

# GROW Newsletter

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

Volume 4 Issue 1

October-November-December 2004

## *Message from the President*

*By Roger Haas*

### *What an enjoyable summer we have had!*

On July 3, GROW members and friends met for a super picnic at the West Linn Willamette Park. The weather also was excellent for the dozen plus GROW families who attended the 2004 GRHS Convention in Bismarck in July!

Due to Roberta's health condition, we decided not to attend either the GRHS or the AHSGR Convention. I have seen pictures with Dr. Velma Jesser and Roy Schnaible parading our new Banner along with the other GRHS Chapter Representatives and their banners at the Opening Ceremonies. Thank you, Velma and Roy, for honoring us. Roy also went out of his way and assisted at Registration and Ilene volunteered with the *Kuchen*. Geraldine Gander did us proud by serving as the GROW Board representative to answer questions regarding GROW's hosting of the 2006 Convention. Bob Schauer helped with the Library, packing and setting up, as well as taking it down again. Bob Schuh, Wanda Hopkins, Valerie Ingram, Milo Bauder made presentations and assisted in the Library. Other GROW attendees of whom I am aware were: Joe Gander, Del & Donna Ussleman, Betty Thatcher, Margaret Freeman, Maryann Axtman, Shirley Nitschke, Lorraine Werner, Maxine and Clyde Daily, Dennis Levi, and Rudy and Agnes Wagemann. If others attended or if I don't have my story correct, let me know and we'll correct the details in our next Newsletter. I have heard very positive reports; all attendees were elated and indicated that they would repeat it again.

Our big news is that GROW will host the 2006 GRHS Convention. For more details for this exciting endeavor, see page 2.

And for information about our retiring and incoming GROW Newsletter Editors, also see page 3.

It's an exciting time for our GROW Chapter, and we look forward to strengthening bonds among our membership as well as building new friendships as we work together toward Convention 2006!



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### *Photo Credits*

Photos provided throughout this issue were provided by Maxine and Clyde Daily.

### *Correction*

GROW Newsletter, Volume 3, Issue 2 (January-February-March 2004) included an article titled "Migration to the Caucasus." The article incorrectly indicated that the author was Milo Bauder; however, the article should have indicated, "Written by Bonnie Anderson and Submitted by Milo Bauder."

### *2004 Events*

Add the dates of the Chapter and Board Meetings to be held during 2004 to your personal planners now.

Dates, times, locations - page 12

### *Are you easily confused?*

Is it "emigration" or "immigration"???

**Emigration** begins with "e" as in "exiting" a country  
**Immigration** begins with "i" as when coming "into" a country

**2004 Programs**  
**Convention Reports and "Show & Tell"**  
**September 26 at 2 p.m. (Arrive early please)**  
**Portland Airport Holiday Inn**  
**NE 82<sup>nd</sup> and Columbia Boulevard**

We will view convention meeting spaces and meet the Director of Sales & Catering as we plan for the 2006 GRHS Convention in Portland. The Library will be open at 1 p.m., along with your displays of "Show & Tell." Convention attendees will also share their experiences, and refreshments will be served.

**October 17**

**Honorary German Consulate Günther Hoffmann**

**2006 GRHS Convention**

With regard to GROW's invitation to hosting the GRHS Convention in 2006, the GRHS Board did vote in the Affirmative on July 22 and announced the same at the Convention to the Membership that the 2006 GRHS Convention site will be Portland, City of Roses. Subsequently, the GROW Convention Site Committee continued beyond their preliminary efforts and researched the accommodations. The Committee viewed several of the narrowed list of hotels for price, and meeting room space and then negotiated the terms. The members giving time and expertise were Geri Gander, Roger Haas, Bob Majhor, Bob Schauer, and Roy Schnaible. Thank you for a job well done! The contract has been signed with the Airport Holiday Inn for 21,772 sq. ft. of meeting space, including 6,860 sq. ft. for the Library. The meeting rooms can accommodate as many as eight simultaneous workshops. The dates are July 12-16, 2006.

Two years may seem a long time in the future, but people plan on seeing their sister, cousin, aunt, or others sometimes a year or more in advance, especially if they live 1,200 or more miles away. Most of the GRHS members live in North and South Dakota and coming to Oregon is almost like "Columbus discovering America," well, not quite. Some of those folks have never been out of those two states, like myself when I came to Oregon in 1953. GROW will give those Dakotans a special attraction to hop the plane, ride the train, or drive their cars for a week or two of celebration and, hopefully, relaxation.

GROW has its challenges cut out, but I believe the Chapter is up to the task. In fact, I want to express appreciation to six families who have accepted to be the Chairs for the major responsibilities namely: Maxine and Clyde Daily and Jan Prunier-Publicity; Jan Haberman-Registration; Roy and Ilene Schnaible-Food and Facilities; Lola Weber-Programs;

Sharon Voeller-Bookkeeper; and Ed Weber-Recorder/Tracker. These Chairs will be looking for a lot of help. Don't be bashful, and don't let them down; they need your assistance. Offer yourself to be on a list to help even if the Chairs can't see a need at the moment. No hands are too small, and many hands make EASY work. This is YOUR Convention and we all share in making all potential attendees welcome and happy for their participation.

On September 26, 2004, our Chapter meeting will be at the Portland Airport Holiday Inn, not at the Solid Rock Baptist Church as listed in the previous Newsletter. Please make note. We will be meeting at 2 p.m. in Salon A of the Ballroom. At 1 p.m., the Library will be open. Exhibit your "Show and Tell" items at that time and see other items on display before the meeting begins. Ed Tritcak, Sales Manager, will meet with us following our preliminaries and will show us the spacious meeting rooms and other facilities that will be available for the Convention.

We had a member offer the GROW 2006 GRHS Convention Committee some start-up money and that certainly is very thoughtful. We don't know exactly what our needs will be, but we know that the total will be approximately \$50,000. We will not be getting any registration dues until about April 2006. Therefore, money to order materials and purchase supplies and pay for other needs will have to be received far in advance and from somewhere??? This is a faith mission. If you would like to gift, donate, or give, please ask for a Tax Deductible receipt to file with your Form 1040 in the year you make your gift. GROW and GRHS are 501c3 non-profit tax deductible charitable societies.

Another item of help would be the suggestion for a theme as a guide to the Program Chair and the Publicity Committee. The earlier the better, as we already have Presenters for Workshops requesting to know our theme so that they can gear their thoughts around the Convention Theme.

Excitement grows as the Convention Committee begins this new adventure. Their goal is to make this 2006 Convention open not only to GRHS, but to extend invitations beyond its membership to all AHSGR members, GAS (German American Society), FEEFHS (Federation of East Europe Family History Society), and other groups. The plan is to have programs focusing on the global interests. This should be a time for Germans and amalgamated components to come together that have interests in our heritage and who support our mission.

## ***The Picnic***

**June 20, 2004**

A lovely, mild, sunny day made our picnic a delight, an especially meaningful day celebrating Father's Day with friends and family. Highlights included the unveiling of the new GROW banner, a "Show & Tell" of antique family heirlooms by Roger Haas, and good food and entertainment. Three private Portland



German Schools with different backgrounds presented opportunities and history from the Portland area, information new to most GROW members.

### **And the Winners!**

Barbara Heuser, Helen Majhor, Donna Ussleman. The gifts were donated by Ann and Glenn Gumeringer, Vivian Messenger, and Jan and Cliff Haberman. The name drawn for the Door Prize was Roger Haas; this gift was provided by Ilene and Roy Schnaible. Principal Blake Peters donated five specially designed card packets made by German American School students for raffle prizes.

### ***Vivian Messenger, Pianist***

Vivian provides entertainment regularly at GROW activities so we have asked that she tell us a little about her background. She writes: I was born in Billings, Montana. The family farm was located two miles west of Rapelje, Montana. My dad and his two sisters left Russia in 1991 with their parents and grandparents. They spent a year or two in North Dakota before moving to Montana. My mom played the piano, and I remember when I was very young "accompanying" her in my own way while she played a song. My early training began with my first grade teacher and continued for several years until she moved away. Then, I traveled to Billings (50 miles away) on Saturdays for lessons which continued through my senior year in high school.

I have played the piano for my hometown church services, a variety of soloists, Christmas programs, graduation ceremonies, recitals, and weddings. During my sophomore year at Cascade College, I had the opportunity to use my skills at a German-speaking church in Portland. I currently play the keyboard and piano at the church I'm attending.

After graduating from college, I purchased a piano while living with two roommates. We had great times

singing and playing. I met my husband-to-be while accompanying the children in the junior department at church and then when he sang for special services. At times, in our home he would play the organ while I tickled the ivories. I've thoroughly enjoyed playing the piano for the GROW Chapter and getting to know the German songs.

***Thank you for sharing your talent, Vivian!***

### ***Welcome To Our New Newsletter Editor Janice Prunier***

Janice is a graphic artist by vocation and has served as a Newsletter Editor for her church and other groups for many years. She has been the creator of the GROW Outdoor and Inside Banners. Recently, she has been our co-web mistress and has served GROW in other ways. By the way, Janice is the daughter of Clyde & Maxine Daily. Maxine is one of GROW Directors.

Welcome Jan! We will be sending our Newsletter articles for future issues electronically to Janice (see page 11 for contact information).

### ***Thank You, Dr. Velma Jesser!!!***

Velma Jesser has been a member of GROW since the formation of the Chapter, August 18, 2001. She also has served admirably as our Newsletter Editor for this same period of time. We can't begin to thank her enough for the excellent quality and superb efforts for these past three years. She has become a very special friend, and it is difficult to let her go as our Newsletter Editor. Velma, however, is not forgetting us and has offered to make the GRHS Convention Registration booklet print-ready and be a Convention Presenter. Thank you, Velma, for being gracious and generous with your gifts and time.

Velma is a GRHS & AHSGR Life Member. The AHSGR President has also realized her many talents, and offered her the position of Editor of the AHSGR quarterly *Journal*; she accepted. As an area representative of District #7 for the AHSGR, she represents Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah, plus being Chair of the AHSGR Russian Archive Committee, Vice Chair of AHSGR Editorial/Publication Committee, and serving on the AHSGR By-Law and Folklore Committee. She has organized the New Mexico GRHS/AHSGR Chapter and who knows how many other commitments. We can understand the reason for her wanting to lighten her load. GROW is very grateful for your service; and, Velma, we look forward to your contributions in sundry ways in the future.

See "Thank You" from Velma, page 11

## *Ed's Corner*

My father, Jacob Weber, was born in Kassel, Glückstal Colonies, South Russia, November 1893. He immigrated to the United States in 1910 and went to Eureka, South Dakota, where he settled with a number of other immigrants from the Black Sea area of Russia. He later moved to Isabel, South Dakota, and again joined a number of German families from Russia. I was born in Isabel in 1924.

During World War II, I served in the US Army as a member of a Combat Engineer Battalion. At the close of hostilities in May 1945, my Engineer Battalion had its headquarters in Hildesheim, Germany. For a month after the war closed our Engineer Battalion was ordered to inventory factories and the slave labor camps associated with them. As soon as an inventory was completed, the Russian Army would have the machine tools crated and shipped to Russia. The same treaty that divided Germany into Allied Control areas gave the authority for this theft. Not only did the Russians want the machine tools, but they also expected the Allied Forces to send the former slave laborers and any former Russian citizens who might have escaped their control.

Part of our duties included patrolling the roads in the Hildesheim area, guarding against any guerilla activity by the defeated German Army. In our patrol area we did not witness guerilla action, but I did get a close look at the chaos caused by hordes of ex-slaves and bombed-out German citizens trying to find relatives or attempting to stay out of the control of Russians.

I have been reading "Lydia Schauer's Memoirs" in the last two GROW Newsletters and realized I was a witness to the events described by Lydia Schauer. Part of the area I assisted in patrolling included the area around Gifhorn, mentioned by Lydia Schauer as her temporary home after March 7, 1945. Gifhorn was in our patrol area.

You would see the displaced persons walking on the edge of the road. There would be men, women and children walking in groups of four to six people. They were dressed in what appeared to be several layers of clothes and carried everything they owned in backpacks or suitcases. When one group met another group they would always stop. Everyone had to shake hands and then sit down. One member of the group would light a cigarette, pass it around to every one present. The next step in the meeting would be getting out pictures and asking, "Have you seen this person? Where? When?"

The living conditions in the slave labor camps were deplorable. The barracks were of wood construction with tar paper roofs. There was no insulation; and even though the camps I saw were in central Germany where the winters can be cold, I didn't see any stoves to provide heat in the barracks. There were beds that consisted of wooden bunks, four high, about 6 feet long and 2 feet wide. No mattresses, pillows and often no blankets—the workers would sleep on the wood and often had to use a coat to cover up at night. If the workers had extra clothing, it would be used to wrap up their personal effects, a cup, a spoon, and their identity papers—the whole thing would accompany them in their bunk.

Because the Schauer family was German, I'm guessing that their treatment in Germany was only marginally better than the displaced slave laborers. The Russian government wanted all the former German soldiers sent back to Russia. Through UNRA (United Nations Relief Agency), the Russians wanted all the displaced people from Eastern Europe to be sent back through Russia. I visited a number of the labor camps, and I know that the wandering displaced persons would wander from one labor camp to another, always moving as far away from the Russian zone as possible.

In reading about the living quarters of the German Immigrants who arrived in Russia in response to Catherine the Great's invitation, the accommodations of the slave labor camps were luxurious. Our ancestors who came to North America from Russia and took up homesteads and then had to live in sod houses to prove up their claims also struggled with some very difficult circumstances.



That's it  
from Ed's Corner

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## *Favorite Web Sites*

All sites below begin with <http://www>.

### **GROW Chapter**

[grhs.org](http://grhs.org)

Click on *Chapters*, Look under *West Coast*

For changes/additions to GROW web site,

Debra Voeller at [debbily@earthlink.net](mailto:debbily@earthlink.net)

### **See images from the NDSU exhibit (until Jan 1, 2005) on German-Hungarians in western ND**

[lib.ndsu.nodak.edu/collections/  
exhibits/german\\_hung\\_wnd.php](http://lib.ndsu.nodak.edu/collections/exhibits/german_hung_wnd.php)

### **Newly revised Volga German web site**

[webbitt.com/volga/](http://webbitt.com/volga/)

**Lydia Schauer's Memoirs**  
**Part II—Immigration to the United States,**  
**Family Tree, and the Years Under the Communists**  
**Dated May 1, 1978**

*Note from the Editor: The beginning of Part I—Evacuation from Russia was published in GROW Newsletters Volume 3, Issues 3 and 4; this article in this issue concludes this story. The entire article, complete with footnotes, can be located at the GRHS website under VC Newsletter, Supplemental 11-3-Sup AC, dated: Nov 2003. Lydia's story continues . . . .*

## 2. USA Immigration

On September 28, 1951, our ship sailed from Bremerhaven. Our trip began at about four o'clock in the afternoon. We went to America on the *General Sturgess*, an army transporter; The voyage took 14 days. After 340 hours on the water, we landed at the port of New Orleans.

Louisiana was to be our new home. However, our sponsor died before we arrived so it was arranged that another family in Illinois was to take us in. We traveled by train twenty hours from New Orleans to Chicago. There we changed to another train that took us to Dixon, Illinois. Mrs. Hughes, our new sponsor, picked us up at the railway station on October 15, 1951. In preparation for our journey, Erwin learned a little English in night school. He made all of the introductions as Mrs. Hughes spoke no German.

On her farm, she arranged a residence for our use. My husband worked as a farmer, milking cows and working on the farm machinery. The language was the most difficult thing at first. My husband was 48 years old; I was 43; Erwin, 21; Jakob, 17; and Oskar, 9. Erwin undertook work and lived with another farmer. There was not enough work for him at Mrs. Hughes' farm. It was difficult to be separated; we were unhappy and lonely in our isolation.

Erwin wanted to go back to Germany, but he first wanted to see something of America. He left the farm and traveled through many states until he reached Portland. Here he met his wife, Caroline Jones. She refused to go to Germany so he stayed in Vancouver until his death in December 1969. We remained on the farm until November 1953 and then left for Milwaukee, Wisconsin. There we found many German people and felt more at home.

In 1968 my husband retired so we also moved to Vancouver, Washington. It was our wish to be with our children. Our son Erwin had a kidney illness and had to be connected to a kidney machine. One and a half years after our arrival, on December 10, 1969, our son Erwin died at the age of 39. We are happy to be in

this rich country. In a letter, I thanked Senator Langer, who answered with his characteristic signature.

## 3. Our Relatives and Ancestors

My father was Johann Alexander (b.23 Sep 1883 in Klein Neudorf, d. 1914). In 1905 he married Katherina Herrman (b. 3 Sep 1884 in Neu-Glückstal). His parents, Jakob Alexander and Elisabeth Alexander (nee Mayer), were from Kassel. My grandfather came from "old" Neudorf and settled in Klein-Neudorf, one of the first settlers. Everything was swamp and standing water where they had built the town. Also, my husband's grandfather came from the same village, both (his and my grandparents) were about the same age. My 17-year-old great grandfather came from Württemberg and went on foot to Russia with his parents, and the old mother of the family was pulled in a hand wagon; this all in the year 1818.

*(Additional genealogical information is included in the continuation of this article and at the web site described at the beginning of this article.)*

In 1912, my grandfather bought 17.5 hectares of land in Neu-Berlin for 10,000 Rubel. The entire family went from Klein-Neudorf to Neu-Berlin. Upon his death in 1920, sons Jakob and Gustav, were left with 11 hectares fields, 1 hectare wild meadow, ½ hectare house garden, 3½ hectares pasture, 1 hectare vineyard, ½ hectare yard, and animals (3 horses, 4 cows, 3 pigs, 9 sheep, chickens, rabbits, etc.). Neu-Berlin lay 12 kilometers from the market and the city, 20 kilometers from the railway station.

## 4. The Years Under Stalin

It was then in the year 1941 that the Germans occupied our homelands. The German soldiers freed us from Communism. After eleven years, the farmer was again allowed to own land and vineyards under his name. Under Communism, we were allowed to possess nothing; everything was taken away. We had hardly any cattle left because the Communists had taken them away before the German army came. In the eleven years under Stalin's laws, we had to work hard and got very little to eat.

Once a day an old man who could no longer work brought our meal to the field where we worked with horse and wagon. The meal came on a *Weihwasserständer* (a stand in church that contains holy water). Everyone had to have their bowl and spoon ready to get their single portion. The soup was cooked with a few potatoes, clover seed, barley seed, and *Maisgritze* (feed corn for animals). The work began each morning at a steady pace; but if the work was not completed during the day, we had to stay

overnight and finish. The next day would begin with a new allocation of work. The women had to do the farm work because there were so few men available. Women had to work in the field until their 65<sup>th</sup> year.

Starting in 1930, the richer families were taken away. At night the Communists came and quietly took the man away first. The only person immediately aware of this was the woman while the children in the next bedroom were oblivious to all that happened. Several nights later, they took the woman away and then the older children, one after the other. The wailing of these small children cannot be described, children sat among the police with guns on the open vehicle and were then taken away. No one was allowed to open the window to see what was happening. So parents and children disappeared without a trace. Many families were secretly taken away. Under an assumed name, some were saved; but few succeeded this way. Later, in the German occupation, a couple of families were able to return to their houses and home.

In many German colonies, many people starved, especially in the villages near the large cities. The factory workers, who were driven by their needs, overcame the nearby farmers and took the last little bit of food away. We ourselves were weak with hunger and were hardly able to walk, but the work had to be done. All heavy work was accomplished by hand without machines. In this place of sadness, the little children also came home undernourished. At home one had nothing to eat; everything had been taken away. We were allowed no personal possessions, everything going to the state. They took the entire harvest away, and it was never enough. They would say, "You did not work hard enough." Our reward remained in the earth.

After the harvest, it was not permitted to gather the remaining ears of corn left in the field. They said, "You hid it there." We had to satisfy our greatest hunger in the harvest. While doing the hardest work, we secretly took an ear at work and ate the seeds. After one day harvesting potatoes, we had to go through an inspection. Two men searched us for stolen potatoes. The punishment was for one potato, one year prison; for two, two years; etc.

When the collective farming began in 1930, our first son was born. Our child could not eat the grass that we found in the valley nor was he able to digest grape seeds. Our child cried in hunger and got a thick belly. It was my mother's job to cook the meals for farmers. She took our child with her to work, although this was not permitted so she hid him behind a door. Secretly,

she gave him something to eat; he was in good hands. My mother lived 35 kilometers from us so we were not able to see our son for one year. In a time of even greater need, the year 1934, our second son was born.

While my husband worked in the field, he would scratch away (hide in the dirt) a little wheat. While everyone slept during the night, including our children, we both set off, trembling with a beating heart. No one was able to see us. Behind our yard, there was a hill over a flat stream which we crawled up to survey the entire village. We ran down the mountain to the hiding place and took wheat and crept home. Our children were still sleeping, and father looked in all directions to make sure that no one had seen us. House inspections were made often to search for anything that might be stolen. In the cellar we hid the wheat by digging a hole, putting in straw, then the wheat on that, and then covering this with dirt. With my coffee mill, I ground up the wheat at night. Later my husband was able to bring home some corn and barley seed.

He built a mill out of a plow wheel and a tooth of a harrow on the seat of a chair. Together, we would scratch and process the seeds. We were very fearful; only by night were we able to eat. Every night we thought: Today we will be taken away. We were not well-to-do, much like our relatives, some who had already disappeared. If "they" found out that we had stolen our hard-earned bread, then it would be our turn.

Many people starved; in the winter they went to the next village begging, dying of hunger and cold. In the spring the snow melted, and the dead would be exposed to the light. The corpses fouled the air while the dogs and birds ate at them. With their wagons, the farmers had to bring the corpses to the cemetery. There the dead were shoveled into a deep hole. As neighbors to the cemetery, we were able to see this. Peter and Jasche, Kathy and Gerda, as well as our grandchildren—everything here that I write I do so to remember our origin and why we came to America.

At the beginning of my letter, I purposely never used my name, Lydia Schauer, born Alexander and also not the name of your father, Jakob Schauer, but rather always "I" and "my man." That way, you will better understand what this is about. Our forefathers came from Württemberg, Germany, and settled Klein-Neudorf, Ukraine, by the Black Sea.

My father, Johann Alexander, married my mother, Katharina Herrmann, in the year 1905. He came down

with tuberculosis; no physician was able to stop the bleeding, and he died September 1914. He left behind his wife and five children; I was the oldest at 6 years. Alwine, the last child, died four years later from an ear infection. My father also had a sister, Magdalena. They were the children of the second marriage of my grandfather, Jakob Alexander and Elisabeth (nee Maier) from Kassel. His three half-siblings were from the first marriage: Jakob Alexander, Gottlieb Alexander, and Christine Neuhard (nee Alexander). The three emigrated to America before World War I. My mother was not permitted to continue to work our father's farm. His children were too little. A woman was not able to own land under the laws of the Russian czar.

After the death of my father, everything was auctioned: machines, horses, and whatever went along with a large farming operation. The money was set aside and put into an orphan's fund until our 21<sup>st</sup> year when each child would be allowed to take out part of father's money. In World War I, the savings banks were plundered (by the state), and we did not get a penny. As 7- and 8-year-old kids, we had to work for other people; we got 30 to 50 *Kopeken* a day (about 30-50 cents). This was heart wrenching for my poor mother; but at the time, the national laws allowed this to be so.

In World War II we lost everything again: Let us get away from these Russians! There I was in Neu-Berlin married to your father, Jakob Schauer. I was not able to leave with my mother and siblings in the evacuation (to Germany). Each village remained together as a group; everyone was registered, and it was established which village in Germany we were to settle in. So we came to Gifhorn near Hanover; however, my mother and siblings who were from Klein-Neudorf went in 1944 to Thuringia, which became part of the Russian-controlled Eastern Zone after the end of the war.

The people who were born in Ukraine, Russia, had to be brought back home. They were promised to be returned to their houses and property (*hof*). They were loaded into a cattle car and were transported to Siberia. That was in September 1945, and they (Lydia's relatives) eventually arrived at Krasnojarsk in January 1946. They were unloaded in the deepest snow in a forest where no one lived. More than half of the people who endured the four-month trip starved or froze while the others nourished themselves with dried berries, pine cone seeds, and bark.

From the transport to Siberia, our father's sister wrote us a letter. With their three children, Russians

promised them a trip home. Lydia quotes from her aunt's letter:

As we crossed the border of Germany and Poland, we all had to remove our good clothes and shoes. Out of a pile of old things, we were allowed to find clothes; no shoe would match any other. Then we were loaded into the cattle car, the door bolted and locked with no window to see where we were going. Every morning the train stopped in the open country. Corpses were hurled out and something for a meal thrown in, uncooked potatoes or yellow carrots, all the way until Siberia where we were unloaded in the snows of the deep forest. Many died in the cattle car or starved. Later in the forest while working at hard labor, thousands more froze or starved [to death].

The Russian-Germans were punished—twelve years of hard labor by the Communists. The men sawed down trees, and the women dragged the logs from the forest to the river, all without machines. For twelve years they were punished because they had left Russia and became German citizens.

After twelve years, they were permitted to leave, moving under the Cossacks, Mongols, and all kinds of races to settle in Karaganda. The people (in the town of Karaganda) were told, "These white ones who just came, they are dangerous criminals from prison; do not let them into your houses." My mother went from door to door and begged so she would not go hungry. Some people gave something; others showed her a stick. She got weaker and could no longer walk. She died of pneumonia in January 1959. My mother lived with my brother, Jakob, and his wife, Alma (nee Wahl) with their eight children; they all went hungry. One boy died, but seven sons and my brother and his wife survived this time and still live in Karaganda..

Emigration to Germany was denied to them; the Russians needed the boys as soldiers. Young men are taken in and obligated to serve for four years and remain in the country. For another five years, my sister, Melita Kammerer (nee Alexander) and her husband, Wilhelm, came back to Germany in 1974 with their three children: Oskar, Walter, and Lillia Gerth (nee Kammerer), all with their spouses and their children.

My husband's siblings suffered the same problems after the war; at that time my husband had five surviving sisters and a brother. Katharina died of cancer in Siberia; Christine and Marie starved in

Siberia; Pauline died of a heart illness also in Siberia. However, Emma now lives in Schleswig, Holstein, Germany. She and her family remained [in Germany after the war] and were spared the abduction to Siberia. Brother Gustav lives since 1973 in Villingen, Germany.

Gustav was in the German army and was released from Russian captivity and “let free” to live in Siberia for ten years. His wife was also displaced from Russia and then from East Germany to Siberia, and they met there again. They lived in Novosibirsk with two sons until 1973. Many of our relatives lived in Novosibirsk as well as my brother’s wife, Emma, and their two sons, Oskar and Edmund; a son died on the transport to Siberia. My brother Alfred died in the hospital in Thuringia of lung illness. As a former German soldier, he got little care and no medicine or food from the Russians. His wife was not allowed to remain with him. She and three sons were taken from him and then sent away [to Siberia]. Thus, he died in 1946 without any family member by his side.

That is everything briefly written so that you should know about your relatives that live in Russia, Germany, and America. The Alexanders in America and from my mother’s side, the Herrmanns, emigrated to Germany.

**Epilogue**  
**by Robert Schauer**  
**November 2003**

Lydia Schauer (nee Alexander), a German-Russian evacuee, died in the United States of America on November 14, 1990. Her husband, Jakob Schauer, preceded her in death the year before on August 21, 1989. Although her journey ended, I vow to continue my journey as long as I am able. My grandmother, simple as she was, taught me two things: one, remember the past; and two, record it for those who follow. I understand this like Lydia understood the Communists.

I am old enough to remember events like the assassination of JFK and the moonwalk—like most Americans; these events, like the recent terrorist attacks, I will remember always. But unlike most Americans, I also remember that day in late 1991. The newspaper, in the boldest of letters that are still imprinted into my mind, had the following headline:

**USSR: 1917-1991**  
**Soviet deputies sweep away empire**

For some deep-seated reason, I hung onto my copy of this paper. When I saw that headline that morning, the first thing I thought of was my grandparents. How ironic that they had passed away only a short time before. All I could think of was that they deserved to see these bold letters. The regime that had caused so much pain to my family was history. I could not go to work and concentrate; instead, I went to the local coffee shop and stared at the paper. I doubt many Americans felt this way on that day.

In the past year, I have continued to record things in a newfound meaning and sense of my ancestors. With my parents, Oskar Alexander and his wife, I attended our first GRHS Convention in August 2003. When Oskar came visiting in the summer of 2003, I made sure to give him something, just as he had given me something the year before—the family tree on his mother’s side, whether he really wanted it or not. At the convention, I was happy to see that there are many like me, many cousins and fellow German-Russian descendants who live very close by. We are deeply indebted to the efforts of the volunteers from the GRHS, AHSGR, and the GCRA to capture and record the history of the German-Russians. Their efforts are worth so much more than the dollars spent on such activities.

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***Summer With the Habermans***  
***By Jan Haberman***

We were busy this summer having new windows installed throughout our home and building a covered deck for our Golden Years, a place to watch the birds and bees! Cliff’s baby half-brother, Ronnie Usinger, helped prepare and paint the house. Jan went to her 50<sup>th</sup> Class Reunion at Morton, Washington, August 7<sup>th</sup>, where half of the class attended out of a class of 32.

Jan and Cliff stayed the weekend with her 92-year-old mother, who still lives on the farm alone, doing the normal chores and keeping nice flower beds and a garden. The town of Kosmos is now under water from Tacoma Power & Light with a dam where Jan and family were raised. (Today the mailing address is Glenoma, 10 miles from Randle, going over the White Pass Highway to Yakima.) This little community is nestled between two mountains in a nice valley at the headwaters of the Cowlitz River. It has lots of fishing, some logging and farming, and many German settlers. The farm was Jan’s father’s dad’s place and where her father, Luther Dunaway, passed away while out petting the cows and checking fences. These activities brought many hours and memories of good times with friends and family—a good summer for 2004!



## **My First GRHS Convention Experience**

*By Maxine (Wetzel) Daily*

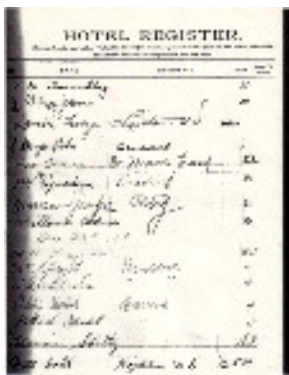
As GROW members, my husband and I were excited to go to the 2004 Convention in Bismarck. We also took the opportunity to tour the GRHS Headquarters building where I found my mother's name on one of the gold leaves of the beautiful gold leaf tree mural.



We spent many interesting hours in the Library and found information that I didn't know and a picture of my grandmother, Carolina (Roesler/Lutz) Weber. A picture of her taken when she was younger and married to my grandfather, John Lutz of Greenway, South Dakota, is the one used on the new GROW banner, along with a picture of John Lutz who died in 1933. After his death, she married John Weber at Eureka, South Dakota.



After living in Wishek, North Dakota, a few years, they bought the Central Hotel in Braddock, North Dakota, and owned it until they moved to West Linn, Oregon, in 1938. In the library we found a Braddock book with two pages of the hotel registration. Lawrence Welk registered as a guest there (third signature from bottom on second page of register below). At one time, he was courting my mother in the old barn dance days. Although we could not attend



all that was offered at the Convention, there is obviously a tremendous amount of information to be had and many interesting and informative persons to meet.

*Wise men talk because they have something to say;  
fools, because they have to say something. -Plato*

## **Other 2004 Convention News**

The Convention this year presented exciting opportunities to meet others interested in our German-Russian heritage and make new friends. The programs were packed with new and interesting material; the *Kuchen* tasted great, and the *Gemilichkeit* was abundant. Groups enjoyed sing-a-longs of old German songs and familiar favorites from yesteryear. GROW members attended this year, including the Dailys, the Ganders, the Hopkins, the Ingrams, Velma Jesser, Dennis Levi, the Schnaibles, Bob Schauer, the Schuhs, Betty Thatcher, the Wagemans, and Lorraine Werner. Roy Schnaible and Velma Jesser carried the new GROW banner in Opening Ceremonies. The Convention ended with the usual Memorial Service for those no longer with us, a moving and meaningful ceremony to an excellent Convention.



### **Family News**

See page 11 for details to submit material.

*We send GROW Wishes  
for Pain-Free Days  
and Better Health to . . .*

**Joe Gander**, recovering from a cancerous growth on his eyelid

**Roberta Haas**, who is preparing for her second back surgery

and

*Happy Anniversary to . . .*

**Joe and Geri Gander** on their 48th

**Roger and Roberta Haas** on their 49th



### **An Invitation**

#### **GAS Annual Heritage Ball**

The German American Society invites GROW members and friends to their Annual Heritage Ball at the Beaverton Greenwood Inn on October 23. The cost is \$35/person and formal invitations will be mailed in October. The Ball features a Canadian German Band, a raffle for two Lufthansa round-trip tickets (Winners must be present to win.), and other exciting events. For more information contact any of these:

Jane Radtke at (503) 518-8181

Norah (503) 775-1585

email arcenter1@qwest.net

email rahaas@haasfamily.us

## **GROW Board of Directors**

### **Roger Haas, President/Liaison**

8618 SE 36<sup>th</sup> Ave., Portland OR 97222  
(503) 659-8248 rahaas@haasfamily.us

### **Roy Schnaible, Vice President**

3801 Calaroga Dr., West Linn, OR 97068  
(503) 636-5541 gourmetir@aol.com

### **Edwin Weber, Secretary**

16660 SW Monterey Ln., King City, OR 97224  
(503) 639-4798 weberd@easystreet.com

### **Sharon Voeller, Treasurer**

17064 SE Wiley Way, Milwaukie, OR 97267  
(503) 659-2726 voellerp@worldstar.com

### **Maxine Daily**

454 NE 69<sup>th</sup> Ave., Portland, OR 97213-5504  
(503) 253-8388 cmdali@juno.com

### **Geraldine Gander**

14926 SE Lowell Lane, Sherwood, OR 97140-7014  
(503) 625-3070 neatfamily@verizon.net

### **Oscar Geiszler**

803 5<sup>th</sup> Ave., Oregon City, OR 97045  
(503) 656-1802 Oscarandlorraine@msn.com

### **Jan Haberman**

8110 SE Madison, Portland, OR 97215  
(503) 252-5480 jan\_cliff@juno.com

### **Robert Majhor**

23985 W. Baseline Rd., Hillsboro, OR 97123-6937  
(503) 648-5781 rgmajhor@pacifier.com

*For Board of Director meetings and activities, see page 12.*

## **Help GROW At No Cost To You!**

**Electronic Newsletters** save GROW over \$40 per issue in postage. To receive your newsletter electronically, contact Jessica Mertz. (See Committee Chairs on this page.)

**Fundraisers Roy Schnaible** reports books, CDs, and other items are selling well at the Chapter meetings. Proceeds from raffles, facility use, badges and memberships also add to GROW funds. In addition, regular checks are being received from Albertson's Scan Cards; contact Roger Haas for your card if you don't already have one. **Oscar Geiszler** also sent in a case of empty inkjet and laser cartridges for an additional fundraiser. He can also help you receive approximately 50% discount on refilled cartridges. Bring your empty cartridges to chapter meetings or contact Oscar directly. (Contact information for Roy, Roger, and Oscar can be found above on this page.)

### **Need a GROW Name Badge?**

Name tags help you get to know other members at GROW activities and help others put your face with your name. Name badges in the shape of Oregon and Washington have your name and ancestral villages imprinted along with a clasp pin or neck rope (lanyard). At a cost of \$5, order a badge at the next meeting or contact:

**Leona Koth** at (503) 538-3447  
email: [LVKoth@msn.com](mailto:LVKoth@msn.com)

## **GROW Committee Chairs**

\*Member of Board of Directors (contact information in left column)

### **Calling**

\*Oscar Geiszler

### **Car Pooling**

\*Oscar Geiszler

Glenn Gumeringer (360) 573-6453

Bob Majhor (503) 648-5781

### **Hospitality/Greeting**

\*Jan Haberman

### **Collection/Research&Genealogical Assistance**

Bob Schauer (360) 687-1905 / bschaue@pacifier.com

### **Library**

Vivian Messenger (503) 574-2271 or cvmesseng@hotmail.com

Evelyn Gatlin, Glen Gumeringer at amggum@aol.com,

Carrie Lippincott, Alice Summers

### **Membership**

\*Geri Gander

### **Newsletter**

Jan Prunier, Editor (see page 11)

\*Sharon Voeller, Labeler

Alice Summers, Printing/Mailing

### **Programs**

(Vacant)

### **Refreshments**

Roberta Haas (503) 659-8248

Ilene Schnaible (503) 623-5529

Lorraine Geiszler, Ann Gumeringer, Helen Mahjor,  
and Rosalie Schachterle

### **Pictorial Scrapbook**

\*Maxine Daily

### **Special Interests/Obituaries**

\*Sharon Voeller

### **Sunshine Gals**

Amelia Lybarger (503) 648-1058 or at

655 SE Washington St., Hillsboro, OR 97123

### **Volunteer Coordinator**

Robert Mahjor (503) 648-5781 rgmajhor@pacifier.com

Dennis Levi (360) 699-4884

### **Web Site**

Bradlee/Jessica Mertz (503) 667-7953

solandmoon@hotmail.com or mertzb@onid.orst.edu

Debra Voeller (360) 897-9671 debra@voeller.us

## **The Sunshine Gal**

**The Sunshine Gal helps us show GROW cares!**

If you know of any illnesses, marriages, births, deaths, anniversaries, or other news about members, contact:



### **Amelia Lybarger**

(Contact information on page 10.)

You can help *The Sunshine Gals* save costs for GROW by donating or making computer greeting cards and/or contributing funds for postage.

## **Membership Report**

### **August 3, 2004**

126	Annual members
23	Life members
25	Associated members
<u>13</u>	Honorary members
187	Total members

*People in life who are the happiest,*

*Don't have the best of everything.*

*They make the best of everything they have.*



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

Year(s) of Membership \_\_\_\_\_ Circle appropriately: NEW RENEW

NAME (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Month (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ Anniversary Date (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name of my ancestral village(s) \_\_\_\_\_

My family surnames \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my remittance of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Membership fees are due annually on January 1.

**GROW NEWSLETTER/OPERATION DONATION minimum \$5**  
GRHS Membership \$40 GRHS LIFE (\$130 per year)

Names of adults in household desiring membership cards \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO **GROW** - US Currency  
Mail to: **Roger Haas, 8618 SE 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Portland, OR 97222**

***GROW Publication Information***

The GROW newsletter is a quarterly publication. Receiving your GROW newsletter and other communications electronically as an Adobe pdf file saves GROW printing and mailing costs, and you receive the newsletters immediately. (Adobe Acrobat Reader is available as a free download on the Internet at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.) You can also forward the electronic newsletter to friends and family as a way of introducing them to GRHS and to our GROW Chapter. To receive future GROW newsletters electronically if you are not already on the list, contact Jessica Mertz (see page 10) and help GROW's budget by doing so.

**Submission of Materials:** All materials should include a statement that gives permission for use in this newsletter. All contributions, including photos, are welcome; we can scan images and other graphics. Please provide a SASE for materials you would like returned. Send articles and other materials for publication, as well as ideas and suggestions for improvements, to the Editor, Janice Prunier at:

**1218 Pacific Avenue, Everett, WA 98201 or email [janiceprunier@verizon.net](mailto:janiceprunier@verizon.net) or (425) 258-1698**

*Let me know what you do/don't like - Your comments are appreciated!*

***The Next Newsletter . . .***

This is **your** newsletter; your contributions are what makes it yours; otherwise, it is just your Editor's newsletter. Please send short clips from something you've read, a German-Russian custom, an interesting website, a cartoon, a family photo/document, a question for other members, publicity for an upcoming event, genealogy tips and tricks, an article about your family, etc. Even if you think the material might not be relevant or too long or too short or too *whatever*, your Editor **edits!** Send anything you think might be appropriate.

The next quarterly newsletter will make **your** contributions the priority!  
**Annual GROW Newsletter Deadlines: September 1, December 1, March 1, June 1**

***A Special Thanks to GROW Members***



Thank you to all of you who have supported me in the production of your newsletter over the past many issues. You have been a wonderful group to know. As I have entered a new phase of my life, I am enjoying retirement and my new home in New Mexico. I know that most of you received an electronic copy of my newsletter for the new chapter established to combine AHSGR and GRHS as the New Mexico Chapter, and I hope that you enjoyed it. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you, even though that has always been from a distance geographically; let's not forget our members who cannot travel to meetings to participate. Through newsletters and personal correspondence that I receive from so many of you, let's continue to stay in touch as we remember our German-Russian heritage.

## 2004 Meeting Dates and Events

### Chapter Meeting Dates

Meetings begin at 2 p.m. **Solid Rock Baptist Church**

No meetings in July and August

September 26, 2004, Portland Airport Holiday Inn

October 17, 2004, Solid Rock Baptist Church

November 28, 2004, Solid Rock Baptist Church

No meeting in December 2004

*For program descriptions, see page 2*

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### Board Meeting Dates

Meetings begin at 1 p.m. **All members welcome!**

Libbie's Restaurant, 11056 SE Main St. in Milwaukie

No meetings in July and August

September 15, 2004

October 13, 2004

November 17, 2004

December 15, 2004

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### GROW Newsletter Deadlines

September 1, December 1, March 1, June 1

(See page 11 for submission details)

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### 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.

**From I-205 heading North** Take the Johnson Creek Blvd. Exit (#16) and stay 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.

**Solid Rock Baptist Church**

**8510 SE Battin Rd., Portland, Oregon**

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# Happy Fall!



**Germans from Russia Heritage Society**

**Dr. Velma Jesser, Editor**

**GROW Chapter**

**3133 Renaissance Loop SE**

**Rio Rancho, NM 87124**

