## GROW Newsletter

## Germans From Russia of Oregon and SW Washington Area chapter of the Germans from Russia Heritage Society (GRHS)

Volume 1 Issue 2

#### January-February-March 2002

#### President's Message

Time passes by so fast. Here we are already publishing our second newsletter. It has been a tremendously successful four months since our formal organizational meeting of August 8, 2001. We have facilitated "getting to know you" sessions, located our ancestral villages, and shared many different German Russian foods with our friends of German heritage. Our Chapter Meetings bring us together where we gain strength, fellowship, and knowledge from each other. Also GROW meetings help us to learn more about our heritage while we search our individual ancestors.

We started our first meeting with 16 members enrolling. We now have over 50 members; and by the time you get this newsletter, we will undoubtedly have 60 members. We must be doing something good. We have an excellent Board of Directors who work really hard to make this chapter successful and meaningful for all members. They are providing workshops and information to help families trace their ancestors.

I know you won't be disappointed with the assistance and support from our membership and our GROW Board. I look forward to the year 2002. A year with a bright future for GROW and for you.

#### Oscar W. Geiszler, President

#### Newsletter Items

Please send articles, stories, and pictures of genealogical interest to DrVJH@yahoo.com or to Dr. Velma Jesser, PO Box 4909, Sunriver, OR 97707-4909. The deadline for the Apr/May/Jun 2002 GROW newsletter is March 1, 2002.

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#### 2002 Upcoming Events

#### Chapter meetings held at Solid Rock Baptist Church

January 18	Board Meeting
January 19	Genealogy Internet Research Seminar
January 27	Chapter Meeting
February 15	Board Meeting
February 24	Chapter Meeting
March 1	Newsletter Deadline
March 15	Board Meeting
March 24	Chapter Meeting
April 19	Board Meeting
April 28	Chapter Meeting
June 14	Board Meeting
June 23	Chapter Meeting

#### **Directions to Solid Rock Baptist Church**

From I-205 heading South take the Johnson Creek Blvd. Exit (#16). Turn right onto Johnson Creek Blvd.

Turn left onto SE Fuller Rd. And then left onto SE Battin Rd.

I - 205From heading North Take the Johnson Creek Blvd. Exit

(#16) and stay

Solid Rock Bantist Church

straight to go onto the ramp. Turn left onto Johnson Creek Blvd. Turn left onto SE Fuller Rd and then left onto SE Battin Rd.

#### GROW Genealogy Internet Research Seminar

#### January 19 from 9:00 a.m. to noon PCC Computer Lab 1626 SE Water Ave, Portland, Oregon RSVP by December 17, 2001

The purpose of this seminar is to provide genealogy research, education, and support to GROW members wanting to use the World Wide Web (WWW) as a research tool for tracing their ancestors.

Each researcher will have access to their own computer to conduct their research with the support of four research specialists. Researchers will also receive a diskette with hotlinks to a list of Internet sites for general Germans from Russia research as well as more specific research areas such as Großliebental, Volga, Bessarabia, Glückstal, Chortitza, Molotschna, Crimea, Beresan, and Kutschurgan.

Don't wait! **Space is limited** to only 16 researchers and 9 seats are already sold! First come, first paid gets the seats! Cost is **only \$12.50** per person for this 3-hour research session. **Reserve your seat today** by emailing Gayla Gray at <u>gaylagray@msn.com</u> or calling her at 503-547-2938. Checks should be made out to GROW and must be received by December 17, 2001.

#### The Sunshine Gal

If you know of any illnesses, marriages, births, deaths, or other news about GROW members, please call the GROW Sunshine Gal, Agnes Herrle, at (503) 236-5642 or send a note to her at 1914 SE Harold St., Portland, OR 97202-4935.



# Elizabeth Weber (nee Theurer) Submitted by Lola Weber

Born 19 Aug 1836, Neu Freudental, Odessa District, South Russia. Died 12 Feb 1900, Campbell County, South Dakota. Married 17 Apr 1858 at Freudental, Odessa, South Russia to Johann Michael Weber.

During my fall trip to South Dakota, I was able to take a trip to the north central part of the state to Campbell County and stood on the homestead land that Elizabeth (Theurer) Weber settled in December 1888. A widow from Neu Freudental, Odessa District, South Russia, with seven children boarded the *SS Werra* at Bremerhaven, Germany and arrived in New York on May 29, 1886. Her husband, Johann Michael Weber, had died in 1875 in South Russia.

Part of my search is trying to determine her route to Dakota Territory in 1886. At this time, I can only surmise that the family boarded a train out of New York, perhaps changing in Chicago, and then taking the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul line into eastern Dakota Territory where she stayed with Karl Broeckel, a Baptist minister (and possible relative) near the Menno-Freeman area for a time before continuing on to Campbell County and the precious land that beckoned to be settled.

She filed in 1888 at the land office in Aberdeen SD and indicated that she had built a 14 x 20' sod house and 14 x 18' sod stable.

As I read the history of Dakota in the early years and learn more about the Germans from Russia heritage, I continue to be amazed at the strength and endurance that it must have taken for this woman to strike out for a new land. It was in visiting her final resting place, Thule Baptist Cemetery (which is out in the middle of a field today, not maintained with prairie grass growing as high as your waist and wind blowing with nothing to slow its course) that I could marvel at this lady who risked everything for a new beginning.

I owe much gratitude to the Weber cousins Bob, Lester, and Curt Weber, who were the finders and seekers in locating the actual sites.



# Two Generations of Family Christmas Memories

The Thirties and Forties in North Dakota by Ray Ohlhauser and Virginia Ohlhauser Hitchrick as told to Gayla Ohlhauser Gray

Christmas during the thirties and forties in North Dakota were very different from Christmas today. The holiday season back in the thirties and forties started with turkeys. Farmers in the area brought their live turkeys to Anderson's farm. There they were killed, plucked, and packaged for Christmas dinner. As a young boy of twelve, I was paid ten cents for each turkey I plucked clean. One year I made 50 cents in one day and that was a lot of money back then.

The holiday season was festive, but decorations were not prominent like they are today. Christmas trees were hard to find in North Dakota so we didn't always have a tree for Christmas. In 1938 while living in Killdeer, we had a small tree, but I'm not sure what kind of tree it was. The decorations on the tree were handmade paper ornaments made by the older children of the house and strings of popcorn. My mother had candles in candleholders on the tree for lights, but they were only lit on Christmas Eve.

Christmas presents were not exchanged outside the immediate family like today. You only received one maybe two presents from your parents. These presents were scarce and always practical. One Christmas Eve, I received a new dress and pair of shoes and Ray received a new shirt and pair of trousers. The presents were not wrapped and were not under the tree. In the early thirties, all we received for Christmas was a small bag consisting of hard candy, some nuts, and maybe an apple or orange. I remember getting an apple one year. I was so happy that I shined that apple on my

pant leg for hours making it shine so bright before I finally ate it.

Santa didn't come to our house in 1938. If you wanted to see Santa, you had to visit him down at the lumberyard in Killdeer. I believe it was the Chamber of Commerce that brought him there. Santa always gave you a small sack of hard candy.

Christmas morning started with sugar, prune, or cheese kuchen. Dinner was served at noon starting with soup, usually chicken noodle or vegetable, and either turkey or ham with all the trimmings. The adults always ate first and then the children.

We may not have had much, but whatever presents we did get tickled us and we really appreciated them.

Continued on page 4 (The Fifties and Sixties . . . )

#### Kris Kringel

This holiday card was pinted in Germany– Verlag Von Max Victor. Koln Postkarte No. 12 Post dated Dec. 20, 1898

A blending of the German gift-bearers Christkindl and Belsnickel. Kris Kringel is very similar to our modern-day Santa Claus in that he, too, is a holiday gift bringer. However, unlike our Santa, he rings a bell to deliver his presents.



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http://www.santalady.com

Submitted by Gayla Ohlhauser Gray

... Continued from page 3

#### The Fifties and Sixties in Billings, Montana by Gayla Ohlhauser Gray

I have many wonderful memories of Christmas growing up in the fifties and sixties. Memories of ice skating and sledding with friends, baking holiday cookies and candy with my mother and aunt, and helping to decorate a big evergreen tree with lots of lights, special ornaments, and tinsel. Christmas was truly a festive time of year. It was a time for giving and receiving Christmas spirit, Christmas cards, and Christmas presents. It was also a time to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Excitement escalated as December 24<sup>th</sup> neared. Brightly colored packages now overflowed the area beneath the trunk of the tree. My excitement and anticipation drew me to the packages with my name. I couldn't resist the urge to pick them up and shake them and try to guess what was inside.

Finally, the stockings were hung by the fireplace for Santa as the night sky appeared on the eve of Christmas. My whole family gathered around the brightly lit Christmas tree impatiently waiting for father to hand each of us a gift to open. As I opened each gift, my eyes grew bigger, my smile wider, and my cheers of joy became louder. I was so lucky to have so many new dolls and toys.

Before heading to bed that night, I put out a glass of milk and a plate of cookies for Santa. I knew he would be hungry and thirsty after delivering presents to all the good little boys and girls in the neighborhood.

I awoke Christmas morning at the first sign of dawn to see what Santa had brought me. For some magical reason, he always brought me exactly what I wanted. There under the tree was the Barbie doll I had been wishing for. Santa truly was the best person in the whole wide world.

Christmas dinner consisted of a huge turkey with all the trimmings. Aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends, dressed up in their finest outfits, came over to join the festivities. Holiday cheer, warmth, love, and friendship were everywhere.

#### **Programs**

Send your ideas and/or suggestions for LEARN and SHARE programs to Lola Weber at <a href="https://hunterl@kalama.com">hunterl@kalama.com</a> For information on 2002 programs, see page 8.

#### 2002 Board Meetings

Board Meetings start at 7 p.m.
General membership is welcome.
Please notify host/hostess to allow for accommodations in their homes.

- Jan 18 Rehwalt home, 19990 SW Edy Rd., Sherwood, OR 97140
- Feb 15 Haberman home, 8110 SE Madison St., Portland, OR 97215-3025
- Mar 15 Location to be announced
- **Apr 19** Aman home, 4178 SE Cedar St., Hillsboro, OR 97123-7466
- **Jun 14** Henne home, 9 Cellini Ct., Lake Oswego, OR 97035

### Membership

GROW was organized August 18, 2001 with 16 members. We are now at 51 members just three months later. Help us to continue to GROW by promoting us with family and friends.

GRHS and GROW dues are now due for the year 2002. If you haven't already paid your dues, we'll make it easy for you. Just write one check to GROW for both organizations and we'll forward your GRHS dues (\$30 directly to Bismarck for you. The GROW minimum donation for 2002 is \$5, which covers the cost of the newsletter and other organizational expenses.

A current roster of membership is printed for your convenience on the next page.

## **GROW Member Roster**

Name	Phone	E-Mail	Villages	Surnames
ABERLE, JEAN	360-577-8430	jjaberle@aol.com		
AMAN, WALT	503-648-7322	wcaman@aol.com	Landau, Guldendorf	Amann, Grenz
BOWMAN, ROBERTA	541-347-2837	srb51795 @worldnet.att.net	Elsass, Selz, Strassburg	Mastel
COOK, KARLA	503-656-0206		Neudorf, Kassel	Haas
EHLI, PATRICK J.	503-631-7952			
GATLIN, EVELYN	503-371-9580	eveymarie	Lichtental, Bergdorf,	Scheid, Giess,
		@aol.com	Friedenstal, Hoffnungstal	Knodel, Rieker(?)
GEISZLER, OSCAR & LORRAINE	503-656-1802	Oscargeiszler @aol.com		
GEISZLER, REUBEN & DELORES	503-658-2485			
GRAY, GAYLA	503-547-2938	gaylagray	Freudental, Neu	Ohlhauser, Schlecht,
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			Alexanderhilf, Hoffnungstal, Molotschna	Tschetter, Gross
GRUENBERG, ELEANOR	503-692-0894	Elegrue@aol.com	Landau, Speier	Kunz, Briltz, Dinius
HAAS, ROGER & ROBERTA	503-659-8248	rahaas @uswest.net	Neudorf, Kassel	Haas, Schauer
HABERMAN, CLIFF & JAN	503-252-5480		Balzer	
HELFENSTEIN, JAMES	503-452-1878	jimscastle @home.com	Grossliebental	Helfenstein, Eichele
HENNE, DOUG	503-635-2348	dhenne @teleport.com	Neudorf, Gluckstal, Bergdorf, Kassel	Henne
HERRLE, AGNES	503-236-5642	<u> </u>	,	
INMAN, FREDA	503-297-7423			
JESSER, VELMA	541-598-8654	drvjh@yahoo.com	Rohrbach, Worms, Klostitz, Gluckstal, Bergdorf	Jesser, Jantz, Littke, Buchler, Schober, Wizemann, Lieb
KASTER, KAROLYN & KEVIN	503-829-4167		Neudorf, Kassel	,
KING, JERELDINE	503-256-1607	Jk1232@aol.com	Speier	Dinius
KOPP, LEONARD	503-590-3886	legend @hevanet.com	Krasna,Landau	Корр
LARKINS, IRENE	503-357-9835	Ilark5661 @aol.com	Selz, Odessa	Hoffert
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PORTER, VERNA & ROBERT	503-284-8591	bobporter @webty.net	Neuburg, Odessa	Faul, Kreinbuhl
PRODOEHL, IRENE	503-287-5673	C ITONI MET	Worms, Odessa	Neubauer
REHWALT, MARGARET	503-625-7055	mjrehwalt	Strassburg, Speier, Sulz,	Schwan, Mastel,
, -		@aol.com	Landau	Miller, Zimmerman

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			Landau	Miller, Zimmerman
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SEIBERT, ART & DORIS	503-651-2394		Leipzig, Kulm	
SEIFERT, DIANE & DENNIS	503-632-3857	dianeseifert @bctonline.com	Franzfeld, Landau	Materi, Bischof
STANG, RICHARD	503-655-6607	rspdsnf@cs.com	Rostov	
STEGMEYER, KATHRYN	503-760-7337		Neudorf, Kassel	
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SUMMERS, HAROLD &	503-692-9289	hsummers		Schaffert, Jacober,
DELORIS		@teleport.com		Eberhard, Wall
ULMER, WILLA	541-572-2239	Willabird		·
		@msn.com		
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·		@worldstar.com		Feller
WALDSTEIN, CONNIE	503-246-7877		Selz	Geisinger, Eberle,
ĺ				Feller
WALLENDER, ARNOLD &	541-770-2467			
DONNA				
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			Freudental	ĺ
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ĺ		@msn.com	Lichtenfeld	

GROW Board of Directors

\* indicates 1-, 2-, 3-year terms

GROW Committee Chairs Until June 30, 2002

* indicates 1-, 2-, 3-year terms Until June 30,		002	
		Calling	Lorraine Geiszler
President	***Oscar W. Geiszler		
		Hospitality/Greeting	Jan Haberman
Vice President	(open)		
		Library/Collection/Research	Jim Helfenstein
Secretary	**Gayla Ohlhauser Gray	&Genealogical Assist to	Doris Seibert
		Members Margare	et Schwahn Rehwalt
Treasurer *M	largaret J. Schwahn Rehwalt		
		Membership	Cliff Haberman
National Board Liaiso	n ***Roger Haas	_	
<b>7.</b>		Programs	Lola Weber
Director	*Walter Aman		7 J. G.
<b>D</b> :	**D   II	Refreshments I	Kathryn Stegemeyer
Director	*Douglas Henne	Namelation & Dall's Dalations	<b>X</b> 7-1 <b>T</b>
Director	**D. Caril E. cara Dainle	Newsletter & Public Relations	Velma Jesser
Director	**Dr. Cecil Eugene Reinke	Chariel Interests	Sharon Voeller
Director	***Clifford Haberman	Special Interests	Sharon voeher
Director	Cimoru Haberillan	Sunshine	Agnes Herrle
		Sunsimic	Agnes Herric

#### DEDICATION OF GRHS HEADQUARTERS 8 AUG '02, BISMARCK, ND By Roger Haas

The New GRHS headquarters, located at 1125 W Turnpike Ave., Bismarck, ND, called the August & Kathryn Schauer Haas Building and named after my Dad & Mom, came about due to the fact that the National Board saw the pressing need for a larger facility, for greater accessibility & for more accommodations. Roberta and I were the major donors for covering the cost.

As a son of an immigrant, seeing my parents living with only the basics and struggling for a better life for



their children and themselves, it dawned upon us that sacrifice, frugality, and unselfish loving mental support were the watchwords for their sons' higher achievement.

Education, living an exemplary life, and loving God were basic tenets modeled and set forth as life's purposes. Those preempted goals became our guideposts in our almost 47 years of marriage.

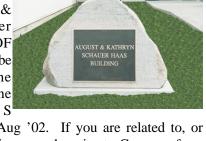
Self-denial and living below our means, even as public school educators, to achieve savings always has been our objective. Then we saw a worthy cause: giving toward the education and preservation of the German Russian heritage. We are so thankful for the vision and sacrifice of our forbearers. Life would have been so terribly different for all of us if they had elected not to uproot themselves and start over in a free land, America, even at the risk of blood, sweat & tears!

The New Headquarters represents a HOME OF

RECORDS where even today we are discovering materials, information, and family histories in Russia and other places and depositing them for the education and the dissemination to us the living and our children to come.

The STONE holding the Brass Plaque represents the many toiling hours that my parents and maybe your families spent hauling rocks off the fields to eke out a living in the plains of the Dakota Territory. As you know, the early life in the Dakota was not always kind to our people who used basically horse drawn implements, and were challenged by hail, drought, and pestilence. Yet our people believed that ARBEIT MACHT DAS LEBEN SÜESS (work makes life sweet).

The August & Kathryn Schauer Haas HOME OF RECORDS will be dedicated at the beginning of the 2002 GRHS



Convention on 8 Aug '02. If you are related to, or connected by marriage or otherwise to Germans from Russia, you can and will want to be a part of the formal dedication to the hopeful perpetuity of our heritage and to the dedication of assistance to the future generations to share our way of life and the characteristics we represent. We are fittingly a proud people, being contributive and willing to serve our country, making it a better place in the world than when we entered it. If we fail to volunteer and assist others, our own worth and that of others will be diminished.

Aug 8, 2002 may seem a long way off, but now is the time to plan to see relatives, friends, and old stomping grounds as well as being at one of the greatest conventions of the GRHS. We are not only growing in our local Chapter, but the National Membership of GRHS has been steadily growing since 1992. Our GROW membership started with 16 families on Aug 18, '01; 35 more families have become a part of our GRHS Chapter for a total of 51. How many more will we invite to become a part of us by Convention time?

Continued on next page . . . .

Isn't it conceivable that GROW being the newest and the fastest growing Chapter, could be the Host Chapter for the Convention site of 2004? Spearfish, SD is the Convention site for 2003. GROW Members have talent, enthusiasm, and the interest to arouse our cousins to perpetuate our vision and our cultural heritage. Let us be caring and sharing about what and who we are.

#### **GROW Scheduled Programs for 2002**

#### Jan. 27, 2002 - Rev. Dr. Donald N. Miller Humanitarian Work in Ukraine

The Rev. Dr. Donald N. Miller will give a slide presentation of a humanitarian work he founded in Ukraine, near Kiev, in 1993. The work, located in the formerly German villages of his parents/grandparents, is committed to helping the poor, especially widows and orphans, with food, clothing, medicine and empowering the people to help themselves. Dr. Miller, a retired Baptist pastor and seminary vice president, has made eleven trips to the area, including a number of genealogical tours, as tour leader. He has done extensive research in the State Archives of Ukraine and is the author of a book, entitled, "In the Midst of Wolves" (A History of German Baptists in Volhynia, Russia, 1863-1943).

#### Feb. 24, 2002 - Robert Schuh Understanding the EWZ Films

Robert Schuh will present information regarding the EWZ Antraege (Applications) files. These files consist of over 400,000 applicants for naturalized German citizenship by ethnic Germans during 1939-1945. The collections are arranged by country or region, with individual's files in alphabetical order by family name. These films are especially valuable in searching for families that stayed in Russia. Research on these films may make it possible for you to connect with relatives in the former Soviet Union and/or Germany.

#### Mar. 24, 2002 - Dale Wahl A Picture Presentation to Bessarabia and Odessa

The Bessarabian Team had been planning a trip to Bessarabia for over three years, when the WTC interfered. Since the number of people had been reduced to only four remaining for the trip, it was feasible to iron out a new

and refreshed schedule and make the trip. Dale Wahl will present a picture quick presentation of this 10-day trip split between Bessarabia and Odessa via overhead. He will share well over 1,000 pictures taken during this trip.

#### April 28, 2002 – Shirley Nitschke Author of the book Heimat

Shirley will share with us the character of Helga and her family from her book Heimat. Helga traveled as a young girl with her father and sister to Russia, on the promise of a new life, once it became apparent that life in Germany was falling apart. Her novel is a love story, a coming-of-age story, a family unity story, an adventure story, a dramatic story, a woman's story, and an immigrant's story. This is not simply a history lesson. It is a saga of a brave, courageous woman. It is a personal story, that humanizes history, and touches all of us. It is a story of the Germans in the nineteenth century. The Germans who chose to make the trip to Russia, and the Russia-Germans who came to America. It is a story of hope, survival, conviction, and determination. Heimat is the story of an individual, a family, of three groups, and three nations.

#### June 23, 2002 – Dale Wahl The Records Chase from Archives to GRHS Members

The GRHS is active in obtaining our ancestors records from the old Russian Archives. This is a multi-step process requiring a search and find effort. Once located then it is a matter of gaining positive contact with the archives to attempt to negotiate a reasonable price for a photocopy of the materials. Once an agreement can be reached, then it is a matter of getting a good quality copy of the record in our hands so we can process the information through our many teams that are busy at GRHS. Once processed, the materials are shared via many Black Sea newsletters, the Heritage Review, or sold as a stand-alone document at our bookstore.

Dale Lee Wahl has been intimately involved as the leader of the GRHS Clearing House through establishment of these many processes that currently functions for us at GRHS, and he will share with us - insight and examples of these many steps that brings the processed products to you as a GRHS member. Dale is the Chairman of the Village Research Project (VRP) where the Village Coordinators (VC), the Area Coordinators (AC), and the Clearing House (CH) functions at GRHS. He is a member of the GRHS Archives Acquisition (AA) Committee, the leader of the Clearing House itself, the chairman of the Computer (CC), and also the Translations committees.



## GROW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION GERMANS from RUSSIA of OREGON and Southwest WASHINGTON (GROW)

PLEASE STATE WHICH YEAR(S)				
(Check appropriately): NEW				
NAME (Print)				
ADDRESS				
CITY	STATE	ZIP		
PHONE NO. ( )	E-Mail	Address		
I'm interested in receiving the	GROW Newsletter	Electronically	(Email) to save publica	ation/postage costs.
Membership Class	GROW			
•	er Preferences		<del></del>	
Name of Ancestral Village				
Names of adults in Household desiring cards:				
Enclosed is my remittance o				
GROW NEWSLETTER/OPE	RATION DONATIO			
Membership	\		30.00	
Educational (librar Silver (\$100 beyond	_		30.00 30.00	
Gold (\$250 beyond a			3 280.00	
LIFE (\$100 per year			5 500.00	
Membership fees are due anr LIFE membership fees may be	=	_	ents of not less than \$10	0.00.
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO <b>GROV</b>	√ - US Currency	,		
Mail to: Margaret Rehwalt,	Treasurer,1999	0 SW Edy Ro	d, Sherwood,OR 971	L40

#### GROW Newsletter

The GROW newsletter is a quarterly publication. Receiving your GROW newsletter and other communications electronically as an Adobe pdf file will save GROW printing and mailing costs and YOU receive the newsletters immediately. Adobe Acrobat read is available as a free download at http://www.adobe.com/products

/acrobat/readstep2.html. You can also forward the electronic newsletter to friends and family as a way of inviting them to join GRHS and GROW. Email <a href="mailto:DrVJH@yahoo.com">DrVJH@yahoo.com</a> if you would like to receive the GROW newsletter in the future electronically.

All submitted materials should include a statement that gives permission for use in the newsletter. Pictures are

welcome as we have a scanner to digitize images and all output is done on a laser printer. Please provide a SASE for materials that need to be returned.

Ideas and suggestions for improvements to this newsletter should be addressed to the Editor at DrVJH@yahoo.com





Germans from Russia Heritage Society

GROW Chapter PO Box 4909 Sunriver, OR 97707-4909