

North Star Chapter

January 2007

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

Volume 32 Number 1

“The Public Land Survey System: Why they did it, how they did it, and its impact on ownership in America”

Saturday, January 13, 2007, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Berea Lutheran Church, 7538 Emerson Ave. South, Richfield, MN 55423

Join us for an interesting and informative presentation on a project that had an impact on the settlement of our grandparents here in America. We will welcome two speakers. David Claypool is a surveyor for Ramsey County. He has 36 years of experience in the field of land surveying and has worked with the U.S Department of Justice as an expert on the original Public Land Survey.

Also presenting will be Lisa Hanni, who is currently the Goodhue County Land Use Management Director, County Surveyor, and County Recorder. She is active in many land surveying organizations and has published articles in state and national journals. She is a frequent presenter on land use issues at state and national land use conferences.

They will bring examples of early surveying instruments and provide information regarding current techniques used in land survey. Start the New Year right by joining your friends at North Star Chapter's first program of 2007.

Spring Genealogy Workshop “Hungry, Hopeless, Nowhere to Turn. Please Send Help!”

Saturday, February 10, 2007

Berea Lutheran Church

7638 Emerson Ave. South, Richfield, MN 55423

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Those were the pleas of the relatives who stayed in Russia after our ancestors migrated to America a century ago. It wasn't easy, but help arrived. Our spring genealogy workshop is a full day of research and learning opportunities.

10 AM: Library open for research and assistance to those beginning or continuing their genealogical research. All members with research experience are asked to assist. Bring maps, dictionaries, and other research aids to help our fledgling members off to a successful start.

11:30 AM: Break for lunch (Bring your own lunch and use the time to network with others).

1 PM: Brief North Star Chapter business meeting.

(continued on page 3)

PRESIDENT'S CORNER by Lil Ward

As I reflect on the past year I am so thankful for the help and support of the members of the North Star Chapter. Jim Gesele has been elected as president, since I chose not to run again, and I am so happy to have the Chapter in such capable hands. I accepted the position of 1st VP/Program Chair and with the help of Carol Just we are putting together great programs for the coming year. If you have any suggestions for programs, please let us know.

As I write this I am anticipating a wonderful Christmas with our family, friends, and our new great-grandson. My hope for all of you is a very Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and prosperous 2007.

Upcoming Events

March 10, 2007 – Ben Jacque, Stoneham, Mass., author of "The Silent Ob," the chronicle of his grandfather's amazing WWI-era escape from his Mennonite/ Seventh-Day-Adventist village in Russia, landing in San Francisco via Harbin, China.

April 21, 2007 – Deb Marquart, poet, musician, and Iowa State University English professor, will join us for our spring banquet to discuss her new memoir "The Horizontal World: Growing Up Wild in the Middle of Nowhere."

Please Take Note

The Chapter would appreciate help with providing treats at meetings. If you'd like to bring something, please call Helen Kleingartner at 763-205-2297.

Welcome to new members who have joined our chapter in 2006: Sharon Chmielarz, Kathryn Doty, Ed & Idellet Gilbertson, Joyce Libra, Leonard Nitschke, Sue & Matt Podhradsky, and Rick Wais.

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Spring Genealogy Workshop "Hungry, Hopeless, Nowhere to Turn. Please Send Help!" (continued from page 1)

2 PM: Presentation by Homer Rudolf, PhD: "1921-23 Famine in Ukraine & the ND Citizens' Relief Association."

If you weren't grateful to your ancestors before, you will be after this powerful presentation. Armed with newspaper reports, letters to the editor, personal letters, interviews, and photographs from the Wishek family collection, Rudolf tells the powerful story of the 1921-23 famine in Ukraine & the ND Citizens' Relief Association. Rudolf, Richmond, VA, is a native of Wishek, ND, and has researched, translated, and edited many articles and publications about the Germans from Russia.

Information in the U.S. regarding the crisis among the German colonists in Ukraine was generally limited to those who read the German-language newspapers published in the U.S. A number of relief efforts were initiated in the Germans from Russia community in the U.S., with those for the Black Sea area centered in the Dakotas. Most important, and most effective, was the North Dakota Citizens' Relief Association for the Needy in Russia. The organization collected clothing, provisions, money, and pledges for the donation of cattle for the effort. Please join us for a fascinating and educational day.

Chapter to Vote on Revised Constitution and Bylaws

By Jim Gessele

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find a final draft of the revised chapter constitution and bylaws as presented by the Board of Directors for membership approval at the regular chapter meeting on January 13, 2007. North Star's newly established additional affiliation with GRHS and a need for simplifying and updating our rules of governance necessitated a rewrite of the documents. The only significant changes are inclusion of GRHS in the document text, the requirement that our Executive Committee maintain membership in both national organizations, and the omission of a Standing Committee list. This list will henceforth be maintained and updated annually by the Board of Directors. Read the document carefully and be prepared to cast an informed vote.

SEI UNSER GAST Cookbook Order Form

To order, fill out the information below and mail it with your check to: **Cookbook Orders, North Star Chapter of Minnesota, P. O. Box 583642, Minneapolis, MN 55458-3642.** Please make your check (US funds) out to the North Star Chapter.

The cost for each book \$11.95 for orders of 1-4 copies, \$10.95 each for orders of 5-9 copies, and only \$9.95 for orders of 10 or more cookbooks. If you are not going to pick these up at a Chapter event, add these shipping and handling charges to the price of each book in your order - one mailing per order. :
1 to 4 books: \$1.75 each shipping (\$3.88 each Canada)
5 to 9 books: \$1.25 each shipping (\$2.75 each Canada)
10 or more books: \$1.00 each shipping (\$2.25 each Canada)

Name _____
Address _____
City State _____
Zip _____
Phone _____
of Cookbooks ordered _____
Total Cost of Cookbooks _____
Postage/Shipping (see above) _____
Total Enclosed _____
Thank you for your order!

Keeping the Faith

By Cynthia Miller

Like many writers, I'm an ardent collector of quotations. I also read widely and at any time of the day or night, and I never know when a saying will find me, strike me with some element of truth or importance, and I'll feel like I'll never want to forget it. After years of finding scraps of paper with scribbled lines in books, drawers, and purses, I finally put them all together in one hardcover book, which I refer to often.

Sometime earlier this year I came across a quote in archaic French that referred to the teaching of the language in Canada. The quote was "Qui perd sa langue, perd sa foi," but it was the translation that grabbed me: Who loses his language loses his faith.

It's not a secret or surprise that as one of the under-40 crowd, I did not learn German at home. I was more fortunate than most that my parents stayed in the county my great-grandparents settled in, so I did hear plenty of the language growing up. Even after studying it for five years in college and earning a minor, I find I still can't converse in any meaningful way with my nieces' German nanny. Jim Gessele is probably giving up hope that I will ever remember the "h" in "Weihnachtsfest."

I've heard a story, true or not, that one reason many German-Russians were so against giving up the German language church services was the belief that God wouldn't understand their prayers in a heathen language like English. But I don't think this quote necessarily refers to only religious faith. I believe it could encompass faith in oneself, one's background, one's heritage, one's hopes, one's values, and one's family. Can loss of language really be powerful enough to take all that away?

For years I've struggled with the exploration and understanding of myself in relation to my heritage. I can accept that there are things I will never be a part of because I was born the third generation. But what constantly makes me feel a step apart is my absence from the language. Even if I could learn proper German fluently, I have only one grandmother left from whom to learn the dialect of my ancestors. I have to accept that this is part of the German-Russian experience that I will not share.

So I have had to learn to keep my faith in other ways. I do this by learning as much as I can, and using my skills to honor my ancestors. I also have faith in the future. I have heard of a German-language charter school in St. Paul. In five years, I may be looking into it for my son, who's only half German, but it's the largest portion of his cultural make-up. Perhaps he will be the one who carries on the faith in our heritage through our language, among other things.

Library Corner

By Bernie Becker

The history of German states is confusing. Land was divided between sons and grandsons, making it difficult to trace ownership. The area known as Germany began in large pieces. Over time they were broken up into over a thousand smaller pieces. They were owned by knights, bishops, counts, princes, dukes, and kings. There was little peace from 843 to 1871. One army after another felt they could capture land belonging to a weaker entity. Nobles married their children to other noble families with the intention to inherit more land.

To help you through this maze, check the map section in our library where you will find three intriguing new books. "Lands of the German Empire and Before" has many maps and much historical information helpful to understanding Germany. The timeline begins when Charlemagne ("Charles the Great") was named Emperor of the Roman Empire by the Roman Catholic pope in 800. It covers additions, divisions, treaties, knights, wars, plague, the Reformation, and emigrations, including World War II, and stops at 1990.

"German Maps & Facts for Genealogy" has an abundance of maps too, but it also covers the German dialects, migrations, religion, civil registration, rivers, ports, shipping routes, etc. It features a guide to place names listed in English, French, and Polish. There is also a list of terms and their English words.

"How to Read & Understand Meyers Geographical and Commercial Gazetteer of the German Empire" was compiled to aid officials in identifying public government services, government offices, and religious and educational institutions. Merchants used it to pinpoint transportation, communications sources and industries.

The information includes the name of the place, whether it is a city, village, hamlet, estate, farm, mill, foresthouse, and so on. It lists the kind of authority over this community, such as local government offices, civil registration offices, courts, military, or the local church. After you find what record-keeping offices existed in that area, you may be able to find records in a local archive or church.

The names of over 210,000 places are arranged alphabetically in German. What makes it confusing is that many places had the same names. Thus it is important you find the name of the German state. The typestyle in this Gazetteer is in hard-to-decipher Gothic print, but the book gives you help with this. There are many abbreviations, but they are explained in the book. These books are not quick, easy reads. But if you are serious about research in Germany, they can be invaluable. You will find them on our shelves under 'L.'

Another new book is "The Diary of a Napoleonic Foot Soldier," donated by Jim Gessele. When eighteen-year-old German stonemason Jakob Walter was conscripted into the Grand Army of Napoleon, he had no idea of the trials that lay ahead. This is a compelling chronicle of a young soldier's loss of innocence as well as an eloquent and moving portrait of the profound effects of war on the men who fight it. Find it on the shelves under 'A.'

To save time when you attend a meeting, study the library inventory list on our web site, which lists titles and where to find them on the shelves. You must be a member of North Star Chapter to check out books.

A Dismal Christmas Fest

By Zitta Maurer

Translated by James Gessele

Originally titled "Die Räuber und das arme Weihnachtsfest" as found in Alfred Camman's *Aus der Welt der Erzähler*, (Marburg: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1987).

We always celebrated nice Christmas holidays before the time of total Communist expropriation. By 1929, it was quite different. Before Christmas, Papa took a trip to Krivoy-Rog [Russian settlement near Kronau and Landau of the German Prischib colonies roughly sixty miles north of Kherson]. It was the neighboring town to ours, an industrial city. Papa had loaded up flour, oil, grain, butter, etc.—anything that could be sold—and traveled there. Any profit left over was to be spent on Christmas shopping. Three to four days were needed for such a journey. First, the goods had to be sold at the market. Then Papa would quarter the wagon and horses on the outskirts of town at a livery barn and go shopping in the city, something which could not be completed in a single day. After he was all done, Papa loaded everything onto the wagon and drove off towards home.

It was only a few miles from Krivoy-Rog and the hind axle broke. Papa stopped the wagon and looked at the damage. Astonishingly, the axle had been sawed through part ways! Now what the devil was he to do! He always had tools under the seat, so he pulled them out and began to make temporary repairs. Because the ground had frozen hard the night before, he took the big sheepskin from the wagon, scattered a bed of straw and laid the skin on top so that he wouldn't freeze on the icy earth. It didn't take long, and riders came galloping up. Papa didn't think anything of it and just remained under the wagon, working away. But as the riders approached, Papa saw they were carrying guns.

"Stay under the wagon!" one of them shouted, his rifle aimed, at Papa. The others swarmed over the wagon, loaded everything on their horses, fired a warning shot and disappeared.

They took everything, absolutely everything: bolts of cloth, sugar, candies, spices, shoes, toys—everything in the wagon, even Papa's jacket. One thing they left: the big sheepskin robe which Papa had laid under the wagon against the cold ground—all to Papa's good fortune, for it was December and the temperature was freezing.

It was a dismal Christmas. By 1929 we already had been reduced to poor peasants and had to pay extremely high fees just to farm a small plot of land. Papa explained to us why we wouldn't be getting any presents that Christmas; but he also promised that some day things would be better again.

German Christmas Markets

For those of you who have visited the Christmas markets in Germany, or have always wanted to, check out this web site for a virtual tour of several markets:

<http://www.usatoday.com/travel/germanychristmas/flash.htm>

Nancy Gertner, who has visited the market in Stuttgart, says that all that's missing are the wonderful smells.

CONSTITUTION OF THE NORTH STAR CHAPTER OF MINNESOTA

ARTICLE I – NAME OF ORGANIZATION

The name of the organization shall be the North Star Chapter of Minnesota, a non-profit organization, chartered by the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, hereafter known as AHSGR, with international headquarters at Lincoln, Nebraska, and by the Germans from Russia Heritage Society, hereafter known as GRHS, with international headquarters at Bismarck, North Dakota.

ARTICLE II – CHARTER

Chapter charter membership rests upon approval by international headquarters of AHSGR and GRHS.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSES

SECTION A. The purpose of this organization shall be:

- 1) To stimulate interest in individuals to pursue, study, and research the heritage of Germans from Russia.
- 2) To encourage individuals to document this historical information and communicate it to this organization and to international headquarters.
- 3) To identify and provide resources which will aid individuals in their pursuit of this historical information.

SECTION B. The North Star Chapter is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as now enacted or hereafter amended, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that also qualify as Section 501 (c) (3) exempt organizations.

ARTICLE IV – LIMITATIONS

At all times the following shall operate as conditions restricting the operations and activities of the organization:

- 1) No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be a carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

- 2) No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, its members, trustees, officers or other private persons except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered.

- 3) Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from Federal Income tax under section 501(c) (3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as now enacted or hereafter amended.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Chapter membership shall be contingent upon membership in AHSGR or GRHS. The chapter Board of Directors, as defined in the bylaws, may sanction membership in other qualified national organizations having as their mission the pursuit, study, research and preservation of the Germans from Russia heritage.

Membership shall not be limited to individuals of Germans from Russia heritage. Any individual, family, institution, or corporation interested in the objectives of AHSGR and GRHS or the preservation of the Germans from Russia heritage shall be eligible for membership.

Annual chapter dues shall be left to the discretion of the Board of Directors and approved by a majority of the members present at the next chapter meeting. The membership year shall be concurrent with the fiscal year—January 1 through December 31.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

The chapter shall meet quarterly and at such other times as provided by the bylaws. The membership shall be notified of meetings at least one week prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE VII – ELECTIVE OFFICERS

The elective officers shall be the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The officers shall be elected to their respective offices at the last regular meeting of each fiscal year.

ARTICLE VIII – QUORUM

A quorum needed to conduct official business at the regular or special meeting shall be at least 10% of the membership in good standing and three elected officers.

ARTICLE IX – OPERATIONAL POLICIES

The Executive Committee, as defined in the bylaws, shall develop such operational policies not covered in the constitution or bylaws for approval by the Board of Directors and for subsequent approval by the membership at the next regular or special meeting.

ARTICLE X – AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution may be amended by two-thirds vote of those voting at the regular or special meeting called in accordance with the bylaws. Proposed amendments shall be considered by the Board of Directors and recommendations presented to the membership. The membership shall be notified of any proposed changes at least one week prior to the vote.

ARTICLE XI – CHAPTER DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the chapter, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all debts, obligations, liabilities, costs and expenses of the chapter, dispose of all the chapter assets exclusively for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as now enacted or hereafter amended, or shall distribute such assets to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office or the chapter is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

This amended and recodified Constitution of the North Star Chapter of Minnesota adopted at the organization's regular business meeting this _____ day of _____, 2007.

_____, President

_____, Secretary

BYLAWS OF THE NORTH STAR CHAPTER OF MINNESOTA

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP VOTING RIGHTS

1. Family members may cast a maximum of two votes (two individuals each casting one vote) for the conduct of official business. All other memberships shall be entitled to one vote.

ARTICLE II – MEETINGS

1. The Executive Committee, upon recommendations from the First Vice-President as Program Chair, shall determine the date, time, and place of chapter meetings.
2. The first chapter meeting in each fiscal year shall be designated as the Annual Meeting at which reports covering the past year's activities shall be presented, and a formal introduction of the newly elected officers shall be made.
3. The rules contained in the latest edition of "Robert's Rules of Order" shall govern all parliamentary procedures which are not covered by the Constitution, Bylaws or Standing Rules of this organization.
4. Standing Rules may be adopted by the Board of Directors as necessary for more efficient and expeditious operation of chapter meetings.

ARTICLE III – ELECTIVE OFFICERS

1. The officers shall be elected for a one-year term. No person shall be elected to the same office for more than two consecutive terms.
 - 1.1. The president shall:
 - 1.1.1. Preside at all regular and special meetings of the chapter, the Executive Committee, and Board of Directors.
 - 1.1.2. Call meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors whenever required.
 - 1.1.3. Appoint all chairpersons for special committees with the approval of the Board of Directors.
 - 1.1.4. Be an ex-officio member of all Standing Committees except the Nominating Committee.
 - 1.1.5. Represent the chapter at or appoint a representative to outside functions and activities as required in the interest of the chapter.
 - 1.1.6. Provide an annual report to the membership at the North Star Chapter annual meeting and to both AHSGR and GRHS organizations according to their requirements. This report shall be coordinated with the secretary, providing a single report to each organization.
2. The first vice-president shall:
 - 2.1. Preside at meetings in the absence of the president.
 - 2.2. Appoint and chair the program committee.
3. The second vice-president shall:

- 3.1. Preside at all meetings in the absence of both the president and the first vice-president
- 3.2. Appoint and chair the membership committee.
- 3.3. Maintain a list of paid members.
4. The secretary shall:
 - 4.1. Record and maintain the minutes of all general meetings, Executive Committee meetings, and Board of Directors meetings and shall provide them to the participants therein.
 - 4.2. Report on an annual basis to AHSGR and GRHS the chapter activities.
 - 4.3. Maintain a list of current standing rules.
 - 4.4. Assure that a copy of the chapter constitution and bylaws is available for reference at all meetings.
 - 4.5. File the list of Executive Committee members of the North Star Chapter to AHSGR and GRHS in accordance with their respective requirements.
5. The treasurer shall:
 - 5.1. Be the custodian of all chapter funds.
 - 5.2. Pay all authorized bills.
 - 5.3. Report the status of all accounts at all regular and special chapter meetings and Board of Directors meetings.
 - 5.4. Pay for special, non-budgeted items of \$100.00 or more only upon approval of the membership.
 - 5.5. Be a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

ARTICLE IV – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The elected officers shall make up the Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Committee shall meet on the call of the President or on the request of three members of the Executive Committee.
3. Executive Committee members shall be members of both the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia and the Germans from Russia Heritage Society. In cases where elected officers do not meet this requirement, the chapter shall arrange for paid memberships to cover all deficiencies.

ARTICLE V – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. The Board of Directors shall be composed of the Executive Committee, the immediate past president, and the chairs of all Standing Committees.

ARTICLE VI – STANDING COMMITTEES

1. The Program Committee shall be chaired by the First Vice-President. The Membership Committee shall be chaired by the Second-Vice President. The Executive Committee shall appoint chairpersons for the remaining Standing Committees for a one-year term. Except for the Program and Membership Committee chairs that are limited to two terms, there shall be no limit to the number of terms a person may chair a Standing Committee.

2. An official and updated list of Standing Committees and duties shall be determined by the Board of Directors and maintained by the secretary.

ARTICLE VII – SPECIAL COMMITTEES

1. Special committees shall be formed by the Board of Directors as needed. The appointed chairperson of each committee will appoint the additional members.

ARTICLE VIII – ELECTIONS

1. Officers shall be elected annually at the last regular chapter meeting of the fiscal year.
2. A Nominating Committee of three members, appointed by the President at least thirty days before the election of officers, shall submit a recommended slate of officers for the ensuing fiscal year. Provisions shall be made for nominations from the floor.
3. Election of officers shall be by majority vote of members present and voting. A written ballot shall be used for any office having more than one nominee.

ARTICLE IX – COMPLIANCE

1. North Star Chapter operations and procedures shall comply with guidelines as established by AHSGR and GRHS. Should conflicts between local and national organization guidelines arise, the Executive Committee shall meet to determine acceptable resolution to the conflicts. If amendments to the bylaws are required, they shall be approved per Article X.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

1. The Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the chapter by a two-thirds vote of the membership present and voting, provided said amendment has been considered and recommended by the Board of Directors and written notice of at least one week has been given by the Board of Directors prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon.

These amended and recodified Bylaws of the North Star Chapter of Minnesota adopted at the organization's regular business meeting this _____ day of _____, 2007.

_____, President

_____, Secretary

**North Star Chapter
of Minnesota-AHSGR and GRHS**
Non-Profit Organization
P.O. Box 583642
Minneapolis, MN 55458

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2007 Membership Form

New _____ Renew _____ Individual _____ Family _____

AHSGR _____ GRHS _____ Both _____

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.