



Don't miss the bus!
Echo Deadline is:
Jan 19



Please note: Please mail any submittals for the Echo directly to my home address at 232 East 117th St. Jenks, OK 74037-3617, or fax it to me at 299-4814, but call first— or send it via E-mail to this address: frother@att.net —Thanks... Fred Rother

Events Calendar

Tues	Handarbeitsgruppe, 10– 2 PM	Mar 24	Soup party
Dec 31	New Year's Eve Party	Apr 21	Theme party
2001		May12	Maifest party
Jan 5	Stammtischrunde – page 14	Sep 15	Weinfest party
Jan 14	Konversationsrunde – page 6	Oct 7	German-American Day
Jan 20	Anniversary party – see page 5	Oct 27	Oktoberfest party
Jan 26	Weinkeller gathering – page 14	Nov 10	Coronation Ball
Feb 11	Konversationsrunde	Dec 8	Christmas party
Feb 11	Wine & Roses – see page 4	Dec 16	Advent Service
Feb 24	Fasching party	Dec 31	New Years party

Das Deutsche Echo is published monthly by
 The German-American Society Arts Association
 1429 Terrace Dr., Tulsa, OK 74104
 Office hours: Mon. Wed. Fri. 10 am - 4 PM
 Office Phone 744-6997
 Fax 744-6998
 Library hours: on the third Wednesday, 2 - 4 PM

Arnold Bieber, President
 Fred Rother, Editor 299-4814
 GAST E-mail address: frother@att.net
 GAST Web page <http://www.gastulsa.org>

Message Center - 744-6998
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Stammtischrunde

I've scheduled our next meeting for Friday, January 5, starting at 6 PM in the so-called Kaffeestube. (although I prefer to call it the GAST Pub) We'll have an open discussion on anything you wish to talk about (including politics).

If you have anything of interest for a show-and-tell session, feel free to bring it along. I have a new and unique beer glass to show you and maybe some of my German Bierdeckel (coasters) collection.

I also have a video of East-German narrow-gage railroad operations, which I will discuss. If there is any interest in watching it, I'll schedule it for the February session.

Bring some ideas on what you'd like to have us do for future sessions. If time and day are inconvenient for you, let me know at the meeting or by phone or by e-mail.

Beer and soft drinks are available for donations.

Hope to see you there!

—Fred Rother

Weinkeller Gathering

We will have one of our Weinkeller evenings on Friday, the 26th of January. This time we will open at 5:00 P.M. for Happy Hour. Maybe we'll have some soup in addition to the usual snacks, or something appropriate for a cold winter evening. With good friends, good conversation, good music, beautiful surroundings - how can we go wrong? And, all this on a drop-in basis with no reservations required. See you there?

—Lois Voeller

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The President's Report to the Membership:

Although the December Board meeting was scheduled for the 13th we felt that due to the inclement weather we would to delay the meeting for one week, until the 20th.

The 2000 "Christkindlmarkt" is over and, although all of the expenses are not tallied, it looks like we had very successful 2nd annual Christkindlmarkt. The opening of the lower level made for a larger and more varied market this year, and with another year's experience behind us, next year's Christkindlmarkt should be even more successful. Hats off to the Co-chairs **Doris Gallagher, Dana Rosler, Barbara Osborn**, all of the committee, the other volunteers for their efforts, hard work, and especially all of the GAST members who came to enjoy the festivities and made purchases. Remember, now is the time to start thinking and planning for 2001. Any member who would like to assist in this truly German event, please call the Message Center.

Wow, we did it again, **A Really Grand New Year's Eve Party**. With fine music for dancing and a truly fantastic menu of "Pot Luck", what more could be asked for? The New Year's Parties have become such a success that if you would like them to become an annual event, please tell any member of the board.

Please make your reservations for the **ANNIVERSARY BALL** before the 17th of January, 2001. Remember, this not just another party, but the birthday celebration of GAST, a very special event, indeed. There will also be the presentations of the GAST Essay Winners, The Directors Award and The Presidents Award—an evening to remember.

SPECIAL NOTICE *****

Effective the 1st of January, 2001, any member making reservations for any GAST function and not attending, **will be billed the cost of the meal**, unless we are able to resell the meal to walk-ins. The board took this action, to avoid having to absorb the cost of unpaid meals. **Please cancel your reservation if unable to attend.**

As always, if you have a kind word, a suggestion, an idea, a constructive criticism or an inquiry directed to any committee, please contact the chair of that committee directly or the message center, 744-6998. The membership's ideas and opinions are important and are always welcome.

—Don Wright



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...from the Arts President

The New Year is a good time to reflect upon last year's accomplishments, joys and sorrows. We had our share of the latter with the passing of our beloved long time members **Sig Fruehling** and **John Reid** and the parents of **Jim Walker**, **Barbara Conrad** and **Barbara Taron**. Several other member families experienced life changing events, some sad, some joyful. We like to share our happiness and our sorrows and much of our lives with our friends in the **GAST** family, and we will always remember those who are no longer with us.

Our annual traditions culminated with the Adventsfeier on December 17, which was led by Pastor Dr. Russell L. Bennett of the Fellowship Congregational Church with an inspirational sermon in German. Members and guests joined the **GAST Sanger** by singing some of our favorite old German Christmas carols, accompanied by **Leon Boggs** on the organ. Laura Wagdalt, the granddaughter of **Fred and Ingeborg Wagdalt**, was an absolute delight with her solo performance of "Ave Maria", sung in Latin. She was accompanied by Theresa Wehmeyer on the piano. Selected scriptures were read by **Fred Rother** and **Joe Hardt**. Chairpersons and committee members were **Helga Greiner**, **Ursula Andress** and **Lois Voeller**, who prepared and arranged for this event. Many others helped. Thank you, all of you. All contributions collected this day will be turned over to Meals on Wheels.

After a short holiday recess, the Arts committees will be preparing for our 2001 Winter and Spring events. Please mark your calendars for "Wine and Roses", a performance by the Rose Stone Trio, on February 11. The musical group **KOLORIT** also has agreed to return for another performance in April, tentatively on the 22nd.

In coming issues of the **ECHO** we will talk about the Arts Association mission and vision for the 21st Century. The newly-formed Endowment Trust is an important part of that vision. However, we cannot reach these goals and objectives, which will benefit our members and the community without your generous contributions and volunteer work.

For further information about how you can help, please contact the office at 744-6998, or one of the Board members.

—**Arnold Bieber**

To all the Adventsfeier volunteers and contributors:
Thanks to you, the event was a success. I appreciate your hard work to make it happen. Best wishes for the holiday season and a healthy and Happy New Year.

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**We've got mail!**

Dear friends in Tulsa,

Thanks to Rita and Ed Lenfestey's visit to Selb last May, I have been shown the German-American Society's very well done and most interesting and instructive website. Congratulations to **John Toschik** (unbekannterweise), who is obviously prepared to do all the work to send the latest news to the friends of Tulsa all over the world.



For several years now we have had various chances of getting into contact with these most wonderful friends of ours:

Annemie and Glenn Waldroop whose unique hospitality "Green-stuff" dessert and the world famous upside-down cakes will ever be remembered in our family and friendship we have had the honor to enjoy several times, while staying at their lovely home.

Anneliese and Joe Hardt who arranged to meet news anchor Karen Keith and Joe who never got tired of showing us the new GAST-CENTER.

Rita and Ed Lenfestey, the wonderful "golden girl" from Bremen, and Ed, who never gave up to make me a PC-freak by sending thousands of touching stories a la "Chicken Soup for the Soul" and most interesting photos by e-mail and who was deeply admired by our son Ralf for the great job he did while rebuilding the GAST Center and as a captain on his boat on the Grand Lake

Lois and Al Voeller, whose barbecues we'll never forget – excellent food and the chance to meet "millions" of friends. Welcome-parties of the best!

Barbara and Stan Conrad, the scientist with the deep sense of humor - and Barbara, an expert of German geography, politics, literature and the German way of life. She really is a good ambassador of her native country in the New World - and even more so, because she has kept a close contact to her numerous friends all over Germany.

Greetings to all of you and all the members of the German-American Society from Selb. Thank you all for your wonderful friendship. God bless you all!

Love,

Heinz, Marianne and Ralf Kästner

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John S. Millar — Thank you!**

**Anniversary Ball**

Please join us on January 20th for our annual Anniversary Ball.

The Mike Bennett Orchestra will entertain us for the evening.



Dinner will be served starting at **6:30 PM.**

Menu:

Kassler (smoked pork loin)

Stampfkartoffel (whipped potatoes)

Weinkraut

(braised white cabbage seasoned with grapes and wine)

Brot und Butter (bread and butter)

Käse-Sahne Torte (cheese cake)

Cost for Dinner and Dance is \$15.00 per person.

Dance only \$7.50

We ask that you have your reservations made no later than Wednesday, **January 17th**, by calling the Message Center at **744-6998**.

Note! Starting with this party, we respectfully request that you cancel your reservation if you are unable to attend. **If you do not cancel, and we are unable to sell your dinner reservation to a late attendee, you will be billed for the amount of your dinner.**

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**Die
Deutsche
Konversations-
Runde**

Prosit Neujahr!

We celebrated our wonderful Advent season with familiar songs, poems, and stories. Thanks to everyone who participated and all who attended. Of course the best came last, our hosts, **Elfriede and Harry Rogers**

treated us again to delicious Bamberger Lebkuchen. Thanks Elfriede and Harry for being so generous and supporting GAST ARTS.

We will start our new year with an author, Harald Erowez, who wrote a book called "Dezember". A day by day story of an Advent season written to his daughter. Mr. Erowez lives in Tulsa for about 20 years, and we are all looking forward to meet him at our next Konversationsrunde. Please welcome him and attend our first Konversationsrunde of the new year.

THEMA: "DEZEMBER"
SCHRIFTSTELLER HARALD EROWEZ

DATE: SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 2001, 3 - 5 PM

PLACE: **Stan and Barbara Conrad**
7837 S 70 E Ave, Tulsa
492-3273

The Konversationsrunde is a program under the auspices of the German-American Arts Association. It serves to promote the German language and other cultural interests of its members. For suggestions, information, or hosting, please call Barbara Conrad 492-3273 or Jutta Tankersley 742-9759.

Jutta Tankersley (Chair)
Barbara Conrad (Co-Chair)

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Visit our new friends in Celle!

Barbara Taron, member of the Celle Committee, GAST, and German instructor at Tulsa Community College, is organizing a small group trip to Northern Europe with a 3-day optional home stay in our new Sister City, Celle.

Departure is set for May 21st : See Paris in the Spring! – whether you visit the Louvre, Versailles, the heart of medieval Brussels, cruise the Canals in Amsterdam, walk the historic center of Bremen, visit the Michels Kirche or the Reeperbahn in Hamburg or enjoy Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen, May is the best time of the year and the price is right.

Approximate cost without the optional Celle extension: \$2,150. Cost includes Tulsa to Tulsa flights, hotel in double rooms with bath, breakfast and dinner daily, guided walking tours and special lectures.

For more detailed information,
call Barbara Taron 355-2370 or e-mail: taronger@aol.com.



The GAST Sanger

January Notes



All the Y2K bugs
Went under Florida's rugs.
Now it's 2001
The new millenium has begun.

We're going to take a break
Become like bears and hibernate.

We'll be back in Feb. late
Check s Feb's Echo for the date.

Happy New Year!

For more info, please call me at 663-9673

—Teresa Gallagher

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Thank you



(Continued from page 9)

type technician. Three months later I was living in a tent in Korea maintaining and repairing teletype machines—so much for Germany.

After finishing my two-year obligation in the Army, I returned to Buffalo and joined American Airlines as a reservations agent. This job afforded me the opportunity to fly inexpensively; and I finally visited my homeland after 13 years' absence. Several years later, a friend of mine in Germany offered me a job at Ford in Köln. I accepted and worked there as a liaison for overseas assembly plants. While visiting a nearby plant in Erkelenz, I met a woman named Irene, who later agreed to marry me. I resigned at Ford and took a job with her company, being promised a job in their new affiliate in Detroit, Michigan.

The job, however did not work out for me and Irene and I returned to Buffalo, where I returned to my old job at American Airlines. We bought a house and raised two girls. Irene attended night school to learn English. It took about a year before she became comfortable in her new environment. She remained a full-time mom until the girls were in their late teens. As soon as the youngest was able to travel, we visited Germany frequently.

Two years after setting up housekeeping in Buffalo, I was offered a job in American's Data Processing division located about 60 miles north of New York City. We moved, purchased a small house and settled in quickly. Four years later, this data processing facility was closed and we were transferred to Tulsa, OK.

Our adopted country has been good to us. My parents were able to quickly establish a comfortable home for our family. My sister and I received a good education and we gradually integrated into the American scene. We learned the new language quickly, whereas my parents had a hard time learning it, since we spoke only German at home. Luckily, Buffalo had a sizable German-American community which allowed us to continue to enjoy the foods and festivals of our home country.

We love to visit Germany periodically. It's a beautiful and prosperous place now. All vestiges of the devastation we had known have disappeared. The visitor is confronted with raucous traffic, giant buildings, big cars and store shelves full of apple juice. And yet, at journey's end as our airplane touches down at Tulsa airport, we invariably say: It's good to be home again.

In retrospect, I can now appreciate the courage my parents had to muster and the sacrifice they had to make when they decided to leave their homeland and remaining possessions to provide their children with an opportunity to grow up in a stable and peaceful environment.

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Kenneth and Lillian Renberg — Thank you**



We welcome these new members

Michael Atkins (OK)
5217 S. Harvard Ave. Apt. F
Tulsa, OK. 74135
748-5813

Rob Mitchell (Pennsylvania)
1339 So. Florence Pl.
Tulsa, OK. 74104
747-5150

Janice Harvey (OK)
Graeme Nitz (Australia)
9906 N. 43rd. E. Ave.
Sperry, OK. 74073-4578
918-288-6992

Johnnie R. Ruble (IA)
P. O. Box 87
Hesston, KS. 67062
801-554-7006

Cornelia Martinez (Friedberg Germany)
Ed Martinez (Texas)
9616 S. 68th E. Ave.
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298-5447



German-language Movies

An Erwin Jerchau Presentation

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Die Feuerzangen Bowle

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and Hilde Sessak



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Coming to America

by Fred Rother

One day, my parents announced that we would be emigrating to the United States; the year was 1949, and I had just turned 16. Three years earlier, we had been evicted from our home in Schlesien after the war and ended up at an abandoned and shattered airbase in northwest Germany a week later—hungry, exhausted and filthy. The bombed-out buildings of the base provided shelter for several weeks until local authorities could find accommodations for the unwanted "refugees" who so unceremoniously had been dumped into their midst. A single eight by-twelve room, adjacent to the residence of a family of cows and horses, served as our home for the next three years, until my aunt and uncle in Buffalo, NY were finally able to sponsor our immigration into "the land of opportunity".

On December 7, 1949, the Statue of Liberty majestically glided past our ship. Several hundred immigrants crowded the railings to marvel at the sight. My introduction to American society was a memorable one: raucous New York traffic, giant buildings, my first airplane ride on the way to Buffalo, my uncle's "big" car, wide open spaces, undamaged buildings—and all the apple juice I wanted to drink.

I had had three years of English in school in Germany and expected to communicate easily. That, however, proved to be a wrong assumption. I was placed in a junior high school class and to my horror discovered that I couldn't understand a word, although my vocabulary was quite extensive. Ironically, a year later, in high school I was the second best speller of the senior class.

It took about three months of listening to radio shows, such as The Lone Ranger, until the rhythm of the language fell into place. I still remember the day when I suddenly understood everything that was being said. It took a little longer until felt comfortable in emulating the American accent whenever I spoke. After graduating from High School, I started to attend college. Six months later, I received a letter from "Uncle Sam" inviting me to report to the Army induction Center for a two-year stint in the U.S. Army.

Because I spoke German, I was assigned to a Military Intelligence unit after basic training. In order to receive the necessary Top Secret clearance for my job as translator I was offered the opportunity to become an American Citizen—which I accepted after consulting with my parents. I was given stacks of secret documents to translate about the East German military and political machine. After a few months of this tedious activity, I applied for a transfer to Germany. Within weeks, I found myself on a boat bound for Japan, to be trained as a tele-

(Continued on page 10)

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