

North Star Chapter

November 2006

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

Volume 31 Number 4

Fall Genealogy Workshop

Saturday, November 4, 2006

Berea Lutheran Church

7638 Emerson Ave. South, Richfield, MN 55423

10 A.M. - 4 P.M.

The fall genealogy meeting features Family History Center Director, Deb Vevea, from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at Crystal. She will present a program showing how to track an ancestral family back to their pre-Russia home in the German Empire. Church records will be used to look for the family of a chapter member. Ms. Vevea will also discuss the basic skills needed when researching one's heritage and family history. If you have any special requests for some "how to" information, let me know and we will try to get it worked into the program. The day begins with a business meeting, followed by a presentation. We'll break for lunch, and have another presentation in the afternoon, about 1PM. Morning and afternoon presentations will cover different materials. You may bring a bag lunch and network with other researchers during the lunch break. The library will be open for researchers.

Weinachtsfest

Saturday, December 2, 2006

Berea Lutheran Church

7638 Emerson Ave. South, Richfield, MN 55423

12 PM Noon - 4PM

By Bob Gies

This is the annual highlight program for many of our members when we remember the foods of our ancestors, and enjoy all the aromas and tastes of our formative years. It is also a time for fellowship and giving thanks for the myriad of blessings that have been given to us in the United States. As always, volunteers are needed to help set-up and take down. Please volunteer to do what you can. Call me at 651-994-7237 if you can help.

Beverages, plates, and utensils will be provided. Please bring generous portions since our extended German-Russian Family is usually over 100 during this annual festival meal. We don't want anyone to go home starving! I am also asking for suggestions for entertainment preferences. If you have a special request, please let me know.

I will complete two years as Program Chair at the end of this year, and invite someone to step up and provide new leadership for setting up new, novel programs.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER by Lil Ward

Fall arrived with all the beautiful yellow, orange and red leaves mixed with the green pine trees. We took a drive to see the fall colors the other day, and, despite the rain, it was beautiful. Growing up in North Dakota, we never had any leaves to rake because there weren't many trees on the prairies. I remind myself of that as we view the beauty while we rake the leaves.

We have some great programs coming up and, of course, our *Weinachtsfest* with all the ethnic foods mixed with the American foods is always a highlight. I don't make very many Ger/Rus foods and it would be difficult to bring dumplings or strudels to a potluck but I do manage to make some edible traditional food.

I want to take this opportunity to send out a big "Thank you" to all the Chapter members for their help. It takes a lot of volunteers to put out the newsletters, greet people at the door, be an officer, take care of refreshments, keep the library going or just talking to the people at a meeting. When I first came to a meeting a few years ago, I was impressed with the smiles and friendliness making me feel welcome enough to come back. Whatever your role is in the Chapter, I thank you.

Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas. See you at the meetings and bring a friend.

PRAIRIE PHOTOS EXHIBIT AT MINNESOTA MUSEUM OF NATIURAL HISTORY

by Nancy Gertner

Minnesota's internationally known photographer Jim Brandenburg opened a photo exhibit at the Bell Museum of Natural History, tucked into an Art Deco building on a corner of the University of Minnesota Campus at University and Church Street.

Brandenburg grew up in southwestern Minnesota, on a family farm in Rock County near Luverne. Brandenburg developed a trust to turn farmland back into prairie near his childhood home, and "Touch the Sky Prairie" is now about 800 acres near the farm homesteaded by Brandenburg's great-grandfather, who came to America from the German Empire. The exhibit includes photos of prairie plant and animal life from Minnesota, the (continued on page 3)

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Ode to the One Room Country School

by Nancy Gertner

The shocking news this month of a school shooting in a one-room Amish schoolhouse took many of us back to our idyllic childhood days, where we sat in our rows of wooden school desks facing our teacher and the chalkboard.

We realized how life has changed all over the country since our school years, when security guards in schools and locked doors were not a necessity.

At my one-room country school in southwestern Minnesota, Keith the Milkman would let himself in for once weekly stocking the refrigerator.

One November day when I was in third grade, the parents of Sheila and Gary came to pick them up with the shocking news that President Kennedy had been shot. A hunting accident was what 'getting shot' meant to me then, so I consider that day the End of Innocence in my protected childhood, where I grew up without the distraction of TV in our farm home. On Wednesday nights when Dad went to church choir practice, we would go to Grandma's house and watch Mr. Ed and the Beverly Hillbillies. They were good family shows, and never taught me the concept of violence or premeditated assassination.

The Amish Community not only had their schoolroom violated and their children murdered and wounded, but their privacy invaded by the news media as well. Despite these intrusions, they stayed true to their creed of non-violence and forgiveness. That's a lesson many people don't learn in school, at home, or on the street, and I hope we can remember that as well as the shock of crimes committed against innocent children in their quiet country school.

PRAIRIE PHOTOS EXHIBIT AT MINNESOTA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (continued from page 2)

Dakotas, and Oklahoma.

Brandenburg began his photographic career on the Minnesota prairie, and was a staff photographer for the Worthington Daily Globe back in the late 1960s. He taught photography classes, and one of his students was my sister when she lived in Luverne. Brandenburg achieved prominence as a photographer for National Geographic and specialized in Arctic Wolves and wildlife.

He has published several books and DVDs, and will soon have a prairie feature broadcast on the Animal Planet cable TV channel. The museum includes a store with items for sale for those of you that would like to give a little piece of the prairie this year for the holidays. The special exhibit runs through December 31.

The Computer Corner By Duane Stabler, dstabler@bigfoot.com

There continues to be lots of new information and some refreshed older websites that are available. This edition is a mixture of information which I hope you'll find of interest; something for everyone. It is a continuation of the September newsletter article. Enjoy the exploration.

Canadian records might be available at <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/genealogy/022-500-e.html>

There are records for those who crossed the border from Canada into the U.S. Unfortunately, they don't start until 1895. The U.S. National Archives journal Prologue has an article at <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2000/fall/us-canada-immigration-records-1.html>

Not a web page, but a reference list of sources, <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/passengers.html> gives more information and links

The VA (Department of Veterans Affairs) of the United States has a Graves Locator for veterans at the site listed below. A veteran on this list is not necessarily a casualty of war, but is buried as a Veteran. http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2cc/servlet/NGL_v1

<http://www.centennial.isc.ca/default.aspx?DN=18,9,Documents> provides Saskatchewan land records on line for only \$6.00. This might be of interest if your family homesteaded in Canada.

<http://earth.google.com> is an absolutely amazing software program that has limited interest for genealogy use but it's a must see if you have a newer computer and a high speed internet connection. This one will keep you going for hours. You might even see your house, backyard or those of your neighbors!

Number 23, August, 2006. Republication of this article requires prior approval from the author. This and previous Computer Corner articles can be found at www.northstarchaper.org as part of the Articles portion of the website.

What a Difference 30 Years Makes!

1976: Long hair
2006: Longing for hair

1976: Acid rock
2006: Acid reflux

1976: Going to a new, hip joint
2006: Receiving a new hip joint

1976: Rolling Stones
2006: Kidney stones

1976: Passing the driver's test
2006: Passing the vision test

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on my life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearances, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company, a church, a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past. We cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it.

-Charles Swindoll

Library Corner

By Bernie Becker

It is time for an update on what has transpired in and for your North Star Library. Convention time has come and gone and, as usual, the Bismarck Library held fascination for Paul and I. Have you sent in your Pedigree Chart to both AHSGR and GRHS? Many conference participants diligently search them.

One of the books recently purchased is History of the Volga German Colonists by Jacob E. Dietz. This monumental work is a translation from Russian to English; a fascinating documentation of the history, lives, economics, and politics of their times.

Einwanderung in das Wolgagebiet 1764-1767 Band 3 has been added. If you have Volga ancestry, you will want to check out the many surnames listed, as well as study the included map.

A member who wishes to remain anonymous donated the following three books by Ron Vossler. Why I Never Called Death the River, and Lost Shawls and Pig Spleens are light reading filled with folklore, anecdotes, and humor from the oral traditions of Germans from Russia in the Dakotas. Reading them will provide nostalgia, and chuckles. The third book, We'll Meet Again in Heaven, contains translated letters printed in German papers (1925-1937) from Germans left behind in the Soviet Union.

A big thank you to Ardella Bennett. She has graciously provided us with a great selection from her shelves:

Anecdotes of the Prairies by Monsignor George P. Aberle

The Bannisters by Barbara Oaks; a historical novel set in Dakota Territory
(with autograph)

Woman of the Prairie by Barbara Oaks; a novel set in the state of South Dakota.

The Bones of Plenty by Lois Phillips Hudson; a novel about a proud, independent North Dakota wheat farming family and its struggles during the depression years of 1933-1934.

Clothes Lines, Party lines & Hem Lines; Memories of North Dakota Homemakers

Courtin', Cookin' & Castor Oil; Memories of North Dakota Homemakers

Sods, Log & Tar Paper; Memories of North Dakota Homemakers

The History of the Hutterites by John Hofer

In search of your Canadian roots by Angus Baxter; Tracing your family tree in Canada

The Last Farmer, an American memoir by Howard Kohn

Prairie Wind, Blow Me Back by Evelyn Dale Iverson

Thunder on the Steppe by Timothy J. & Rosalinda Kloberdanz; Volga German Folklife in a changing Russia

The Womenfolk by Julie Welle VerZuh; life of pioneers

HAPPY READING!!

American Historical Society
Of Germans From Russia
**North Star Chapter
of Minnesota**

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2007 Membership Form

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Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Local dues are \$12 per year per family, plus membership in AHSGR or GRHS.
AHSGR members please submit \$62 (\$50 for AHSGR, \$12 for North Star membership)
GRHS members please submit \$52 (\$40 for GRHS, \$12 for North Star membership).
Please make your checks payable to North Star Chapter and submit to:
Jorgiann Waltner, 4413 Zenith Ave N., Robbinsdale, MN 55422
Questions contact Jorgiann at 763-533-4090.