1937 and going strong!

We are the last men's and women's mixed voice German choir in the Comal —
Guadalupe County area. Give us a try at our Monday evening rehearsals at 7 p.m., at
Cross Lutheran Church

2171 E. Common, New Braunfels, TX 78130

Contact: Tommy Daum, 830-625-8937

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



June 1. Saturday 7:30 a.m.—2 p.m.

GARAGE SALE!!

714 W. Cross St, New Braunfels, TX 78130

**The sale was a success. A grosse
DANKE to all who helped and
participated!**



2019 Schedule of Events

- 4 June General Meeting, Talent Show
- 2 July Summer Social/Recruitment pizza or icecream?
- 4 July Independence Day Parade
- 6 August Summer Social/Recruitment pizza or icecream?
- 3 September: General Meeting, Program
- 1 October General Meeting, Program
- 1—10 November WURSTFEST!....no meeting
- 3 December Christmas Dinner, Christmas presentation

Coordinator & Chairpersons needed:

Monatsblatt publisher

Publicity

Maskenball



Time to design your WURSFEST pins for 2019

You know the size. Must have a smaller “dangley” thing.
Must have the year “2019” and “Wurstfest® “ on it and legible.
Winning design will be our 2019 pin. Designs are due by July 15.

Meeting Schedule

General Meetings are held the first Tuesday each month:
6:00pm - 7:00pm Social Hour 7:00 - 7:30 Business 7:30 - 8:30 Program
Elks Lodge 353 Seguin Avenue, New Braunfels, TX 78130

Visitors & guests are welcome. You do not have to be a member of the Elks Lodge or a German-speaker to visit or join!