



Das Deutsche Echo

May 2013

Volume 34

Issue 5

The Voice of the German-American Community



The Annual Germanfest celebration will be held in the Great Hall and grounds May 3 through 5, 2013, with authentic German entertainment by the GAST choir, Folk Dancers and the Blaskapelle, together with outstanding Polka bands, traditional food and drink, activities for the children and fun for the whole family. The 2013 GAST May Queen will be crowned. This is one of GAST's biggest fundraisers of the year and is only successful if everyone participates. When you are called to volunteer, say "YES". Better yet. Call the number below today, and let us know you can help.

**Volunteers are needed
Call 918-744-6997 to sign up!**

May 3	Friday	10am—9pm
May 4	Saturday	10am—9pm
May 5	Sunday	Noon—5pm

Barthelmes Concert

May 19
3:00pm
GAST Great Hall



GAST PICNIC

June 9
1:00—5:00pm
GAST Building
Call 918-744-6997 for Reservations



Upcoming GAST Events

Apr 30	Handarbeitsgruppe	May 14	Handarbeitsgruppe	Jun 4	Handarbeitsgruppe	Jun 25	Handarbeitsgruppe	Aug 5	Movie Night
May 3	Stammtisch	May 19	Barthelmes Concert	Jun 7	Stammisch	Jun 28	Weinkeller	Aug 11	Aug 11
	May 3—5	May 21	Handarbeitsgruppe		Jun 9	Jul 1	Movie Night		Ice Cream Social
	Germanfest	May 28	Handarbeitsgruppe		GAST Picnic	Jul 5	Stammtisch	Aug 30	Weinkeller
May 6	Movie Night	May 31	Weinkeller	Jun 11	Handarbeitsgruppe	Jul 26	Weinkeller	Sep 2	Movie Night
May 7	Handarbeitsgruppe	Jun 3	Movie Night	Jun 18	Handarbeitsgruppe	Aug 2	Stammtisch	Sep 6	Stammtisch



...from the GAST President — Leon Boggs

GUTEN TAG!

WHEH! Made it through another Annual Membership Meeting! Thanks to all of you who came and participated. That does show that you have an interest and a concern for our organization. As I start my 5th and final term as GAST President I have mixed emotions. I have some excitement that there are still some things I would like to see us accomplish to promote our German culture and heritage. But there is a sense of sadness and frustration as I see things that we could do go away because we cannot get volunteers or can't get along amongst ourselves to put them together. I am also saddened when I hear that people are unhappy and angry with us, but these same people will not come to a meeting and let us know what is wrong. We can't try to 'fix' things if we don't know what is upsetting folks. We will always listen. It is also disappointing that we could not get a volunteer to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. If we all say "NO" to serving our organization, it will soon be out of business.

I want to thank all the Board members for their service this past year and especially to those leaving the Board. I say a big WELCOME TO ALL THE NEW INCOMING AND RETURNING BOARD MEMBERS. I urge all members and officers - new and remaining to attend the May 8th Board of Directors meeting, the 2nd Wednesday of May. This helps us make the transition from one group to the next.



We are rapidly moving into Germanfest. Stephen Schneider and his committee have done a good job of getting our #2 festival ready to go. I say thanks to all the volunteers who helped work.

As we re-organize under a new group of Directors, we will be looking for some new chair persons to lead our various activities. Please consider how you might help in this area. If we do not get leaders - activities will disappear.

I really want to see GAST succeed and be a vital organization promoting German cultural and heritage.

Again, come to the Board meetings and share your thoughts, ideas, concerns and constructive criticism. This is OUR organization. Let's all work together to make it better.

Auf Wiedersehen

— Leon

...from the Arts President — Gertrud Schmidt



It was a sunny Sunday afternoon on April 14th and about 65 members of GAST out of a total of 398 met to hear what their organization had been up to in the past year and what the plans are for the 2013/2014 biennium.

The Arts branch of the German American Society of Tulsa (GASAA) true to its mission statement to “preserve, promote the German language, culture and customs through educational activities and social events...” supported language classes for children – six participants for each term - and adults – 62 and 73 eager students respectively in fall of 2012 and spring of 2013. Classes will again be offered next fall and spring.

Volunteers represented our organization at the “Kids World”, at the TCC “Global Festival”, at local schools and the Mounds Library. Interesting topics were presented and discussed during the Konversationsrunde get-togethers. The credit for planning and organizing German American Day, Volkstrauertag and Advent Service goes to **Barbara Conrad** who also is the driving force behind the annual Garage Sale – one of our main income sources. The GAST Center Great Hall was and will be again on August 17th the venue for the annual concert of the American Theater Organ Society. We are also looking forward to the Concert by the Barthelmes Conservatory students on May 19th at 3:00pm at the GAST Center. I am told that the students are working very hard on some pieces but won't tell me what these are. So... surprise for all of us!



The Barthelmes Conservatory, recently renamed the bART Center for Music, was founded through the generosity of former GAST members Dr. Albert (1902-1996) and Hedwig (Hete) (1902-1999) Barthelmes. Albert was a petroleum engineer with a specialty in seismic exploration. It was the Seismograph Company which later was merged with Raytheon that brought the Barthelmes' – who had emigrated from Germany in 1932- from Philadelphia to Tulsa. Not only was Albert an outstanding



and very successful engineer but he also was an accomplished violinist. The love of classical music was a strong bond between Albert and Hete who was an outstanding concert pianist and vocalist. Both were generous supporters of the fine arts and the German American Societies in Tulsa and Philadelphia. The acquisition of our wonderful GAST Center was made possible through the largesse of the Barthelmes' who also considered GAST in their will to in part assure maintenance of the building. Their gift is the basis of the Endowment Trust.

So come to the Barthelmes Conservatory concert at the GAST Center on the 19th of May at 3:00pm and give applause and encouragement to the young students and thanks to our former members Hete and Albert Barthelmes.

Gertrud

Newsletter DEADLINE **May 15 at 5 PM**
The newsletter goes to press the first Wednesday after the Board meeting. The Board regularly meets at the GAST Center at 7pm on the second Wednesday of the month.

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 Mon. Wed. Fri. 9am - 3pm
 Library: by appointment during office hours
Leon Boggs, President
 David Forbes, Editor: 918-770-1743
 Editor E-mail address: davidalanforbes@gmail.com
 GAST e-mail: gast@tulsacoxmail.com
 GAST Web page <http://www.gastulsa.org>

Message Center - 918-744-6997
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GEORGE STARCH PASSES AWAY

Article and picture courtesy Irmgard Toschik

GAST member George Starch III passed away this week. He will be remembered by many of the long-time members. George joined GAST early and was continuously active in the organization.



Professionally, he was a civil engineer and worked for the U.S. Corps of Engineers. He was on the Board of Directors of River Parks Authority and was a volunteer for River Parks and for Oktoberfest. He owned a travel agency for years, Tours West, and regularly escorted groups to Europe.

When GAST bought its current building in 1991, George became very active, building the bar and paying for it out of his own pocket. He was a frequent visitor on Tuesdays to the Handarbeitsgruppe, if only to show up and exchange greetings. He conceived and designed the Oktoberfest flags which the Handarbeitsgruppe made to his specifications and which are still displayed proudly at Oktoberfest each year. For many years he made a regular morning walk through the

Center, making sure everything was in order.

He was also active in the Tulsa Ski Club as well as a local car club and he loved to work on his old Porsche. He loved to cook and enjoyed trying out new recipes. He loved animals, especially his old cat Igor. A man of firm ideas, George did not see the world in muted shades but blacks and whites, a fact which occasionally strained some sensibilities.

George was a very private person. He loved the ladies and would talk about his dates but remained single all his life. He was preceded in death by his only sister and is survived by two nephews.

George Starch originally created the GAST Bar with his own funds. He designed and purchased the equipment and maintained it until 2007 when he turned it over to a younger person. His family was in the hotel and bar business for many years, and he grew up in that atmosphere. He was grumpy and opinionated, but he did a wonderful thing for GAST, and he will be missed.

Ed Westenhiser

George was a very active and very generous member of GAST. Besides giving us the bar, for which he is most identified, he grilled sausages for at least 20 years at our Oktoberfests. He loved his Porsche automobiles, and he loved his cat, Igor, who predeceased him a few years ago. He had a lot of friends and will certainly be missed.

Erica Hartman

I feel I knew George about as well as most, particularly in the early days of the GAST Center. He gave a great deal to GAST, his time, particularly having built and donated the bar, always his advice and expertise whether for making apple cider, a machine for re-filling mustard containers or grilling Bratwursts at Oktoberfest. He had a crusty exterior but a soft heart. Sometimes it was difficult to get beyond the exterior. I always had the feeling he was very lonely. May he rest in peace!

Lois Voller

Leserbriefe

THANK YOU TO GARAGE SALE VOLUNTEERS

I would like to personally thank all of the volunteers who graciously gave of their time and efforts to make a success of our recent GAST garage sale. It would have been impossible to have managed this enterprise without your willing and capable participation. At the risk of overlooking anyone, I wish to give everyone a heartfelt thank you for a job well done.

Barbara Conrad

GAST NEEDS EVENT HOSTS

The German American Society Building Corp. rents the hall for many kinds of events. When we do this we are covering many expenses for upkeep, etc., on the buildings. However, we need your help. We ask that you help by volunteering to HOST while these events are taking place. The reason we need a host on the premises while the event goes on is just to make sure that everything runs smoothly, and that the building doesn't get trashed. There is security on the premises so being a presence is basically it. It's not a hard thing to do, and you have some free time to read, relax, have some family or social time, play games, etc. PLEASE call the office and VOLUNTEER at 918-744-6997. Thank you in advance.

Bev Bordner
GAST Building Corp

Communications from members are welcome and should be sent to davidalanforbes@gmail.com

Member Interview

Georg and Martha Ort



Echo: How long have you been GAST members and what roles have you played?

Martha: We joined about 10 years ago; Georg has been on the board and led the nominating committee for the past 2 years. We have been running the bank for Christkindlmarkt and Germanfest. And now I'm the Sunshine Lady. All of these positions have been enjoyable in spite of the challenge involved in working with many different people of different backgrounds.

George: My board position ends next year, and we will continue to work when possible, but our next years will be involving much travel connected with our work, so we are unsure how much we will be around.

Echo: I'm hearing a slight accent from one of you. What are your backgrounds?

Georg: Ha ha. I am 100% German. I grew up in Erlangen, Germany, with all of my extended family.

Martha: I have about 25% German heritage, along with English/Scot-Irish and Irish. My German ancestors came to the U.S. in the mid-1800's with the Adelsverein (The Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas) which was established in Biebrich on the Rhine near Mainz. My family established residence in the Texas Hill Country near Kerrville and Fredericksburg.

Echo: How did you meet and end up in Oklahoma?

Georg: We met in 1977 when we both took jobs in a hospital in Tuebingen, Germany. We worked on the same ward for about a year. We were married in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1985 and will soon celebrate our 28th anniversary.

Martha: We came to Oklahoma after several years of living in Asia. We worked in medical missions for almost 20 years in Thailand, Nepal, and Pakistan. We could have settled in Germany, but we came to the States because we wanted to home-school our children, which you can't do in Germany. We could have moved to Texas, but we found a position in Tulsa for Georg to work with Literacy and Evangelism International so we came here.

Echo: Family?

Martha: Georg's parents have both passed away but he has three siblings in Germany with their families. My mother still lives in Texas and I have three brothers too. Our three children are now grown, with the oldest, Ana Marie, living in Louisville working on her Master's Degree in Biblical Counseling. Our two sons live at home. Paul Stefan, the eldest, is a software developer for a company downtown, and Peter works for DirecTV.

Echo: Hobbies: reading, movies, traditional theater?

Georg: We are taking Russian lessons once a week, meeting on Skype with our Russian teacher from Kirov. We are also taking a class at TCC in Teaching English as a Second Language.

Martha: I like to read. I'm enjoying "Trusting God" by Jerry Bridges and would definitely recommend it to anyone who wants to think about the existence of suffering and what to do about it on a personal level. And, yes, we enjoy movies, but mostly at home. When we go out it is usually with our children so we see movies they enjoy. We recently saw "The Avengers", "Iron Man 2", and "The Hobbit". Whenever we can, we attend the GAST Movie Night. Those German "Heimat" films are usually refreshing. We don't attend theater, but do enjoy the Signature Symphony at TCC, not the least because our son Paul Stefan is in the orchestra! The last concert we attended was the Classics Concert for this year—Aaron Copeland.

George: I like the author Chuck Swindoll. He wrote "Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life" and "Come before Winter" - how to cope and grow in times of challenges and trials. And we enjoy the Weinkeller, the Kaffeetrinken of days past, and Christkindlmarkt and Germanfest.

Echo: Okay, my favorite question: What fact about you might surprise even your closest friends?

Martha: Many people are surprised to learn that we took seven years to make it to the altar. Georg was ready to propose after the first year, but I made him wait and endure a painfully brutal "Dear John" letter, then a few years of silence. I'm sure glad he waited!

Georg: I'm glad you finally came to your senses!

GAST

is grateful to the following members for their continued and generous support:

Rick & Terry Pizzo

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Die Deutsche Konversationsrunde

In lieu of the Konversationsrunde we will meet and enjoy the Barthelmes Conservatory students concert on May 19th 3:00pm at the GAST Center Great Hall.

The Konversationsrunde is a program under the auspices of the German American Society of Tulsa Arts Association. It serves to promote the German language and other cultural interests of its members. For suggestions, information or hosting of one of our meetings, please call Barbara Conrad at 918 492 3273 (chair) or Gertrud Schmidt at 918 495 3727 (Co-chair).

Stammtischrunde

Friday, May 3

6:30 PM

in the GAST Weinkeller.

Hope to see you there.

Zum Wohl,

—Dann Björklund, Chair



Now Playing at the Erwin Jerchau GAST Theater

Monday May 6, starting at 6:30 PM

Musik in den Tag

Starting at 7:30 PM

Besuch aus Bangkok

Starring: Stephan Schwarz, Richard Barenberg, Katharina Meinecke (left), Sabine Vitua and Udo Schenk



Who am I?



Austrian-American, stage and film producer, director, and actor born in Vienna. He received a law degree in 1928, but had by that time become an actor, director, and producer at Max Reinhardt's theater. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1935. He directed several hits on Broadway before turning to the screen. He played German roles in many films during World War II, but is best known as a film director, specializing in screenplays with sensitive social themes.

Answers should be sent to davidalanforbes@gmail.com

Answer to "Where am I" in the April issue: **The Elbe Sandstone Mountains**, a mountain range straddling the border between the state of Saxony in southeastern Germany and North Bohemian region of the Czech Republic.

Tom Bordner was the first correct respondent (again) Congratulations!

New Members

Jason Hogue
Tulsa, Oklahoma



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The back page is sponsored by Kenneth Renberg



2013 NATIONAL SÄNGERFEST IN MILWAUKEE

Several members of The GAST Sanger will travel to Milwaukee in June to be part of the 2013 National Sangerfest. Tom Bordner reported at the last Board of Directors Meeting in April that perhaps 12 to 15 of the GAST Sanger would participate.

The National Sangerfest is held every three years to celebrate German culture through song, and is regularly held in Milwaukee because of that city's very large German population. The festival's long standing history with Milwaukee dates back to 1886 when additional train cars were added into the city



to accommodate the increase in passengers coming to watch or participate. The saloons and restaurants in the city were used as headquarters for each singing society because the hotels were packed to capacity with songsters and guests.

The Opening Concert is on Friday, June 21st, at the Milwaukee Theatre. The Main Concert is Saturday, June 22nd, at the US Cellular Arena. The musical extravaganza will feature German and Austrian singing societies from around the country drawing about 3,000 people or more every year.

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