

THE SAXON NEWS

Volksblatt

Celebrating over 100 years of Saxon Fraternalism

Published by
The Alliance
of Transylvanian Saxons
Home Office: 5323 Pearl Road
Cleveland, Ohio 44129-1503
Tel: (440) 842-8442

ATS Founded in 1902

August 1, 2025

Issue 16

BRANCH 30, YOUNGSTOWN

By Rosemarie Kascher

Upcoming events:

Wednesdays: Dinner and drawings.

Thursdays: Bar Bingo, resumed 7 p.m., Queen of Hearts drawing, Fish dinner, open to the public breakfast till 2 p.m., meeting.

Fridays: Fish dinner open to the public.

Sundays: Breakfast till 2 p.m., meeting held on second Sundays.

August 4: Officers meeting.

August 10: Branch meeting 2 p.m.

September 7: Pork/Kraut dinners resume.

September 14: General meeting.

September 21: Speck Fry.

I should like to express thanks to the participating performing groups at our North American Heimattag Celebration. What a delight to keep our traditions going. Thanks also to the ATS for their help and support. We are so fortunate for them.

Trash and Treasure Flea Market is open Mondays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fee to enter is minimal at \$5. Come and check out its treasures.

Visit our new Game-Billiards room, Dart Game and slot machines. Bring your friends and enjoy an evening.

Our thanks to the Heimattag Committee for a successful weekend, especially Mr. and Mrs. Mike Teutsch for their leadership.

Happy July!

BRANCH 1, CLEVELAND

By Robert Hanek

Cleveland Sachsenheim is proud to have the Saxon Dance Group from Herzogenaurach perform at our Oktoberfest/Sommerfest on August 16th. Music will be by Gemütlichkeit Clevelander Musikanten. Doors will open at 4 p.m. Please book in advance. Further information will be on Sachsenheim's website.

All Branch 1 members are needed to attend September's meeting. Many issues concerning our branch and our club will be discussed. Please plan to attend.

Our Christmas in July night was a fun event that luckily stayed dry. Thanks to our staff and volunteers and GCM for making it possible.

Grumpy's Clambake will be September 27th this year. Again, book your reservation early as this is a popular event.

Our Sausage sale will be on the 6 and 7th of December this year. If you are able to help, please let me or any Branch 1 member know so we can plan accordingly.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Denise Aeling Crawford

ATS Nat'l President



What a weekend! The 2025 North American Transylvanian Saxon Heimattag is now in the history books. What a great event. If you were not there, you definitely missed out! I want to thank the Officers and Members of the Youngstown Saxon Club for welcoming all of us to their clubhouse. The grounds looked great, the clubhouse shined, and the workers and bartenders all had a smile on their face all weekend. Thank you, also, to Margie Ziegler and the ATS Cultural Promotion Committee. Margie is the Chairperson, along with members Mike Bachinger, Barbara Spack, Mike Teutsch, and Monica Weber, who helped plan the weekend.

The event started on Friday evening with a "Back to the 70s" theme. Mother-daughter duo Erna and Heidi Weber definitely stole the show, although there were quite a few others dressed in 70's attire. Heidi stepped up as DJ all evening long, after a member of the band that was scheduled to play ended up in surgery that week. Thank you, Heidi! We even managed to have 16 former Jugendlager participants in attendance line up for a photo. I'm not calling anyone old, but I believe there were a few in the picture who were on the second-ever Jugendlager, back in the 70s – 1973 to be exact!

Saturday started with a delicious lunch. Then, church service began. Thank you to Father Joseph Rudjak, retired, from the Holy Apostles Parish in Youngstown for the scripture and sermon. Thank you also to the New Castle Männerchor for their choir hymns and the Youngstown Saxon Culture Group for the lovely church music. An Offering was collected during the service. All funds received have already been wired to the Saxon Relief Fund in Germany, who will dispense those funds as they see fit. Following the church service, preparation began for the Auf Marsch. Anyone dressed in traditional tracht was welcomed to join in. Following the flag procession, the Auf Marsch began. Geoffrey and Amanda from the Cleveland Saxon Dance Group always do a wonderful march, getting everyone going two by two and then four by four, as well as crisscrossing and weaving in and around the lines. It was a lot of fun. Again, thank you to the Youngstown Saxon Culture Group for playing the Aufmarsch and then the National Anthems.

The 800 Years of the Golden Charter presentation was a little different than we were hoping for. Our speaker from Transylvania could not get his trip approved to come to our event. We were informed about a week before he should have arrived. However, he was nice enough to give me some of his notes on the presentation. Between the brochure that I picked up in Transylvania last summer, his notes, and some

Continued on Page 3



We welcome the Siebenbürger Jugendlagergruppe Herzogenaurach

Performing
August 15 - Detroit
August 16 - Cleveland
August 20 - Chicago

TIMELY - DO NOT DELAY
MAILED TUESDAY, JULY 29, 2025

Attention Postmaster: Send all Changes of Address to:
The Alliance of Transylvanian Saxons
5323 Pearl Road Cleveland OH 44129-1503



ANNUAL
INTEREST YIELD
IS STILL

4.00%

On Current
Annuity and IRAs
issued July 1, 1996
and after

Schloss Horneck needs OUR help!



Schloss Horneck located in Gundelsheim, Germany is the international location for our Siebenbürger Sachsen to house Sachsen artifacts, books and other historical documents and records. It is important to our worldwide Sachsen community to help in the maintenance expenses of this historical facility that will preserve our Sachsen culture and heritage.

The Federation of Transylvanian Saxons requests donations to help in the funding of the facility. If you are interested in giving a donation, please complete the form below and send to the ATS Home Office, 5323 Pearl Road, Cleveland, OH 44129.

Please make your check payable to the ATS.

DONATION FOR SCHLOSS HORNECK

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zipcode _____

Amount Donated \$ _____

Please indicate if donation is in memory
or honor of someone

BRANCH 9, CHICAGO
By Rose-Marie Hauer

Just a reminder to all members there is no meeting August 4.

If you have not, please make your reservations and come join the Siebenbürger Sachsen Branch 9 as we welcome the Transylvanian Youth Dance Group Herzogenaurach traveling directly from Herzogenaurach, Germany. Wednesday, August 20, 2025 at the Donauschwaben Facility 625 Seegers Road, Des Plaines, IL

Dinner will be served at 5:00 p.m.

Dance performance at 6:30 p.m.

Advance tickets are \$30.00 per person which includes Buffet Dinner & Show - No refunds.

Make your reservation(s) on line: <https://forms.gle/NT-TaBkNLJJpcQTQ6A>.

Any questions contact Elfi at (847) 732-0939. Reservations are required by August 13. Make checks payable to: Transylvania Saxon Benefit Society. Payment will be collected at the door.

Please watch your email to sign up and volunteer for the German Day fundraiser on September 6, 7, 8, 2025.

Steuben Parade - September 7, at 2 p.m. Please contact President Thut if you march in the parade. Please consider marching; we need a large group.

Next meeting September 8, at 7 p.m.

All the best and have a great rest of the summer!

Alliance of Transylvanian Saxons
Home Office: 5323 Pearl Rd., Cleveland, Ohio 44129
Telephone: (440) 842-8442 FAX: 440-842-5442
E-mail: office@atsaxons.com Website: www.atsaxons.com

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ATS SAXON RELIEF FUND



We petition our Saxon fraternal community - members, branches, affiliate organizations, and friends to continue to support our Saxon Relief Program.

The need is still great and we ask our members and friends to continue to support our Saxon Relief Fund program with generous contributions.

Please send your contributions to our ATS office, 5323 Pearl Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44129. Write checks payable to the “ATS SAXON RELIEF FUND”. Thank you for your help!

☆☆ ☆☆

NOTE: Gift packages can be ordered for delivery to a specific relative or friend in Transylvania for a minimal cost of \$50.00. Send your check payable to the “ATS Saxon Relief Fund” and the **exact name and address** of the recipient to our ATS Office. Please print or type for clarity. The package contents include non-perishable items such as: Coffee, Milk, Cocoa, Sugar, Rice, Flour, Margarine, Soup, Chocolate, Cheese, Sausage, Yeast, etc.

If only I
were as
good as my
dog thinks
I am.



SECRETARIES TAKE NOTICE:

THE DEADLINE DATE FOR ARTICLES
IS WEDNESDAY - 12 NOON.

You may either
E-MAIL: saxonvolksblatt@aol.com
POSTAL MAIL:
Saxon News Volksblatt
29076 Fall River Dr
Westlake, OH 44145

Articles e-mailed will receive an e-mailed confirmation by Noon Thursday. If you did not receive a confirmation, please give us a call.

DEADLINE DATES FOR ARTICLES:

DEADLINE	ISSUE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2025	FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 2025
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2025	FRIDAY, AUGUST 29, 2025
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2025	FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025

Please have your articles in by 12 Noon.

Did you miss the deadline?

Have you emailed your article past 12 Noon?
Please call Hanz Hermann at (440) 525-0020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Cont'd from Page 1

other research, the presentation went on. I enjoyed the research into the Golden Charter and found many interesting tidbits of history related to it. As I have had a lot of people request a copy, you can read the presentation in this issue of the Volksblatt.

Next came the wonderful cultural performances. Thank you to all the performers! The Cleveland Saxon Dance Group started it off, having just returned the week before from their two-week tour in Austria and Germany. The New Castle Kinderchor was next. They just melt your heart with their beautiful singing. Not to be outdone by the kids, though, was the Männerchor and their striking powerful voices, singing beautiful songs as well. Then, our final performance of the afternoon was the Kitchener Transylvania Club Dancers. We sincerely thank them for traveling from Canada to participate in our Heimattag!

Next was dinner and a few greetings. We thank Krista Hesch, the Ladies Representative from the Alliance of Transylvanian Saxons in Canada for giving the greetings on behalf of the Canadians. We missed John Werner over the weekend. He had hip surgery earlier in the week and wasn't up to a bus ride and the weekend events so soon afterwards. I spoke with him on the phone during the weekend. He was home and already on the mend. We send him best wishes for

a speedy recovery! John, Krista did a great job on your behalf! Rainer Lehn, the Federation of Transylvanian Saxons Chairperson from Germany also sent greetings for a wonderful and successful Heimattag. He congratulated the ATS and especially the Cleveland Saxon Dance Group on their successful tour to Austria and Germany. He said the Saxons in Europe were thrilled by the dance group's performances. He stated that even though we are third, fourth or fifth generation Saxons in America, the group was proof that it is worth showing commitment to our cultural heritage.

The evening wrapped up with Fred Ziwich and friends playing for our dancing pleasure. We thank Fred for stepping up and filling in for our Saturday evening. The main performer in the band that was scheduled to play also ended up with surgery during the week and couldn't play for us. Fred, graciously, filled in. All in all, even with substitutions, the weekend was a great success. I believe everyone who attended had a great time!

Mark your long-range calendar for next year's North American Transylvanian Saxon Heimattag. It will be held July 10-12, 2026, in Aylmer, Canada. I'm quite sure that the ATS will schedule a bus trip for the weekend. Check your passport now to make sure it will still be valid this time next year!

Until next time...

Thank you to our German visitors who attended the North American Transylvanian Saxon Heimattag in Youngstown, Ohio.



Thomas and Monika Mueller visited the ATS Home Office earlier that week.



Georg & Diethild Tonsch gifted the ATS with two books from Tartlau, Transylvania.

2025 ATS SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

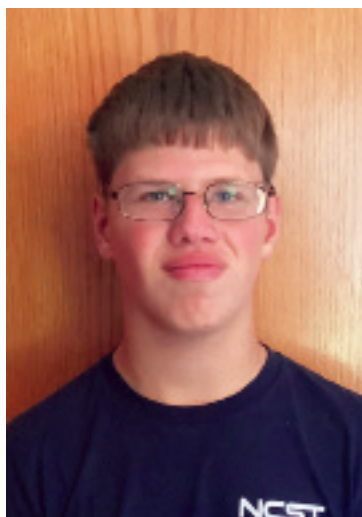
Following are scholarship recipients' academic, athletic and community achievements that were not included in the previous issue of the Volksblatt:

Andreas C. Angiolelli is going into his last semester at Slippery Rock University. His major is Homeland Security and Organizational Security, which will align him to work for the government on the federal side. He enjoys lifting weights, playing rugby at school. He coaches other students and friends in physical training and fitness and enjoys teaching what he knows. He is looking forward to wrapping up college as he knows great opportunities await.

Zachary D. Both is attending the New Castle School of Trades studying Construction. He is an active bowler with the TSBA. (His team made up of his dad and two brothers won the league championship this past season!) After



Andreas C. Angiolelli



Zachary D. Both

completing school, he plans on eventually having his own landscape/construction company.

NOTES OF THANKS

The following excerpts are taken from notes/letters/emails written to the ATS from our 2025 recipients of ATS Scholarships:

Thank you so much for selecting me to receive a scholarship to help me continue and pursue my academic goals, as it is much appreciated.

Andreas C. Angiolelli

Thank you so much for selecting me as the recipient of the Vocational and Trade School scholarship. I really want to thank you for this great opportunity you are giving me in helping me go to the trade school. This helps cover the cost of finishing my construction program.

Zachary D. Both

**WE HAVE A RICH AND COLORFUL
HISTORY AND HERITAGE!
WE NEED YOUR HELP TO KEEP IT ALIVE!
BECOME A PROUD AND ACTIVE MEMBER!**



**Come join the Siebenbürger Sachsen
as we welcome the
Transylvanian Youth Dance Group Herzogenaurach**



Traveling directly from Herzogenaurach, Germany and touring the USA.

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

Donauschwaben Facility 625 Seegers Road, Des Plaines, IL
Dinner will be served at 5:00pm

Dance performance at 6:30 pm

Advance tickets are \$30.00 per person which includes
Buffet Dinner & Show- No refunds

**Make your reservation(s) on line:
<https://forms.gle/NTTaBkNLJJpcQTQ6A>
Any questions contact Elfi at 847-732-0939
Reservations required by August 13.**

Make checks payable to: Transylvania Saxon Benefit Society

FRATERNAL CALENDAR

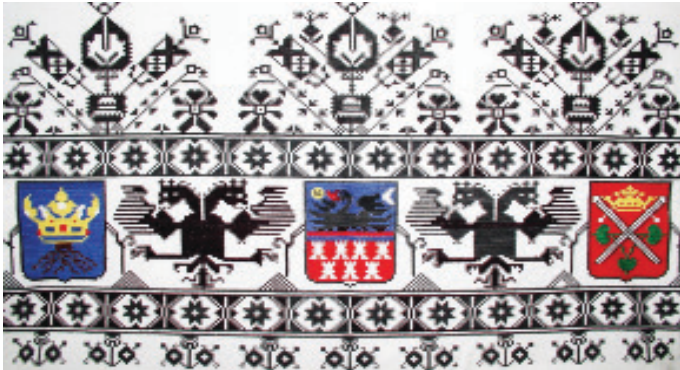
YOUNGSTOWN
SAXON RETIREES
By Ro Dundon

NATIONAL EVENTS

October 18 - 19, 2025
ATS Open Bowling Tournament
Host: Merrillville, IN
July 10 - 12, 2026
North American Transylvanian Saxon Heimattag
Aylmer, Ontario Canada

LOCAL EVENTS

August 15, 2025
Detroit Br.37 Performance of the Youth Dance Group
from Herzogenaurach Germany
American Polish Century Club
August 16, 2025
Cleveland Sachsenheim Sommer Oktoberfest
with Performance of the Youth Dance Group
from Herzogenaurach Germany
August 17, 2025
Cleveland East Br. 33 Annual Picnic
Penitentiary Glen
August 20, 2025
Chicago Br. 9 Performance of the Youth Dance Group
from Herzogenaurach Germany
Donauschwaben Club, Des Plaines
September 7, 2025
Youngstown Saxon Club Pork/Kraut Dinner
September 21, 2025
Youngstown Saxon Club Speck Fry
September 27, 2025
Cleveland Sachsenheim Clambake
October 15, 2025
Cleveland Sachsenheim Lagerfest
October 24, 2025
Cleveland Sachsenheim Children’s Halloween Party
November 9, 2025
Cleveland Sachsenheim Veterans’ Day Dinner
November 19, 2025
Cleveland Sachsenheim Tree Trimming
December 5-6, 2025
Cleveland Sachsenheim Sausage Making / Sale
December 13, 2025
Cleveland Sachsenheim
Children’s Christmas Party
Krampus Fest
December 14, 2025
Chicago Br. 9 Christmas Party



Alliance of
Transylvanian Saxons



Marino’s Restaurant was the site for our group to meet on July 10th. It was a good get-together and as always great to be together.

Also making the day good was that Kay Ring was back with us. She looked wonderful and said she feels good. Her chauffeur was her daughter who is helping her out for now. Oh, the way here they stopped to pick-up Eileen. It was so good to see Eileen and know she is coming along. We are happy to see them with us and to meet Kay’s daughter.

The Club was spruced up in anticipation for the Heimattag weekend. We understand it was a great time for all… members and visitors. How wonderful to be in the midst of your “Brothers” and “Sisters”.

Family Day at Waldameer will be July 28th. That I am sure will be a really fun time.

During our meeting we discovered the next day would be Kay’s birthday. We didn’t sing but we all wished her a very happy birthday, and many more.

In the event things change regarding our next meeting, RoseMarie will get in touch with everyone. We will meet at Amen’s Restaurant in Girard. The time is 12:30 p.m.

Everyone keep your air conditioning on and beverage close at hand to prevent dehydration during these hot, hot days.

Until we meet again ….As usual….it’s RO

Laboratory can
detect cancer three
years earlier

A cutting-edge laboratory test can detect cancer years before diagnosis and potentially improve treatment outcomes, according to new research from Johns Hopkins University. A multi-cancer early detection laboratory test was able to detect genetic material from tumors in the bloodstream as far as three years before a conventional diagnosis. Lead study author Yuxuan Wang noted that cancers are usually much less advanced with very early detection and are more easily treated and cured.

SACHSENHEIM HALL
OKTOBERFEST 2025

Oktoberfest

7001 DENISON AVE CLEVELAND OHIO 44102

AUGUST 16TH | DOORS OPEN AT 5 PM

SACHSENHEIM HALL
LIVE MUSIC, DANCE PERFORMANCES,
GERMAN CUISINE, AND FUN
CONTESTS AWAIT AT OKTOBERFEST

\$5.00 COVER

Special performance by the
Jugendtanzgruppe
Herzogenaurach
from Germany

SACHSENHEIMHALL.COM

ASK YOUR DEPUTY HOW A CERTIFICATE OF
MEMBERSHIP IN THE ATS CAN HELP YOU TO SAVE!

The Transylvanian Saxons are pleased to host
“The Herzis” Transylvanian Youth Dance Group
Herzogenaurach



Join us for a wonderful evening of
Music and Gemütlichkeit.

When: Friday August 15th
Time: 6 – 10 pm
Where: American Polish Century Club
33204 Maple Lane Drive
Sterling Heights, MI 48312

Ticket Price: \$50.00 includes Dinner and Drinks
ATS Branch 37 Members Free

RSVP by August 1st to Debbie Ferguson 586-979-7857



Youngstown Saxon Club

**FLEA MARKET
NOW OPEN!**

**Mondays
8 a.m to 2 p.m.**



**Understanding salt:
Table, sea, and kosher**

In time out of mind, the earth was covered with oceans, and when the oceans receded they left behind huge deposits of salt.

In fact, we know salt has been part of the human experience since 6050 BC, according to Salt Works. In recorded history, salt was part of Chinese pharmacology by 2700 BC.

Today salt is mined from underground deposits -- the salt of seas from long ago.

Some salt, sea salt, is manufactured by evaporating salt water -- exactly the same process that occurred eons ago.

According to the Mayo Clinic, sea salt and table salt have exactly the same nutritional value. Chemists know all kinds of salt as sodium chloride.

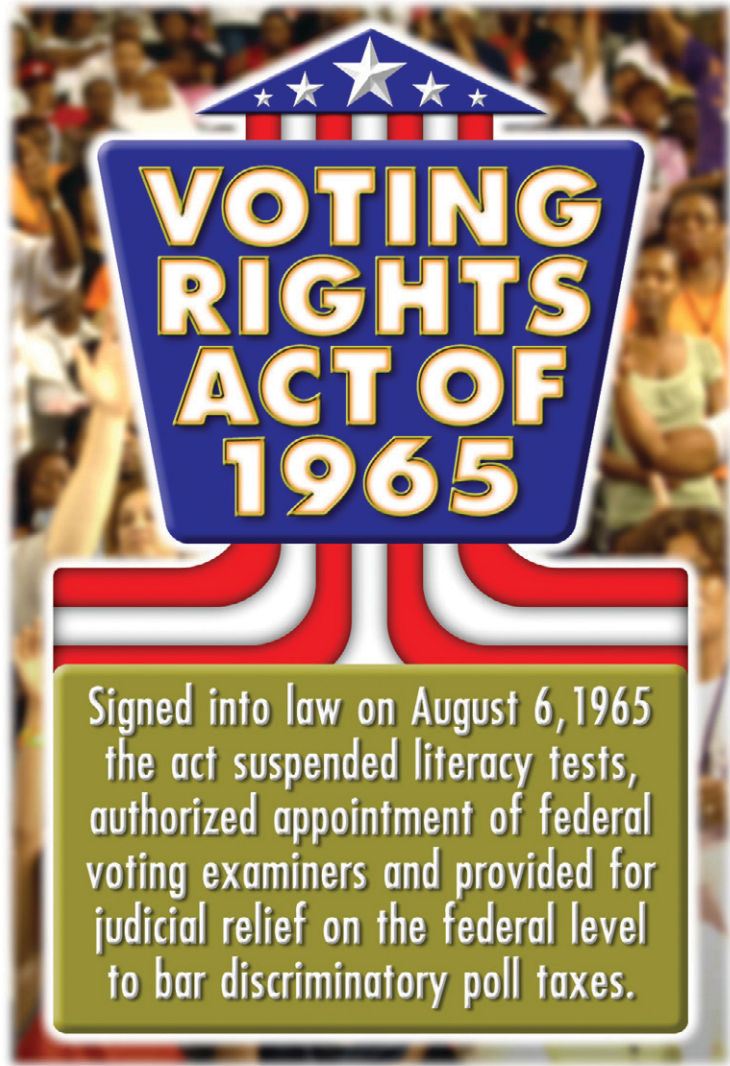
Sea salt usually contains

trace materials such as minerals and is usually coarser. Table salt is ground into fine grains and trace materials are removed.

You might have noticed another type of salt: Kosher salt. This is a salt with large flaky crystals, different from the fine grains of table salt. It does not contain anti-caking agents or iodine.

There are actually two kinds of kosher salt. The first is Kosher Style Salt, usually created through evaporation. The second is called Kosher Certified Salt is processed under religious supervision.

You'll find kosher salt is often called for in seasoning meats and vegetables, in pickling, and smoking of meats. You'll also find it around the glass rim on Margaritas.



BRANCH 33, CLEVELAND EAST
By Arline Krestel-Suts

Branch 33 Annual Picnic is Sunday August 17 at 1 p.m. at the Pavilion in Penitentiary Glen, Kirtland Ohio. Games start at 1:30 p.m. (lots of great fun!), dinner catered by Mission Bar-B-Que at 4 p.m. There is a children's activity park next to the Pavilion, and nice walking trails. We are hoping to host a Dance group from Germany at the picnic. Cost is \$5 for all members, \$10 for Guests. Arline Suts taking reservations (440) 867-6103.

We are delighted to welcome two new members, Phil and Laura Merkun, relatives of and sponsored by the Ginther Family. But I am sorry to report we lost a member; Ingeborg Mahn, age 97 passed away on July 11th. Sister Inge lived a full and blessed life with her husband of 55 years, Franz (deceased), 4 children, 9 grandchildren, and 8 great-grandchildren. Her life was rooted in family and faith. She cherished playing



Ingeborg Mahn

cards with friends, baking, crocheting, and watching goldfinches outside her window. Our sympathy and prayers to her family.

Our next business meeting will be Wednesday September 10th at Messiah Lutheran Church, Lyndhurst, starting with a party tray supper at 7 p.m. We will be planning our annual Clambake, scheduled for Saturday September 27th--so stay tuned to your Volksblatt for upcoming details on the Clambake.

BRANCH 27, NEW CASTLE
By Dolores Both

The days have been quite stressful this summer filled with 'rainy days and Mondays' for us all. However, we were happy to gather at Soni's Restaurant on July 10th for dinner and meeting and, most important, air conditioning! It sure felt good. President Judy Both opened the meeting leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance. All officers were present. There were 13 members and one future member, Amanda Hudak, present.

Minutes from the June meeting had been distributed by email and were approved at the meeting. Get well wishes are sent out to Joan Wertz who is ill and Mary Normington who recently had surgery. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Thinking of You cards will be mailed to them.

Regarding the merger, no meetings have been scheduled. Much planning was discussed for the Oktoberfest scheduled for September 27. We are happy to participate by having a basket raffle and a bake sale. We may also ask the Singers and Bowlers to donate baskets. We will be looking at dessert recipes in the Saxon Cookbook and asking our members to contribute desserts to

be sold. Volunteers will be needed for the bake sale and basket raffle tables. A list of times will be available at the August meeting. Please contact Judy (724-654-0573) or jboth1512@comcast.net if you cannot be present and you are willing to help. A sample of an apron for our workers will be brought to the August meeting for approval. We will also be selling Eintracht ornaments. All profits from the bake sale and basket raffle will be donated to Branch 25.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and we are looking for ways to support breast cancer patients. We will be collecting donations for Club Hope. One of the services they provide to patients is to distribute "Bags of Hope" filled with items to help patients during treatment. Branch members will receive a door prize ticket for every item donated. The door prize is sure to be something special and will be donated by Judy. If anyone can crochet, they are encouraged to make hats that are helpful in preventing heat loss as patients lose their hair. A list of needed items will be distributed via email when available.

Linda Stoops was the lucky



We remember our Sisters and Brothers who have departed this life in recent days. Our sincere sympathy is extended to the members of the bereaved families.

Elizabeth Paal
Age: 87

Died: March 9, 2025
Branch 27, New Castle, PA

Mary Ann Roth
Age: 94

Died: July 1, 2025
Branch 18, Salem, OH

Hermine K. Wolfe
Age: 93

Died: July 3, 2025
Branch 30, Youngstown, OH

Ingeborg H. Mahn
Age: 97

Died: July 11, 2025
Branch 33, Cleveland East, OH

Glorie A. Geisel
Age: 88

Died: July 12, 2025
Branch 27, New Castle, PA

CHURCHES



**St. Peter's
German and Saxon
Lutheran Church**

11423 Chicago Rd.
Warren, Michigan 48093
(586) 979-3850
stpeters_church@sbcglobal.net
www.stpeterswarren.org

10:00 Service

Nursery

Coffee following service

Senior Circle

door prize winner of a colorful set of storage containers. Our game of the night was Test Your Knowledge of the 4th of July. All 20 questions tested our knowledge and we relearned forgotten facts to appreciate what a great country we are fortunate to live in.

Mark your calendar: Next meeting August 7 at Soni's Restaurant 6:00 p.m.

Diploma Andreanum : 800 Years of the Golden Charter

(presented at the North American Transylvanian Saxon Heimattag, July 12, 2025, in Youngstown, Ohio)

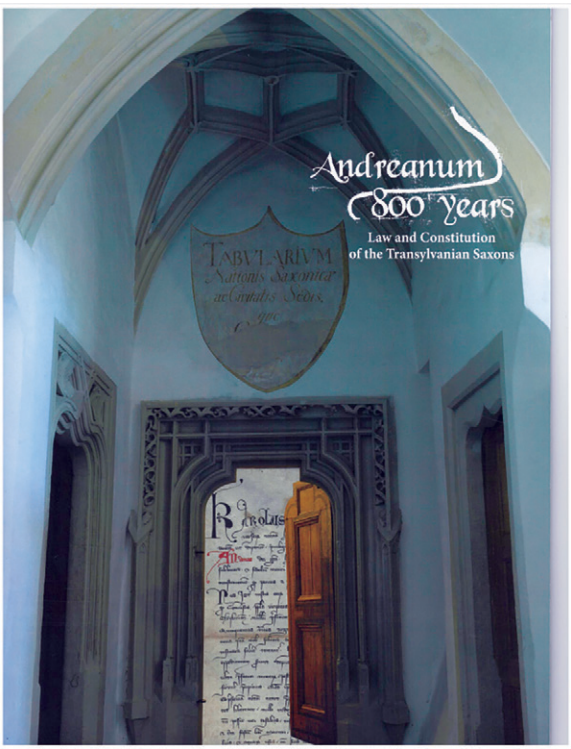
Everyone knows the story of how the Saxons moved from the regions around Germany to the Carpathian Mountains in Hungary at the request of King Geza II. These early settlers created homes, villages, and churches throughout the region that became known as Transylvania.

In the year 1224, King Andrew II of Hungary confirmed the rights of these early German settlers of Southern Transylvania in a document later known as the Andreanum or the Golden Charter. At the time, this was nothing unique. Documents like this one were very commonplace. However, the fact that this particular document lasted for centuries is what sets this one apart from the rest.

Our story starts in the High Middle Ages in the Danube-Carpathian region. Several regions of power struggled with each other. From the south, the Bulgarian empire exercised its dominion far into the interior of Transylvania. From the west, Hungarians had replaced the Great Moravian Empire, and after breaking off the westward expansion, pushed back across the Carpathians into the Transylvanian highlands. From the east, equestrian nomads were pushed further and further west by the peoples advancing from Asia. All these forces clashed around and in Transylvania and incorporated the small-scale formations and settlements of those already existing there. This struggle was less about settlement space and more about securing borders and securing assets, such as the Transylvanian salt deposits. In the long-term, the Hungarians were successful. Border fortifications and the inclusion of auxiliary people (local inhabitants, as well as allies from the land-grab period), primarily to secure the border and protect against the Bulgarians and the Cumans (Cumans being Turkish nomadic people).

So, after the foundation of the Kingdom of Hungary by King Stephen I around the year 1000, a systematic development of the country began. Noblemen from the German countries often participated in this process. Miners from Germany were called in to mine salt and precious metals. According to their mining law, all western settlers were soon stereotypically called *Saxones*, until they also adopted the term *Saxons* as their own designation. Initially settled sporadically in the northwest and southwest, it wasn't until the mid-12th century that these guest settlers or invitees were assigned contiguous territories by the crown in larger numbers in the south, then later in the southeast and north of Transylvania. The goal was to secure the southeastern flank of Transylvania and push back the Cumans threatening the kingdom from beyond the Carpathians.

King Andrew II of Hungary confirmed to these settlers the province of Hermannstadt, their rights already granted by his predecessors. Actually, this was “grandfathered” in - as King Andrew's grandfather was King Geza II. This document, from the end of 1224, named after the King Andreanum, is the most important legal document of the Germans of Transylvania, since all later grants of rights refer to it and are based on it. The rights granted applied without distinction to all the guest settlers or invitees, which were to form one people and judged only by their peers, and to be free to choose their judges



and pastors. No one was exempt from paying taxes or following the army, and except for the King and those appointed by him, no one from outside was allowed to judge them; they were safe from foreign jurisdiction. Market and trade freedoms were added. The legal territory was called *fundus regius* (King's ground), because it was granted by the king from his own stock. This *Andreanum* thus secured a comprehensive territorial autonomy for a clearly defined population. The king wanted to assure himself of the loyalty of these western settlers and their taxes, as he was in dire need of support in many places in the empire.

The term “Golden Charter” was used because it referred to the generosity of its content, not the way the charter was sealed.

The Charter contained the following provisions:

1. It stated “*unus sit populus*” meaning that the German settlers were to continue to form a single unit and stand under a single judge, the Saxon Nation. So, equality of rights and thus simple equality among the settlers and thus the exclusion of any aristocratic privileges.
2. Judges and civil servants were to be freely elected from within their own ranks, on their own responsibility and without any outside interference.
3. The only tax to be paid was 500 silver marks per year. Translated, that was no small

amount. One of the later kings of Hungary boasted about all the taxes that the Saxons paid when he was trying to court a bride from France.

4. The Settlers were to provide the king with 500 armed men in the event of conflicts within the kingdom (ex; a civil war). This was an essential provision, as the king had just become powerless within the kingdom due to a disagreement with the nobility. If the king marched on a foreign power, the Saxons need only provide 100 armed men.

5. The charter read: “They should freely elect their pastors and present the elected ones to the bishop.” Meaning they only had to present them, not that they needed to be confirmed. They should give the pastor the tithe and in all ecclesiastical matters, the Saxons should answer to their pastors according to the old customs.

6. The Transylvanian Saxons should only be judged according to their customary law and no other law.

The king also cedes the free use of the forests and waters to the Saxons “for rich and poor alike”. Once again, the principle of equality as the basis for the Transylvanian Saxon community coming through. Lastly, free and fair trade is granted throughout the kingdom.

In that early settlement phase, those settlers or invitees, built refuge castles as protection in case of threat, which were usually used by several villages. Stone fortifications followed in the towns from the 14th century onwards, while villages converted their churches into fortified churches from the 15th century onwards.

In the Saxon cities in the 13th and 14th centuries, an open and diversified guild system was established, which benefited for a long period of time from the steady influx on journeymen from the German lands. The guild charter of the Seven Cities of 1376 listed 19 different guilds and 25 different trades. In the 15th century, these invitees, mostly craftsman, strove for political participation, especially since they bore the largest burdens – mainly the maintenance of the city fortifications. They were finally included in the governing of the community.

The Kingdom of Hungary was destroyed by the Ottoman empire in 1526 and subsequently

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Diploma Andreanum : 800 Years of the Golden Charter

Cont'd from Page 6

divided up in 1541. Part went to the Hapsburg nation (Austria), the rest was now ruled by the Ottoman empire. Transylvania became a largely independent nation under Ottoman sovereignty for a good part of the 16th and 17th centuries.

As early as 1547, the Saxon Nation started implementing the Reformation of Martin Luther. The great Saxon Reformer, Johannes Honterus, was an instrumental part of bringing the Lutheran religion to our Saxon people. The teachings of Martin Luther were introduced in Hermannstadt. It spread quickly to other towns, but took a firm hold in Kronstadt, where Honterus was from. He had traveled, studying and teaching, in different places, but returned home to Kronstadt with a gift: the first printing press ever to enter the country. He changed the whole education system in Transylvania. He brought in teachers, taught them how to teach, and wrote and printed his own schoolbooks. He introduced the “language of the Bible” meaning high German into the schools. Soon young and old alike were reading these books. Other Saxon cities followed suit with the Lutheran faith.

Trading, which the Saxon Nation was known for, suffered greatly due to the constant Austrian and Ottoman military campaigns. Immigration from the German lands into Transylvania also decreased sharply. All this affected the wealthier towns.

In 1690, Transylvania became part of the Hapsburg dynasty, under Austrian rule. The Transylvanian Saxons retained their freedoms - the only country in the monarchy with guaranteed religious freedom. Their strict adherence to old legal titles delayed an urgently needed modernization of the economy and society until the 19th century. For the Saxon Nation, the old freedoms seemed necessary for survival, as it increasingly fell behind demographically and economically from the 18th century onward. The number of Romanians grew rapidly even in its own territory; and trade was lost to other groups. A change in the concept of nation to a linguistic group, a broad expansion of education and new forms of economy also brought a new perspective to the Saxons from the middle of the 19th century. In 1863 and 1864, there was a last attempt to adapt the constitution of Transylvania into a reality; to establish the Romanians as an estate and recognize the two. However, the policies of the Hungarian elites put an end to this hope and forced a dualistic form of government in the “Compromise” with Austria in 1867. As a result, Transylvania was dissolved as a country and incorporated into Hungary, the self-government of the Saxons and the Szeklers was eliminated, and their territories were assigned to counties.

The Transylvanian Saxons, now calling themselves a linguistic group, reacted to this loss of political independence with the following:

1. Effective political representation in the Hungarian Parliament.
2. The establishment of a Lutheran “Volk-skirche” or the People’s Church.
3. Massive economic reforms.
4. The expansion of educational institutions.
5. A differentiated system of clubs and associations.



The idea of a self-governing Saxon Territory, however, remained alive and was included in a list of demands to the Romanian state during the transition of Transylvania to Greater Romania in 1918/1919. The last remnants of the Foundation Sachsische Nationsuniversitat, formed after 1876 and owning mainly forest land and real estate, were dissolved in 1937 and divided between the Lutheran and Romanian-Orthodox churches.

Thus, after more than 700 years, the foundation created in 1224 ceased to exist institutionally as well.

The original charter or Diploma Andreanum from the year 1224 was destroyed. However, King Charles I Robert re-wrote it – upholding the original rights and freedoms in the year 1317. This copy from 1317 was preserved over the years in the National Archives at the Old Town Hall in Hermannstadt. Today, it is in the Sibiu/Hermannstadt State Archives. It was on display in Hermannstadt in August 2024, for the 800th Anniversary celebration of the Charter, where I was honored with the privilege to see it and take photos of it during the Sachsentreffen.

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- Notes from Thomas Sindilariu, Undersecretary of State, Department of Interethnic Relations of the Romanian Government.
- *Andreanum – 800 Years. Law and Constitution of the Transylvanian Saxons* (Trilingual exhibition pamphlet).
- *Saxons Through Seventeen Centuries* by Rev. John Foisel.

Denise A Crawford
President
Alliance of Transylvanian Saxons



Retirement planning on a budget

If you are going to retire comfortably in any of 16 states, you will probably need well over \$1 million, according to GOBankingRates. But, the good news is, it won’t be so expensive in other states.

The most expensive states to retire in are California (\$1.4 million), Massachusetts (\$1.6 million), and Hawaii (\$2 million). Other states that require a big hunk of investments: Arizona, New Jersey, Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Oregon, Maryland, Vermont, New Hampshire, Washington, and Alaska.

If you are worried about affording retirement, consider moving out of expensive states. The most affordable states are West Virginia, Mississippi, and Oklahoma, according to GOBankingRates.

- Other moves to make early on in your life:
- Contribute to your 401(k) or IRA every single month. Saving for 20 to 30 years can build a 401(k) to \$250,000-\$500,000 and support supplemental withdrawals of \$10,000-\$20,000, substantially adding to your income from Social Security.
 - Maintain a stable marriage with two incomes.
 - Build alternative sources of income, such as rental income.
 - Avoid debt, especially high-interest debt like credit cards.
 - Consult a financial advisor to help you tailor your specific needs.

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ASK YOUR DEPUTY HOW
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... AND TO PARTICIPATE!
BE AN ACTIVE MEMBER**

Cleveland Saxon Dance Group Cultural Exchange Tour of Austria and Germany

Wow, it's hard to believe it's already been eighteen months since we started this adventure! When we found out we'd be representing the Alliance of Transylvania Saxons at this year's Cultural Exchange, we got right to work—planning, practicing, and getting excited for what was ahead. Every single Friday night for a year and a half, our group met up to practice, and when fall rolled around, we even added Sunday afternoons to the mix. People gave up all sorts of things—family time, events with friends, even vacations—just so we could be ready for this tour. Saying “yes” to the group over and over really brought us together. Each practice wasn't just about learning the dances; it was about building a team and getting ready for an unforgettable trip.

Looking back on our journey, it's remarkable how a small idea—uniting friends and families across continents through dance and heritage—can transform into an adventure filled with unforgettable moments. From the earliest planning stages, anticipation ran high: countless hours of rehearsals, group fundraisers, and community gatherings built both excitement and camaraderie. For months, we exchanged messages about Tracht fittings, travel logistics, and the prospect of reconnecting with old friends and meeting new faces abroad. Expectations mingled with nerves as departure day drew near, and the sense of representing our shared culture grew ever stronger.

It's been only three weeks since we got back from Europe, and I'm honestly still in awe of our group. The group really showed up—not just for the Cleveland Saxon Dance group but for the Alliance of Transylvanian Saxons too. The whole trip was a whirlwind: busy, tiring, sometimes stressful, and definitely hot! Even so, everyone kept giving it their all, and it really paid off. We got a ton of great feedback at every performance and event, and everyone should feel proud of what they brought to this experience. Our group is a great example of what family and community are all about.

I was fortunate enough to participate in this exchange and a similar one twice before, with the last being over 18 years ago. I think we can ALL agree that this tour in your mid 20s is ALOT different then it is in your 40's and 50's!

Being able to share this experience with my husband and children was even more exciting, so I am grateful for their commitment to our group and heritage. I did prepare them over the last 18 months that this was not our ordinary trip, and to prepare for more of a “work” trip then relaxing vacation. To give an example of what that meant, I'll explain our first day in Austria. Much of the group flew out of Cleveland to Chicago, and then Vienna on Tuesday June 17th, arriving in Vienna Wednesday morning at 8:00 a.m. We promptly gathered all our luggage and met up with our Vienna hosts who transported us to the hotel we'd be staying at for the next two evenings. Once checked into two rooms (everyone else's weren't ready yet), we dropped off our luggage and headed on a day of sightseeing. We were granted a special surprise, one of the hottest days in Vienna! We saw so many beautiful castles, churches, and buildings, and it was a wonderful start to our trip. The group had a quick bathroom break, a short time to walk around the city to grab a quick treat or souvenir and then decided to use a bit of time before our evening at Haus der Heimat to show and change. We then walked a short distance to the event, (Yes in Tracht...yes it was still HOT!) and enjoyed a wonderful evening of dinner and dancing. The group performed two sets of dances which were just over an hour with a 10 minute break in between sets. Now, if you remember, I mentioned the exhaustion above. Nothing prepares you more



Johanna German, Cleveland Br. 4 member, with the group in Augsburg



for a tour than your first day of dancing, going on 40+ hours of no sleep! Yet somehow, they didn't stop!! After dancing our program, they continued to join in with other dances the groups in Vienna were showing and still didn't stop... dancing the night away. And yes, the walk back to the hotel was MUCH slower than the walk to the club.

After a quick sleep, it was another day of sightseeing, with a quick trip to a local amusement park in the afternoon. Some of the kids enjoyed riding rides, while some of us adults enjoyed a drink and snacks. We even found out later that Jameson decided to try one of the tallest drop rides and had to have one of the Austrian hosts join him. Fun was had by all!!! We ended the evening with a gorgeous night at a local winery where we enjoyed a wonderful dinner and delicious wines. We were sad to see the evening end and say goodbye to our Vienna hosts but had an early morning of packing up and heading out to our next destination.

Friday was another beautiful (yep still hot!) day of sightseeing in Wels with a lunch at Gösner Bräu followed by a quick trip to Kremsmünster Abbey for an amazing tour. Following the tour some of the group enjoyed swimming at a nearby pool, while the remainder of us enjoyed a winery tour and tasting at the Abbey. It was time once again to hop on our bus and travel to our next destination. We arrived later that evening in Traun to get together with the Traun group. Some may recall that their group joined us in Cleveland as part of the exchange two years ago, and we were fortunate enough to host them in our home for the day, so it was exciting to see many familiar faces. After an evening of catching up, it was off to our new host families' homes to settle in for two nights.

Saturday morning we started with a tour of Tal der Feitelmacher with a history in knife making followed by a lesson in making our own knife (Jameson has been whittling with his since he returned), followed by an amazing boat ride on an Alpine hut with a picnic lunch, and dancing on the deck! Beautiful afternoon. A quick trip back to our host families for a quick swim (for Jameson!) and changing into trachts for our evening performance. The night was full of socializing, dancing, and once again saying goodbye to our Traun friends. We are incredibly grateful to Manfred Schuller and his amazing groups for all they did to host us in Austria.

Sunday saw another morning start on the bus to our last stop in Austria. The Blasifest in Elixhausen. As opposed to their traditional time, the festival took place a week earlier - to showcase our arrival in Austria. After a family service in the Honterus Church and a warm welcome from Gerhard Alzner, chairman of the Neighbourhood Association, the festival community – led by the Elixhausen local band in its capacity as Transylvanian brass band – marched through the Sachsenheim settlement, with the Cleveland Saxon Dance Group right behind. We then enjoyed some conversation, and lunch, followed by two performances by our group. And not wanting to let Vienna have all the credit, they also provided us with one of the hottest days they have seen! Austria welcomed us with open arms, and we were sad to say our goodbyes to their beautiful country, but we had so much yet to see in Germany!

Once again, we loaded our bus, and began our tour North, arriving in Munich a few hours later. We were greeted by our new host families and taken back to their homes to settle in for the evening. Monday brought us an early morning meet up in Munich city center. For some of us,

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that unfortunately meant rising early for a trip to the city, as some of the families reside over an hour away by car, and 30-45 min by train. This means of transportation was not something our group was used to, and through the trip, we got good at hoping in and out of trains, buses, and trams, often hoping we collected everyone each time. The groups got good at counting heads and children to ensure no one was left behind! Munich was a sight to see, and I look forward to a time I can go back and enjoy all it has to offer. A tour of the city, lunch at the office of the Verband, and a few hours in the afternoon of shopping and relaxing in Munich center. The social evening was held at the Landsmannschaft der Donauschwaben Bayern where we learned a bit about history on the Donauschwaben community and toured their beautiful rooms. Another great potluck was hosted for us with the evening capped off with a gracious gift given to us of a much sought after dance book. I can guarantee you that I held onto that book tight throughout the evening, and it is now in a secure location! (If you know how important this is, you understand!!) Some welcomed rain threatened to ruin the evening, but we pushed on and enjoyed the evening until we once again had to say our goodbyes!

For those keeping track, this was now our third move, and we began our next morning heading to Augsburg. We had a bit of time in the city before our tour, so some of us enjoyed grabbing some fancy (and not so fancy!) coffee and drinks at “Henry’s Coffee” before our tours. One of the most unique aspects about Augsburg is the history of the Fuggers, a wealthy family of merchants and bankers. The Fuggers built a huge trade empire in Augsburg and founded the famous Fuggerei, the world’s oldest social housing complex, which the group had a chance to tour. The evening concluded with a cultural performance at the club which once again had us meeting up with our host families for the evening. The group was especially honored to have a visit from a long time Sachsenheim member and family friend, Johanna German. Mrs. German was close friends with my Oma, and I had the pleasure to know her many years, so her attending one of our performances, in another country for that matter, was even more special.

Wednesday brought us another relocation, as we headed to Heilbronn. This might possibly be my favorite part of the trip. Not only because it gave us an opportunity to have a welcome break from the tour schedule, but more importantly because of the significance and beauty of our new location. On our travel to the Transylvania Institute, we had a quick homemade goulash lunch and dessert at their Saxon Club in Heilbronn prepared by members of their club. We then boarded back onto the bus to head to Schloss Horneck. When I say breathtaking, I am not doing it any justice. To be at the center of our history is one thing. To see how much time and dedication they are taking to preserve our culture is another. We spent the afternoon in the archives and enjoyed seeing everything they are doing and gathering to support those looking to learn more about their Saxon culture. From there we had the opportunity to check into our rooms at the Schlosshotel. It now serves as a cultural and meeting center for Transylvanian Saxons, featuring a museum, a library, a cultural center, and a castle hotel with 32 rooms and four event spaces. AMAZING!!! ONE-OF-A-KIND EXPERIENCE! Each room was unique, and it was fun looking at where other group members



Botschs at Botscher Strasse



were staying. Having the evening to ourselves, we took some time to walk around and enjoy all the sights. Grace took some of our younger members to a nearby pool and water slide area for a few hours of fun before meeting back up for dinner. Since most of the shops closed earlier that day, Mike and I decided to grab some bottles of wine (conveniently sold as self-serve in the lobby) and found a location outside overlooking the vineyards. Since we can’t get enough of each other, the group came together to join. What we all thought would be an evening of solitude and quiet turned into another night of talking, making memories, and enjoying each other’s company is one of the most magical places in Germany. (especially for us Saxons!) Dagmar learned a lot about us that night and gave us an opportunity to see how she fit in nicely to our small family!

The next morning, we enjoyed a tour of the castle with a stop at the Transylvanian Museum before departing once again for a new location. On our way to Heidelberg on Thursday, we enjoyed a stop in Neckarsteinach for some coffee and cake before taking a short hike to the castles. I watched from below as the group made their journey to the top of the castle for a look inside. From there we made two stops to meet up with our new host families. Some of us stayed in Heidelberg, some in Mannheim, and some in between.

A day of tourism, lunch, and an afternoon of shopping in Heidelberg was Friday’s agenda. The evening ended with a dance workshop and an informal community evening with the location group in Mannheim. Though we had a smidge of a language barrier while trying to teach each other dances, the group prevailed and found a way to make it work. I am also pretty sure they have the best Kirschwasser we tasted, and we tasted quite a few!!! And as with all the locations we traveled, they made sure we were welcome, fed, and thirst quenched!

But also as with the previous locations, it was time to say our goodbyes, as we moved on early Saturday AM to our final stop along our tour. Herzogenaurach.

Most of the morning was spent traveling, so it gave most of the group a chance to catch up on a few winks of sleep. I am shocked by the number of people in our group able to sleep on planes and buses. We arrived at the Kronenfest preparations earlier than expected, and since lunch plans didn’t work out, Dagmar decided to treat us to some German Mexican. Yep – you read that right. The dance group walked to a Mexican restaurant. Some were excited for some Margaritas...others enjoyed beers... and even some milkshakes. It was a different variation of Mexican then we are used to here, but we all enjoyed it, nonetheless. The group then walked back to the area Kronenfest would be hosted to help and watch as the Herzogenaurach group prepared for the next days’ festivities and practice a few dances together. Later, part of the group hopped in a few cars and enjoyed a quick tour of Adidas and Puma headquarters. For those not aware, the Dassler brothers, Adolf and Rudolf, were the founders of the Adidas and Puma sportswear companies, respectively. Their intense rivalry, stemming from a post-World War II falling out, led to the creation of two of the world’s most recognizable sportswear brands. This was followed by a quick tour of the city center while we enjoyed a delicious gelato treat!!! Now came the moment we’d been waiting for...the raising of the crown. The word “Kronenfest” refers to the

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“Crown Festival” celebrated in Germany, often associated with the German tradition of crowning a “Beer Queen”. The “crown” in this context is often a symbolic one, representing royalty or leadership within the festival context. These crowns are made by hand by putting together branches of oak from the trees in the area and adding flowers for decoration. This pole would be climbed the next day by a young man. A young man is chosen each year to make the climb up the pole, have a speech about Kronenfest, and in this case toss candy to the kids below. Many members of our group enjoyed the tradition that day of helping to dig the hole for the pole to be placed, enjoying the ceremonial Viche that is placed in the covered hole till the following year, and then lifting the pole into place. Most of us retreated to our new host families’ homes for the evening, while some went out to enjoy a bonfire and party with some of the Herzogenaurach dance members. Another example of the difference on this tour as a 40 some year old versus a 20 some year old. I am not capable of hanging with that crowd, as most didn’t get back with their hosts till 4 AM! We knew this location was going to be special for the younger dancers, as they had one of the younger groups we’d be hosted with, and as a bonus, their young adult group is traveling to the US in August for a private tour with stops in Detroit, Chicago, and Cleveland. We were excited to meet them and talk about plans for when they traveled to see us. So having this experience and being able to spend time with them outside of our tour activities was exciting for me to see.

A church service was at 1:00 p.m. followed by an Aufmarsch, and the ceremonial climbing of the pole. Then we all marched back to the pavilion for the performances. Kronenfest brought our final performance of the tour, and we were excited to have some of the Herzogenaurach dancers perform with us. It was a long day with all preparations, dancing, and community enjoyment. A quiet evening back with the host families was most welcome. Lexi and I joined our families for dinner out at a Sushi restaurant, while others went back to host family’s homes, and some to another restaurant with the youth group.

Monday was a relaxing day we knew we’d be getting at the start of the tour. Knowing it was our last day in Germany, we wanted to be able to find any last-minute gifts or treasures to take home (apart from some of the amazing gifts other groups gave us). We spent the day in Nuremberg enjoying the city center and branching out on our own for a bit. Lexi unfortunately missed out on the day, as she felt unwell that morning and stayed home with our host family. She was treated well as the mom prepared an amazing chicken schnitzel lunch for her. (She even went back later than night after our evening to ask for leftovers!) Mike and I ventured to the tracht store to pick up a new Dirndl for a friend, before enjoying a leisurely lunch in a quaint restaurant in the center of town. Our kids (and Geoff) enjoyed some time playing games and downloading movies for the trip home in a local bookstore, with some Starbucks. A bit of walking, shopping, and relaxing continued until we met up with the group and made our final stop at the chocolate store for last minute treats. We then boarded a train, and bus, to make our way to Werner Hennings for our farewell dinner. Werner was gracious enough to host our group with an amazing pig roast, and of course plenty of beverages. He also made sure to supply Mike with plenty of “white whiskey!” A wonderful ending to our tour with friends, food, and music far into the night! One of the highlights of our trip, for sure.

Special thanks to Dagmar Seck for all she did to help with the planning and preparation for our tour. This was no easy feat, and we are thankful for all the work she did to make it a wonderful

experience for us.

So, this was it...our final goodbyes before heading back to the host families for our last night in Germany. Morning came earlier than most, as we had a 5 am wake up call to get a quick breakfast and load up before meeting our bus at 7 am. We traveled 3 ½ hours to Frankfurt airport to check into our flights and head home. Frankfurt was a bit of a project to get through, but we all managed to get on our flights on time with little issue. We “lost” a few items in Newark security, and I now must find a way to get Jameson some Ovomaltine, but we all made it home safely.

It’s definitely a different experience traveling with a group, and I’m appreciate of mine. Being at Heimattag last weekend in Youngstown was a great reminder of how lucky we are to be part of a group that still brings that “community” we all need. It’s what keeps us young, active, and thriving in our culture.

Thank you to the Alliance of Transylvanian Saxons for selecting us for this exchange and allowing us to represent you and North America as best we could. Thank you to the members of the Cleveland Saxon Dance Group for giving Austria and Germany all you had to give. I will cherish this trip, and the memories you gave me always. You make me proud to be the leader of our group, your friend, but most importantly, your family.

Amanda Donnellan
President, Cleveland Saxon Dance Group

Our tour to Europe was wonderful. I’ve been to Germany and Austria numerous times, but on this trip I experienced seeing many places where I haven’t been.

Our host families went above and beyond to make sure we had what we needed. Food and drink was abundant, to say the least. We were greeted by EACH and EVERY town we performed in with JOY and HAPPINESS. Truly a wonderful feeling!

I attended a Kronenfest many years ago, but only arrived on the day of the fest. This year, I experienced the preparation for this fest. SO MUCH LOVE and WORK put into it. Digging the hole for the pole, decorating the crown with leaves and flowers. 8 young men carrying the HEAVY crown to the pole and holding it in place while the crown was bolted onto the pole. and then, the precision it took to erect the pole into the hole that was dug out. All done on an extremely HOT day. Thank you, our Saxon Landsmann in Herzogenarauch, for allowing us to be a part of this festivity.

This will be a lifelong memory for me.
Rosie Wittine

From June 17 - July 1, the Cleveland Saxon Dance Group had the privilege of visiting our Saxon Landsleute in Germany and Austria. We hit the ground running from day one in Vienna with a tour of the city and a dance performance later that same evening. With no rest for the weary, the very next day we visited an impressive amusement park in Prater that had rides to satisfy any amusement park enthusiast! We then travelled on to Wels and Traun where we reunited with many friends, we had the pleasure of meeting on previous trips and through recent Jugendlagers. I do believe it was here (some of the tour is a blur) that we had a lovely riverboat ride where the captain, I’m sure, was highly entertained by our impromptu singing and dancing. Elixhausen was our next stop where we not only danced but also participated in a fun march through the city. On to Munich where we had a tour of the city, had lunch at the Verband and a short dance performance. Our next stop was a very well-attended event in Augsburg where we were re-united with former Clevelanders Heidi German Mueller and her mother! What a nice surprise! In Heilbronn we toured the Transylvania Institue, Transylvanian Museum and toured/stayed at Schloss Horneck. We even had lunch in the castle moat! Moving on to Neckarsteinach where we had a day of hiking up and down hills and exploring castle ruins. Did I mention that it was over 90 degrees most days of this trip? The next stops were in Heidelberg and then Mannheim where we had a “dance exchange workshop” with some fellow Saxons from the area. Our final stops included the Kronenfest in Herzogenaurach. It was fascinating to see them decorate and erect the Fest pole. I do not recommend anyone try that at home! There were groups of varying nationalities from all over the area at this lovely outdoor event. Again, still 90 degrees. Our final day was spent touring Nurnberg and was capped off with a fantastic picnic hosted by Werner Henning at his business in Nurnberg.

The Dance Group would like to thank the ATS for choosing our group and sponsoring us on this cultural exchange. We also want to thank all the folks oversees who helped lead tours, prepared meals, hosted events and offered us housing and phenomenal hospitality. We are also excited to welcome our friends from Herzogenaurach to Cleveland on August 16-18.

In Saxon friendship,
Christine Roppelt





**North American
Transylvanian
Saxon
Heimattag**
July 11-12, 2025
Youngstown, Ohio



**Together, Side by Side
Zusammen, Seite an Seite**

