



## OVERHEARD

The evidence keeps adding up--in the early days a Volga German farmer could wish for no finer friend than his horse. This story comes to us from C.C. Schumacher:

"During the summer months Irv Jacobs would ride his horse to Pfeifer almost every day. This trip was made to the local pool hall, so Irv would tie the horse to the

hitching post while he went inside to play pool. One day Irv didn't feel well so he decided to stay home. The horse was so used to making the trip he left for the pool hall without Mr. Jacobs and several hours later returned back to the home place."



## FUTURE MEETINGS

**CHRISTMAS:** December 3, 2006  
**FASENACHT:** February 18, 2007  
**SPRING:** April 29, 2007  
**SUMMER PICNIC:** August 5, 2007

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, our annual fund-raising breakfast has come and gone for another year and I would like to say, "Thank you, Sunflower Chapter members, for all your hard work!" We sold all of the 500 tickets that were given to us. At the end of the morning 400 adult and 75 children tickets had been used. The final count on how much we made is still out, but I would say it was another successful fund-raiser for us! We have signed up for another year, and we will receive our tickets once again in August. This annual event helps us to provide many things for our chapter members without raising our local dues. The board has agreed once again to keep the local dues the same, and we can keep doing this as long as we have successful fund-raisers.

One new thing we added to the breakfast this year was a raffle, for which you will find a sheet of tickets along with this newsletter.

Betty, Leona, and I attended the international convention in Lincoln this past August and picked up many pointers for our convention in 2007. Because I had to leave unexpectedly, within 24 hours of arriving, Betty and Leona attended sessions I missed. Fortunately, though, I was able to attend the chapter presidents' meeting held on Wednesday afternoon. Many of the presidents shared their ideas concerning exchange of newsletters and programs and basically just keeping in touch. The group also decided to have the

headquarter district representatives contact the chapter presidents on a quarterly basis in order to keep Lincoln up to date with any comments, suggestions, or questions.

Upon arriving home, I set up an e-mail list serve to enable all chapter presidents to communicate all at once. A chapters' newsletter has also been in the works, and each chapter president will receive a copy to be kept informed of the activities of other chapters. Paul Heil, who gave the presentation, mentioned that the chapter by-laws are also being reviewed and will be updated in their wording.

As soon as the chapter presidents' meeting was over, we went right into the village coordinators' meeting. We learned that those who do research in the name of a village coordinator for the AHSGR can take a certain amount off their taxes for their work. We also discussed the fact that village coordinators need to be fulfilling a number of requests from national headquarters concerning the sharing of our information. Elizabeth Erina, archivist from Engels archives in Russia, was introduced to the group and made a brief statement. She mentioned that the archives is in the process of cataloguing all items in the collection. After she left the room, the attention was turned to Dr. Igor Pleve, who can be slow to answer AHSGR members' questions and requests. Dick Kraus, who handles Pleve's financial affairs in the United States, said that Pleve is currently working on about 100 family charts.

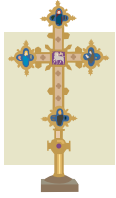
Please see the front-page article by Leonard Schoenberger for more items on the convention. With the 2006 international convention now behind us, we can set our sights on the Kansas Round-Up in October and the 2007 international convention to be held here in Hays in June.

If you have not sent in your registrations for the Round-Up, I highly encourage you to do so. We have some very interesting programs lined up, especially the banquet speech to be given by Jerry Schmidt from the Kansas City area. We were planning on showing a vintage film taken in the old Volga village of Norka, but it looks as if the film is still not ready. As soon as it is available, we will show this one-of-a-kind movie at a chapter meeting. To begin getting organized, those who are participating in the international convention in June will meet at the Kansas Round-Up sometime during the day.

It is also time to start thinking about renewing your membership. Now is the time to give Elmer Dreher your \$55 dues for 2007. This is going to be an exciting year for our chapter. Our membership is growing slowly but surely, and once again we received the Early Membership Renewal Award from headquarters this August.

At our October meeting we will have our annual banquet. This is our second main fund-raiser of the year. We are able to seat 90 people for this meal, so buy an extra ticket and invite a friend.

*(continued on page 6)*



## Lasset uns beten

October is Rosary Month for Catholics, so here are the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary in German.

1. Den du, O Jungfra, von dem Heiligen Geist empfangen hast.
2. Den du, O Jungfrau, zu Elizabeth getragen hast.
3. Den du, O Jungfrau, geboren hast.
4. Den du, O Jungfrau, im Tempel aufgeopfert hast.
5. Den du, O Jungfrau, im Tempel wiedergefunden hast.



WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

Vernon & Verna Befort  
 Jerald Braun (Life)  
 Alexia Brungardt  
 Jim Glassman  
 Darrell Keberlein  
 Robert L. Pfeifer  
 Norma J. Ruder  
 Fr. Gilmary Tallman  
 Wesley & Ruan Windholz  
 Robert & Susan Wolf



## Tribute to Lawrence Weigel from his son

Part Six

*Lawrence Weigel Jr. wrote this biography as a gift to his father while Lawrence Sr. was still alive. In Part Five, published in the last issue, we learned of Lawrence's 1940 wedding to Elizabeth Rohleder in Victoria and the couple's honeymoon trip to Colorado. Then the war years came, along with the birth of the Weigels' first child, Carole Sue, and a new job for Lawrence at the Walker Air Base.*

**B**Y THEN, THE WEIGEL NEST HAD MOVED to East 17th Street, and I arrived on February 3, 1944. Mom and Dad were happy to have two little birds in the nest, a girl and a boy. Dad said, "We loved you very much. What more could we ask for? We did not have much money, but I had a job and two beautiful children and a wonderful wife. I was a millionaire."

Dad was not drafted into the Army because of his job at Walker and his family responsibilities with two children. But on April 1, 1945, he went to Fort Leavenworth for his pre-induction physical and received a restricted military duty classification because of a burst eardrum. The war ended before he was called up.

After the war, he returned to the experiment station job at his pre-war salary. Mom and Dad bought their first home in 1945 at 416 East 16th in Hays. They paid \$1800 with inheritance money Mom had received from her dad, Nicholas Rohleder.

The nest got bigger on March 28, 1946, when my sister Mary Louise was born. Once again, Dad expressed his gratitude for having three healthy children. He always measured the richness of his life by his family and

not in monetary terms. Someone once asked him if he had the desire to be as rich as his boss, and he said, "I'm richer than he is. I have three wonderful children and a good wife, and he has no children at all."

He left the experiment station and started working for H.J. Tholen in May of 1947. Dad wanted to learn the jewelry trade. He took courses in gematology, sold jewelry, and repaired clocks. When I was about five, I got lost about a block from Dad's store. I think Mom was window shopping, and I started following a woman that looked like her. A policeman saw me, and I told him that my dad works at Tholen Jewelry Store. A few minutes later, the cop delivered me to the store in the waiting arms of my parents. I bet there were some anxious moments during that little episode.

Dad continued his quest in the jewelry business and was about to take his final exam to become a registered jeweler with the American Gem Society. But he was offered a position to work for Ralph Hunter at Hunter Construction Company in Hays, and he accepted it.

During the next 30 years (1952-1982), he worked in the office and during that time was promoted to manager of

the ready-mix operation. He became widely respected as an expert on calculating and delivering concrete and material mix to builders and contractors in the area. In later years, Mr. Hunter was bought out by Allied, and Dad finished his career with them in the same position.

I was always amazed at my dad's math skills. He could figure extremely complicated formulas and provide the exact amount of concrete needed for a specific job. He was a whizz at math. He was always taking courses to better himself. He took a course in the College of Engineering at the University of Colorado, where he received a certificate in the concrete aggregate field. He even took a course in abstracting at one point in his life and passed the test to become a certified abstractor.

Dad received 5:30 a.m. phone calls at home during the summer months. Usually Mom answered because Dad was still sleeping. Dad would say, "Who is it?" Mom would say in her Rohleder dry sense of humor, "It's Iss Issy again. He's at a job site and wants some mud." This man would always call and say, "Hallo, dis iss Issy! Tell Lawrence I need some mutt."

--TO BE CONTINUED

## Kevin Rupp's Genealogy Update



Have all our members sent in their genealogy charts to Lincoln? Headquarters needs a completed genealogical chart from every member for their files. I will bring some charts with me to our next meeting, plus materials to help you fill these out. Then we can ship them all off in one package. If you have already done this, you need not make another chart.

### KATERINENSTADT

Our contact in Russia has begun the translation of the 1857 Katerinenstadt census and has started sending these by e-mail to me. I hope to have this project completed by the end of the year. Also, the 1850 census is still being compiled.

### LOUIS

Pleve has sent me the 1902, 1903, and 1904 marriages. If you are needing a marriage record from these dates, please contact me. Pleve has also begun to send family names for the 1893 family list book of Louis. We have a great number of Louis immigrants who settled late in Ellis County. So far Pleve has sent information for the families of FRANK and SPIES. QUINT and BOLLIG have been ordered and I hope will arrive before our meeting in October. I have also been in contact with a PINK family from Louis, who were deported to Siberia and finally returned to Germany. I hope to receive their story soon and will have Sister Alice Ann publish this in a forthcoming newsletter.

### KANSAS ROUND-UP

Don't miss out on the Kansas Round-Up on October 21. The Glenn Mueller Collection will be presented at the Kansas Round-Up by Dennis Zitterkopf. Glenn was a Kansas native, growing up in Sylvan Grove. His many years of family research were willed to AHSGR together with a generous monetary contribution. Sixteen used books in like-new condition from Glenn Mueller's private collection will be available for sale at discounted prices. Please come and purchase one for your personal library. Profits from the sale will be donated to the Kansas Round-Up.

# Kansas Round-Up of Chapters

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2006

HAYS HOLIDAY INN

Cooking Traditions

Fun

Raffle

REGISTRATION 8-9 AM  
OPENING ACTIVITIES 9 AM

MORNING PROGRAMS

LUNCH 11:30 AM

BINGO 12:45 PM

AFTERNOON PROGRAMS

BANQUET 6 PM

Music

Genealogy

Folklore

BANQUET SPEAKER:

JERRY SCHMIDT, "SURVIVORS: ONCE LOST, BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN"

MUSIC: WES WINDHOLZ

When making hotel reservations, be sure to mention  
"Kansas Round-Up of Chapters of the AHSGR."

Hays Holiday Inn: 1-888-465-4329

Room Rate: \$75 and Up

Registration Fee: Members \$10, Non-Members \$15

Lunch \$8

Banquet \$20

### NEW CENSUS LISTS

Brent Mai has just completed some new census lists that are now available from headquarters in Lincoln. He has finished the 1834 census records for Zug, Zurich, and Orlovskaya, just to name a few. The Hertels who settled in Munjor, Kansas, originated in the colony of Orlovskaya.

### OBERMUNJOUR

Pleve was gracious enough to send me a list of the 1834 heads of families for Obermunjour. This list provides some clues as to who was in the colony at the time. Here are the names, spelled the the same way as he has sent them: Baecker, Bebler, Befort, Biel, Bleit, Boes, Brehm, Bruhl, Conrad, Dawou, Dechant, Doerfler, Dreher, D(T)urban, Eckman, Ecksner, Engel, Fischer, Flach, Fleischmann, Geist, Giebler, Goebel (Gabel), Goehring, Graf, G(K)renzer, Heil, Hertel, Keberlein, Klaus, Koenig, Kohl, Kranewitter,

Kramer, Krapp, Kunz, Leideman, Leikam, Leiker, Ludwig, Mattern, Mener, Minich, Mueller, Muench, Neulist, Nuernberger, Pfannenstiel, Resch, Rohs, Rombach, Rumbach, Rupp, Schlotter, Schmidt, Schneider, Seip, Speher, Sperger, Stecklein, Stehle, Stuppert, Tuchmerer, Unrein, Waldschmidt, Walter, Weber, Weibrich, Wendler, and Zimmerman.

### INTERNET SITES

For further information on the Germans from Russia, try visiting the website [www.russianroots.ca](http://www.russianroots.ca).

If you know or suspect that any of your ancestors sailed into New York harbor in the years 1830-1892, you may be able to find them on ships' passenger lists posted at [www.castlegarden.org](http://www.castlegarden.org).

..... *a DVD  
is forever .....*

The Sunflower Chapter is pleased to offer for sale a re-mastered DVD of *Eine Hochzeit in Ellis County, 1881*. Originally produced in 1990 by Leona Wasinger Pfeifer, it captures the last performance of a mock Volga German wedding that enactors had begun doing in 1968. Many well-known Ellis Countians are visible in this DVD, including the late great Lawrence Weigel, Rupert Pfannenstiel, and Paul Werth. (The other performers are still with us but have gotten a little older.)



John and Marie Schumacher  
1881

*Eine Hochzeit in Ellis County, 1881* is available for \$25 per DVD, plus \$3 shipping.

If you are interested in owning it, please send your name, address, and check or money order payable to Sunflower Chapter to:

Sunflower Chapter  
2301 Canal Blvd  
Hays, KS 67601

Classic reissue by the great Volga German folklorist and storyteller

## New on CD, Weigel's 'Volga German Customs and Traditions'

The late Lawrence A. Weigel made this recording in 1976 to commemorate the centennial of the arrival of the first Volga German settlers in Ellis and Rush Counties. Lawrence traces the migration of our ancestors from Germany to Russia in 1763 and tells of the hardships they endured for a century along the Volga River before finding their freedom in America.



He demonstrates how folk songs became an integral part of the culture as he sings and plays his Hammond organ throughout his presentation. You'll hear songs about the way Volga German boys were drafted into the Russian army in 1874, migration songs, wedding songs, and an old fashioned *Hochzeit* tune played on his keyboard organ.

He continues with holiday and wedding traditions and concludes with stories about the impact of the folk medicine doctors. This is a CD for every family with Volga German roots. It can help preserve a priceless family cultural heritage for generations to come.

This CD has been made available by the Sunflower Chapter of the AHSGR and Larry Weigel, son of Lawrence Weigel. Proceeds will go to the Sunflower Chapter, of which Lawrence was an active member.

To order, send your name and address with a \$20 check or money order payable to Sunflower Chapter (cost includes postage and handling) to this address:

[Sunflower Chapter, 2301 Canal Blvd., Hays, KS 67601](mailto:SunflowerChapter@SunflowerChapter.org)

**AND STILL AVAILABLE**

**Weigel's 'Volga German Folk Humor' on CD**

To order, specify title and send \$18 to address at left.

**NEWS & MEDIA TIDBITS**

--Have you heard of Topeka's "Little Russia" district? According to the August 12 broadcast of SHPTV's *Sunflower Journeys*, this part of Topeka was settled in the early 1880s by Catholic Germans from Russia . From their homes in "Little Russia," the men daily walked across a railroad bridge to work in shops where locomotives and cars were manufactured for the Santa Fe Railroad.

Whether the new immigrant workforce attracted the shops or the shops, the new immigrants was a chicken-or-egg type of question, the program noted.

--Here are a few interesting headlines from old newspaper stories preserved on microfilm by the Kansas State Historical Society: "A Sturdy People: About the Russian Settlement in North Topeka" (Topeka Daily Capital, July 9, 1899); "How

Things Are in Little Russia: Looks Manners and Customs of Topeka's Slavs" (Topeka Daily Herald, June 21, 1902); and "Its Known as 'Little Russia' But There's Nothing Russian About Topeka Community" (Topeka Daily Capital, Nov. 12, 1950). In addition, the Topeka-based society has an intriguing little article preserved in a book of 1908 news clippings: "Half of Ellis County Money in Old Boots: Russian Farmers Noted for Paying Up and Saving."

**OCT. 8 GERMAN BANQUET RESERVATION FORM**

Please reserve for me \_\_\_\_ plates at \$8 a plate for the Sunflower Chapter German Banquet to be held at the old Munjor schoolhouse on Sunday, Oct. 8, 2006, at 12:30 p.m. Enclosed is my payment of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Clip and return this form to Kevin Rupp, 2301 Canal Blvd., Hays, KS 67601  
Please make all checks payable to Sunflower Chapter.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*(continued from page 2)*

Our program will be very educational and entertaining. Patty Nichols, Head of Special Collections/University Archivist from Fort Hays University, will give us a powerpoint presentation on the college's Ethnic Studies Collection. In case you are not familiar with this collection, here is your chance to find out about it. Many important Germans-from-Russia collections for Ellis County are housed here. It includes items such as letters from families who stayed in Russia, obituaries, genealogies, cassette tapes, interviews, photos and more. Another feature of our program will be Joe Erbert demonstrating the familiar music of our ancestors on the

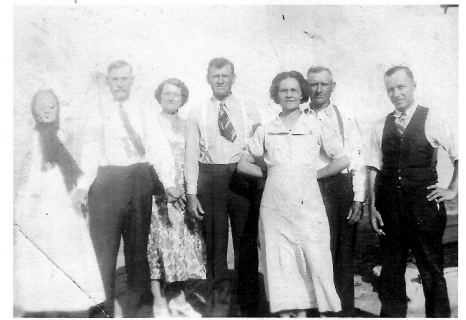
hammered dulcimer. Now is the time to bring guests and expose them to our society!

- 
- PLEASE SEND IN YOUR ANNUAL
- BANQUET RESERVATION FORMS
- BY SEPT. 30. WE WILL NOT BE
- SELLING ANY TICKETS AT THE
- DOOR.
- 

Sorry this message has been so long, but as I said before, these are exciting times for our chapter! Also, keep listing to 1400 AM on the third Wednesday of the month for our radio spot, which airs at 8:40 a.m.

See you Sunday, October 8!

--Kevin Rupp



**CAN YOU SOLVE A MYSTERY?**

Here is my story: my grandfather was Simon Unrein, born 1906, Ellis County, Kansas; Simon's father was John Unrein, born 1863, Russia; and John's father was Gerhardt Unrein, born 1839, Russia. As a young man, Simon moved from Kansas to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and stayed with family friends, the John Kreismans, who also had been from Kansas. Simon later married their daughter, Bertha. They moved to Racine, which is where I am, to raise their family.

Their children--Samuel (my father), Alexander, Eleanor, Kathleen, and Mary--all grew up in Racine. My father's sister, Kathleen, had a box of old photos that belonged to my grandfather and grandmother. As children they didn't know about these photos. Kathleen has no children, so she has passed them on to me. I sat with my father and his sisters, who tried to put names with as many faces as they could, but they had not been to Kansas for a long time. With some photos they did okay, but there were others, like this one, showing people they could not identify. I believe this is a photo of John Unrein and his family. I am learning, or trying to learn, more about the family every day. I'm hoping there is a cousin of my father's who might have the same photo and know the names.

Dawn Unrein/Stephan

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you know these people, please leave me a telephone message and I'll contact Dawn. Call 785-625-4814. Thanks.

## NEWS & MEDIA TIDBITS

-- In July the Russian government continued its crackdown on freedom of the press, which dates back to President Putin's ascent to power in 2000. Moscow shut down 60 stations that had been broadcasting newscasts from Voice of America and Radio Liberty/ Radio Free Europe. " In a country where the news media increasingly avoid controversial subjects, millions of Russians

had made the broadcasts a listening staple," noted an article published July 7 in The Moscow News, a Russian newspaper not yet under strict government control.

--August 19 brought the 15th anniversary of the attempted coup against Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev. A poll of 1,600 Russians conducted in July by the Levada Center found 13% of the respondents saying the coup plotters were in the right,

12% supporting Yeltsin and the democratic forces, and 52 % saying neither side was right. In answer to another question, 13 % said the events of that time were a victory for democracy; 36 percent, a tragedy; and 39 percent, "just another episode in the fight for power." (See "15 Years On: Russians Still Divided on 1991 Coup" at [www.mosnews.com](http://www.mosnews.com).)

## From the steppes to the plains

by Sister Alice Ann Pfeifer CSA

**H**AVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT ELSE WAS HAPPENING IN KANSAS during the late 1800s when our ancestors were entering and settling the state? A timeline compiled by Stephen Chinn and found online at [www.vlib.us/old\\_west/lineofftime.html](http://www.vlib.us/old_west/lineofftime.html) helps answer this question.

Just four years before the March 1876 founding of Liebenthal, the year 1872 was especially eventful. In Smith County, Dr. Brewster M. Higley wrote the words to "Home on the Range," destined to become the Kansas state song. Ellsworth replaced Abilene as the northern terminus for the shipping of cattle driven to Kansas by Texas cowboys. Wichita became known as the wild cowtown where "everything goes" after a branch of the Santa Fe Railroad opened there, and the usefulness of the old Santa Fe Trail ended when that same railroad company completed its line to the Colorado border.

In 1873 and 1874, German Mennonite settlers from Russia arrived in McPherson, Marion, Harvey, and Reno Counties, bringing with them the Turkey Red wheat that was to transform Kansas agriculture.

In March 1874 Kansas passed a law allowing military exemptions to persons objecting to service on religious grounds. That summer, a plague of grasshoppers so severely afflicted the state that devastated Kansas farmers required humanitarian aid from the Eastern states to face the upcoming winter.

By 1878, two years after the Volga Germans' arrival in Ellis and Rush Counties, the buffalo had disappeared from the Kansas plains and in fact were nearly extinct in the nation as a whole. Disappearing, too, from Kansas were roving bands of Indians. In 1878 a pitched battle with Indians happened for the last time on Kansas soil when Cheyenne warriors under the leadership of Chiefs Dull Knife and Little Wolf fought against US Calvary troops in Scott County. That fall, the last Indian raids on white settlers occurred in Decatur County.

In 1880, Kansas amended its constitution to forbid the manufacture, sale, and gift of all forms of liquor in the state. That same year Kansas native Carrie Nation began taking her temperance crusade to the rest of the USA and even to England.

In 1885, ten years after the Volga Germans began settling the state, the last cattle drive from Texas to Dodge City occurred. That same year, Kansas passed a law against the importation of cattle from Texas in an effort to stem the spread of a tick-borne illness commonly called "the Texas fever."

## STRANGE BUT TRUE....

Peter Schaffer, one of the founders of Liebenthal, Kansas, became the town's casket builder when the first deaths began occurring in the little community. One day in 1884, he built a new wooden coffin although no one in town was deathly ill or recently had died. "That one," he told friends and family, "will be mine." Although appearing to be in good health, a short time later he died from a ruptured appendix.

Had he been in pain without telling anyone? Did he have a premonition of his coming death? To this day no one knows for sure. This story came from Peter's granddaughters, the late Rosa (Schaffer) Schuckman of LaCrosse, Kansas, and the late Apollonia (Schaffer) Weber of Oakley, Kansas, in an interview with Sister Alice Ann Pfeifer CSA during June of 1981.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please contact Kevin Rupp (785-625-6638) or e-mail him ([krupp@ruraltel.net](mailto:krupp@ruraltel.net)) on or before October 8 if you can help us prepare for the Kansas Round-Up. Volunteers are needed in the following areas:

Genealogy  
Hospitality  
Registration  
Bingo  
Setting Up

See us at the Oct. 8 chapter meeting in Munjor for more information.

# IT'S TIME

Good news! This summer at the international AHSGR convention our chapter once again won an award for outstanding efforts in obtaining early renewals. Nothing could be easier than handing a check to our treasurer, Elmer Dreher, and having him take care of your local and national dues all at once.

Simply fill out this form and bring it, along with payment, to our next chapter meeting on October 8. Or, if you prefer, mail the completed form with dues now to:

Elmer Dreher  
1319 MacArthur Rd.  
Hays, KS 67601

**THANK  
YOU!**

## *for 2007 dues!*

**YES! Please renew my/our membership in the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (\$50) and the Sunflower Chapter (\$5).**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**For another \$55, please provide a gift membership for the person/couple listed below.**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**(Please make your check payable to SUNFLOWER CHAPTER.)**

### SUNFLOWER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

1703 Henry Drive, Apt. B  
Hays, KS 67601

e-mail: [rossiya@ruraltel.net](mailto:rossiya@ruraltel.net)  
website: [www.volgagerman.net](http://www.volgagerman.net)



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