



PERSPEKTIVEN

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Fröhliche Weihnachten Merry Christmas

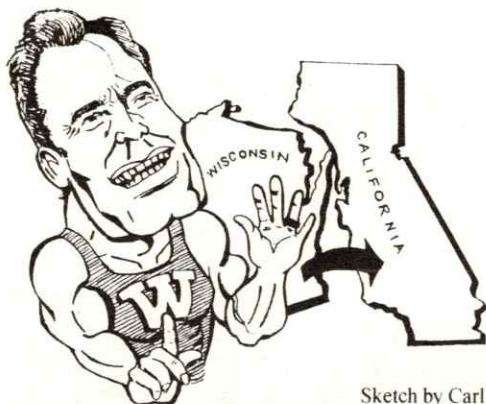
Schwarzenegger: Proves to be a Superior intellect

By Jim Heffernan

Duluth News Tribune

Not enough is being made of Austrian-born Arnold Schwarzenegger's close association with the University of Wisconsin-Superior now that he has been elected governor of California. You see biographical data on the actor/bodybuilder/politician saying he was graduated from the University of Wisconsin. It conjures images of the main campus in Madison, in the shadow of the state capitol, on the shores of Lake Mendota, Corinthian columns almost as large as Arnold's arms, ivy-covered facades.

Nope. Not quite.



Sketch by Carl M. Ruppert

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Move a few hundred miles to the north, to a smaller University of Wisconsin campus just off Belknap Street in Superior, not too far from the shores of Lake Superior.

[Please turn to Arnold, Page 8]



Sketch by Carl M. Ruppert

By Dr. Samuel Scheibler

Each December, the impact of Wisconsin's German heritage comes home to every city, town and village in the celebration of Advent and Christmas.

German Christmas customs arrived on the west shore of Lake Michigan with German-American soldiers posted at Ft. Dearborn (now Chicago) in 1807. Cutting and decorating the territory's first Weihnachtsbaum, (Christmas tree) these sons and grandsons of immigrants from Hessen and Saxony introduced a custom destined to become one of the most beloved symbols of the season. Almost 200 years after the first Weihnachtsbaum brought Christmas cheer to a handful of German-American soldiers in the nation's new Northwest Territory, Wisconsin is today the third largest supplier of Christmas trees in the world.

While the German origin of the Christmas tree is indisputable, the original inspiration for this holiday [Please turn to Christmas, Page 4]

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**From
the President**

ZEIT FLIEGT when one is having fun and the year 2003 has been no exception. It seems like only yesterday that I was reporting to you about year 2002. To be sure much has happened on the positive side this past 12 months as is obvious from a reading of this year's issues of PERSPEKTIVEN. I shall forego any repetition. Of special note for this edition is a listing on the second page of a newly created board of academic advisors. This board was created to expand Goethe House academic activities throughout the state and has already begun to pay dividends. The two meetings thus far held by this group have been both stimulating and challenging. In completing this year, we all wish to express our gratitude to our ever-expanding group of volunteers. Whether it is at German Fest or at our picnics, the Saturday morning play groups or Kultur Café, it all helps! I begin by saluting Laurie Bernd who was with us most of the year before leaving for further studies. Laurie was followed by a German intern, Mirja Goetz, who made an outstanding contribution to our tutoring program. Next, we are currently fortunate to have come on board Jeanelle Hayner and Sarah Schaeufele, Marquette University German majors. To all of our members, friends, donors and supporters we at GH bid you all EIN GUTES NEUES JAHR!!! ALLES GUTE,

ALLES GOETHE

Ted E. Wedemeyer Jr.

The lights within us glow more brightly this time of the year

**By Katharina Hren
Executive Director**

It's my favorite time of year...as the leaves drop with a flurry of color and the days become colder, and I reach for tea or coffee or hot chocolate to warm up, I find myself taking more time to contemplate the things that matter most to me. It's also a time for holidays that cause us to bring out candles to light...and to remember the lights within us which glow all the more brightly when we come together to celebrate the gifts in our lives.

The Saturday Spielgruppe has been making lanterns for a special "St. Martine's Day Laternenabend" at a retirement community called Prairie Meadows in Germantown. We will be meeting in the evening and showing the residents our self-made lanterns and sharing our homemade treats. Members of our group felt this was an ideal opportunity to give to others - to remember how blessed we are - and thereby nurture a giving spirit within our children. As a group we have grown together in many special ways - and it is a joy to watch our children play together and treat each other with respect.

Saturday, December 13th will be our Christmas Celebration day, and the Kultur Cafe' will be joining us towards the end.

The Goethe House sixth annual dinner will be on Monday, December 1st at Karl Ratzsch's Restaurant,


and our newest board member, Father Sam Scheibler, will be speaking. I am personally looking forward to hearing this truly inspirational man speak, for he is a man of many travels - physically, spiritually, and culturally speaking! As our sixth annual dinner approaches, I am also reminded that this has been my sixth year at Goethe House. It is truly amazing to ponder how many people I've met...events which have transpired...and how far we've come in terms of the Goethe House mission to promote language and culture in Milwaukee and beyond! I wish to thank the many members, students, volunteers, board members...the wide range of unique individuals who inspire us in this work.

As you're assembling your Christmas lists and clearing space for the holidays...please remember that the Goethe House gladly accepts (tax-deductible) donations of German books, videos, and now DVDs (we just purchased a German compatible DVD player thanks to a hot tip from one of our volunteers)...and even games (as long as they are translatable into German).

As we approach the holidays, it is my hope that we might bear in mind that it is the many cultures and languages which provide fabric for our lives on this earth...and it is the depth and breadth of human spirit which provide the thread. What we do with the stories of our lives is the sewing that brings us together.

FROEHLICHE WEIHNACHTEN...UND
EINEN GUTEN RUTSCH INS JAHR 2004!

Eure, Katharina



LEAVE A
GERMAN LEGACY

invite you to join in making a bequest to Goethe House in order to guarantee its success and service to future generations.

For more information on supporting Goethe House through your estate plan, contact:
**Katharina Hren
(414) 276-7435**

Goethe House of Wisconsin is a non-profit German-American cultural institute serving Wisconsin since 1958. Our mission is to serve as a statewide resource for information about the past and present culture of all German-speaking people - especially those in the Federal Republic of Germany. Goethe House of Wisconsin invites the financial support of individuals, companies and organizations who share our mission and recognize the value of this important cultural exchange. Goethe House of Wisconsin is a not-for-profit (501) (c) (3) organization. Donations are tax deductible as the law allows.

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Information on Goethe House events, membership and other resources. Satisfy your need for German culture 24 hours a day. Use our web site or e-mail address to send Letters to the Editor to comment or make suggestions.

Fröhliche Weihnachten Merry Christmas

[Christmas, from Page 1]

icon is still a matter of scholarly and popular debate. From the foundation of Trinity Lutheran in Freistadt in 1839, Lutheran schoolchildren in Wisconsin have been taught that Martin Luther began the tradition of cutting an evergreen tree and bringing it into the house just before midnight on Christmas Eve. According to a Pomeranian and Saxon tradition passed on for five generations in southeastern and central Wisconsin, Luther invented the Christmas tree as an almost poetic act of love.

While walking through the woods on an unusually clear December night, Luther was so taken with the beauty of the stars shining through the branches of a Tannenbaum (fir tree) he decided to share the lovely sight with his wife. Rather than dragging his beloved Katrina out into the cold night, Luther took an ax to the tree and pulled it through the snowy woods to their comfortable home in Wittenberg.

Christmas tree a teaching tool

Always the pedagogue, Luther used the indoor tree as a teaching tool, explaining to his children and household how the truths of hope and eternal life inherent in the Christmas message are exemplified in the winter greenery of the Weihnachtsbaum.

Down river from Freistadt in Milwaukee, families from Baden, Württemberg and Bavaria ascribed the origin of their Christmas trees to the late medieval Paradeisbäume (Paradise Trees) of Roman Catholic Germany. For centuries, German Catholics observed December 24th as the Feast of Adam and Eve. The focus of the celebration was the performance of a one-act play based on the biblical story of Eden.

Annual home pageant

The main prop for this annual home pageant was a small evergreen tree decorated with apples representing the Tree of Knowledge. The apples eventually evolved into balls of glass and wood and by 1605 regulations for decorated trees at Christmas were a matter of record in western Germany. While the 13th century poet Wolfram von Eschenbach mentions a few candles on the Weihnachtsbaum he immortalized in Parzival, the use of lights did not become common until the 1700's. By the time the Paradise/Christmas tree arrived in Wisconsin, however, candles, paper flowers, wooden, glass, and metal ornaments, cookies, and candy commonly adorned the firs and spruces brought into almost every home.



Brautbäume (Bride Trees)

Middle class Bavarian immigrants to Milwaukee and Green Bay brought another arboreal Christmas custom to 19th century Wisconsin. Copying a romantic fashion that had passed from the Alps (Oberbayern) to the aristocratic palaces of Munich, these new Americans introduced the custom of presenting newlyweds with a Brautbaum (Bride's Tree) for their first Christmas as husband and wife.

Decorated with twelve glass or pewter symbolic ornaments, the Brautbaum was supposed to insure good fortune and a long life of matrimonial happiness. Though the accounting of each talisman on the tree varied by Alpine village, the general understanding in Munich and Milwaukee was that the ornaments should include a heart for love, a house for shelter, a basket of flowers for beauty, a basket of fruit for plenty, a teapot for hospitality, a nesting bird for security, a pinecone for eternity, a rabbit for fertility, a fish for Christ, a rose for the Virgin Mary, an angel for protection, and St. Nicholas for sharing. Producing these very specific decorations created a market for Bavarian Christmas ornaments and by 1900 over eighty percent of the Christmas decorations sold in Wisconsin were imported from Germany.

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Fröhliche Weihnachten Merry Christmas

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The first "Artificial Trees"

Some families arriving in western Wisconsin in the mid 19th century had immigrated twice in only four generations. Germans from Lower Saxony, Saxony, and the Rhineland had moved eastward into the plains of Prussia, Poland, and Russia to establish farms and villages in the two centuries before Wisconsin became a major destination for Germans seeking a better life. Finding themselves in lands blessed with expansive plains but few evergreens, these ingenious farmers crafted pyramid-shaped, wooden "Christmas tree substitutes" that they decorated with candles and ornaments. By storing the world's first artificial Christmas trees away for annual use, these creative and practical farmers insured that their wooden pyramids became integrated into family Christmas traditions from one generation to another.

Family gift-giving traditions

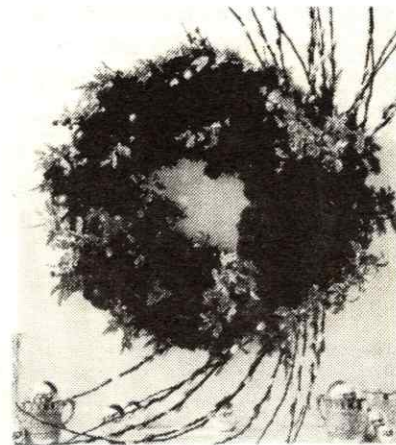
Following family gift-giving traditions, some of these pyramids made their way to Saxony. Many 19th century Saxons and Berliners found these Christmas treasures to be so charming that they imitated and improved upon them. The famous woodcarvers of Upper Saxony, especially in the Erzgebirge Region, adapted the style and created the modern market for "German Christmas Pyramids."

As part and parcel of the portable goods of later generations of immigrants, these wooden treasures crossed the Baltic and the Atlantic and arrived on the banks of the Mississippi. Living rooms in Vernon and LaCrosse Counties are still decorated each December with these delightful testaments to the clever innovation of German ancestors.

Adventzkränze (Advent Wreaths)

A tradition that transcends denominational lines in Germany and Wisconsin is the Adventzkrantz (Advent wreath). Unlike the Christmas tree, the wreath's origins rest indisputable in the pre-Christian Germanic custom of decorating the winter household with evergreen boughs, berries, and lights.

St. Boniface and his fellow 9th century missionaries contextualized the winter wreaths to a Christian message. His great monastery at Fulda in Hessen established the custom that during the four weeks



from the Sunday closest to November 30 to Heiligabend (Christmas Eve), four candles should be lit successively each evening as a symbolic preparation for the coming of the Light of the World, das Christkindl (the Christ Child).

Immigrants from every part of Germany and Austria brought the Advent wreath with them to Wisconsin. In the central counties of the state, families from the Baltic coasts of Pomerania, Mecklenburg and East Prussia taught their children to write letters to the Christ Child on the First Sunday of Advent as it was the Christkindl and his angels who would bring a tree and presents on Christmas Eve. Several church parishes of Baltic German origin in Wisconsin still mark Christkindl requests on this Sunday.

Cultural historians trace the beginning of writing "Letters to Santa" from this Baltic German practice.

Ever practical, Germans from non-forested regions replaced the evergreen wreaths with Lichtstöcke (Light Sticks). These decorated boards with holes bored for placing candles adorn many Advent tables in Wisconsin homes.

Barbarazweig

For Silesian Germans in southwest Wisconsin, Advent also meant Barbaratag (Feast of St. Barbara). As the patron saint of miners, St. Barbara held special significance for these coal and lead mining "badgers." According to a very ancient legend, this 4th century saint had nourished a cherry branch in her cell in the bleak winter days before her martyrdom. To honor her memory, a cherry or forsythia branch should be placed in water on her feast day (December 4). If the Barbarazweig (Barbara

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Fröhliche Weihnachten Merry Christmas

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branch) blooms on Christmas day the year to come is guaranteed to be safe and filled with good fortune. In the very dangerous world of 19th century mining, the Barbarazweig held a very significant place and though the mines are closed, homes in Trempealeau, Buffalo, Pepin, and Grant counties still nurture budding branches every Advent.



Santa Claus

The one fact that all Americans know about German Christmas customs is that Santa Claus originated in Germany. Thanks to illustrations drawn for Harper's Weekly by Thomas Nast, a German-American artist, five generations have shared a pleasant, common image of "Father Christmas."

The historical tale is not as easy to paint. The veneration of St. Nicholas, an exemplary 4th century Greek bishop known for his generosity, was brought to northern Germany and the Rhineland from Italy in the 12th century. As the patron of both sailors and students, he quickly gained wide-spread popularity and his feast day on December 6 became a national celebration. Men dressed as "bishops" paraded through the streets of cities and towns giving gifts and bestowing "blessings."

More gifts were exchanged among friends and family. Children carefully laid their shoes on doorsteps the night before the feast day in the anticipation that St. Nicholas might fill them with sweets and fruit. In local dialects he was affectionately known by a dozen names including Boklaus (Braunschweig), Hatscha (Cologne), Klaubauf (Hannover), Klos (Swabia), Kräst (Bavaria), and Zinterklos (Rhineland).

As the legend grew, St. Nicholas added staff. In most areas of Germany he began to travel with a black man dressed in rags or fur whose purpose was to test children on their behavior, school work or catechism. On the night before St. Nicholas Day, this sinister character covered the length and breadth of the Empire looking for disobedient or slothful children to punish (some historians believe this is the origin of shoes being left outside overnight as no one wanted to risk an examination). Reflecting Germany's wide linguistic diversity, the avenging companion of the compassionate saint was known as Gumphinkel in Hessen, Krampus in Bavaria, Rupsack in Mecklenburg, Pelzebock or Pelznickel in the Rhineland, and Krampus in Saxony. One of his few nation-wide titles was Knecht Ruprecht (Ruprecht the Servant), a name based upon a medieval German belief that Satan's first name was Ruprecht.

Through the centuries of German turmoil and transformation, however, the saint's image and the customs surrounding him changed according to religious, social, regional, and even political influences. The Reformation in Northern Germany made it unsuitable for a bishop to be seen in Protestant towns. In 1778 Hesse-Kassel became the first Lutheran state to ban St. Nicholas from public. He was replaced by the figure of a kindly old man with a long beard and fur-trimmed coat who distributed gifts to those who have been good all year. Amalgamating elements of the St. Nicholas legend into local beliefs and needs, Hesse-Kassel's "good Nicholas" became Klaasburg (Hamburg), Rauklas (Mecklenburg), Bullerklas (Schleswig-Holstein), Sunnerklas (East Friesland). The practical Pomeranians re-christened St. Nicholas as Weihnachtsmann (Christmas Man).

As early 19th century prosperity and technological advancement made travel easier in the German states, St. Nicholas and his assistant (by whatever name) acquired improved transportation. No

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longer pedestrians, in Hesse they arrived by sleigh, on the North Sea coast by ship, and in most of southern Germany by donkey.

Like American children leaving cookies for Santa Claus, in some Bavarian villages children still leave straw or hay under the kitchen table for the saint's donkey.

Most charmingly, in Silesia St. Nicholas chose to descend from heaven on a golden chord.

As he traveled across the Atlantic, St. Nicholas retained many of his attributes but lost his companion. The Hessen immigrants to Washington and Ozaukee counties introduced the secular version of the German saint as "good Nicholas" or "Father Christmas." The publication of Clement Moore's poem "A Visit from St. Nick" in 1844 and Thomas Nast's Harper's Weekly illustrations affirmed a general acceptance of the Hessen Germans image of the gift-giving visitor. By the 1870's most German-Americans in Wisconsin knew the jolly man

in the fur-trimmed red coat by his Hessen name: Santa Klaus.

Heilige Drei Könige (The Three Holy Kings or Wise Men)

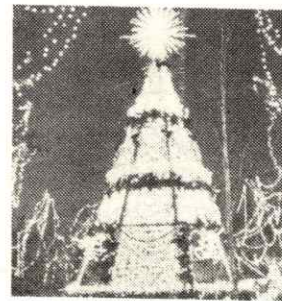
The early German immigrants to Wisconsin celebrated Christmas as a twelve day festival. It must have come as a shock that Christmas Day alone was not recognized as a Federal holiday until 1870.

Regardless of the legal status of the holiday, Wisconsin immigrants from the Rhineland still celebrated the twelve days of Christmas in the evenings following the workday. Recent arrivals from the region surrounding Cologne where the Three Kings are venerated as patron saints paid special attention to this celebration. Men and boys walked from house to house singing carols dressed as the Wise Men. Usually carrying a crib, these evening processions eventually encompassed both genders, crossed the denominational line from the Catholic Rhinelanders to Lutherans, and became community Christmas caroling events.

While the Feast of the Epiphany (January 6) at the end of the twelve day celebration is a major religious holiday, it remains off the national calendar. Until the early decades of the 20th century a few Rhineland Germans in Wisconsin still marked the day, literally, by chalking their doors with the initials of the Three Wise Men (K for Kaspar, M for Melchior, B for Balthazar) along with the date for the New Year. According to a tradition carried across the Atlantic and maintained for generations in the Badger State, for a prosperous new year the chalking this season should read:

20K+M+B04.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Dr. Samuel P. Scheibler, a clergyman, is an ecclesiastical, educational and social leader, who specializes in German folk culture.

Illustrations from Midwest Living magazine

Schwarzenegger: Proves to be a Superior intellect

[Arnold, from Page 1]

That's where Arnold received his bachelor's degree in 1980, but not exactly as a book-hitting, pub-crawling ordinary student.

He was able to trade on his life experience and count credits he'd taken at a couple of colleges in California, said Rhea S. Das, who brought Schwarzenegger to the Superior campus in the first place.

Das taught psychology and later became associate vice chancellor. She is now retired and residing in Florida.

"Staying hungry" philosophy

She contacted Schwarzenegger after his exploits were called to her attention by her children, who recommended she read his book, "Arnold: The Education of a Body Builder." His philosophy, which he called "staying hungry," (involving individuals constantly setting higher and higher goals for themselves) appealed to her.

Das recalled that she had difficulty reaching Schwarzenegger but finally got him on the phone and invited him to conduct a workshop at UWS. He agreed, and the university contracted with him as a visiting faculty member. The same procedure would be followed for anyone invited to appear on campus.

At the same time, Schwarzenegger broached the subject of completing his degree there, and she suggested he enroll in the university's extended degree program designed for people who have some college credits. The program is offered only at Superior and one other Wisconsin campus, Das said. She estimated that about 100 people are enrolled in it at any given time, although its requirements are not confined to the traditional academic year. Students work at their own pace, guided by faculty.

Started as a senior

Schwarzenegger was enrolled in the standard extended degree program in which students are expected to come to the campus and meet with faculty, plan their course, get instructions and return for evaluation and other events. Assignments are given and fulfilled by mail, meaning the student doesn't have to sit through classroom lectures. Schwarzenegger was considered a senior when he entered the program, and he completed it in one year, visiting the campus several times to conduct workshops on bodybuilding and success.

He tested for credit (taking the final exam but not the course) in swimming and archery, and was given a waiver in bodybuilding. Smooth move. At that point in his life, he had been named Mr. Universe five times, Mr. Olympia six times, had appeared in movies and was dating

Arnold Schwarzenegger was born July 30, 1947, in the hamlet of Thal bei Graz, about four miles from Graz, the capital of the Styria region of Austria.

He is the son of Aurelia and Gustav Schwarzenegger, a policeman. He began lifting weights at age 15. He earned the nickname "Steirische Eiche" - "Styrian Oak."

In 1965 he had a one-year tour in the Austrian Army.

He moved to the United States in 1969. He became a U.S. citizen in 1984.

network TV journalist Maria Shriver, niece of the late President John F. Kennedy. Schwarzenegger and Shriver married in 1986 and have four children. (Maybe they should have tested him out in modern American history, too, since he married into it.) Shriver joined Schwarzenegger on several occasions when he came to Superior, Das said.

In May 1980, he returned to the Superior campus to receive his degree at commencement, donning a cap and gown and lining up with other students graduating that year.

Put it all together and it spelled baccalaureate degree for citizen Schwarzenegger -- make that California citizen Schwarzenegger, formerly Austrian citizen Schwarzenegger.

Colleges today like to promote themselves by
[Please turn to Arnold, Page 9]

Schwarzenegger: Proves to be a Superior intellect

[Arnold, from Page 8]

citing students who have achieved success in life after graduation. Schwarzenegger would make quite a poster boy for the University of Wisconsin-Superior.

Unfortunately, the sky is not the limit. Schwarzenegger can never be president. Only native-born Americans can hold the highest office in the land.

There are no such restrictions on honorary degrees, however, and in 1996 Das and fellow staff members Lydia Thearing (formerly Lydia Binger of the physical education faculty) and counselor Allan Scholbrock, both of whom had been involved in Schwarzenegger's UWS career, nominated him for an honorary doctorate. The university agreed.

Must attend ceremony

A proviso for receiving an honorary degree at UW-Superior is that the recipient must attend the ceremony. Schwarzenegger agreed to attend the May 1996 commencement to receive his degree.

But on the weekend of the ceremony, Das recalled, the Twin Ports were rendered invisible by pea-soup fog. Schwarzenegger and Maria Shriver had to land elsewhere and take a limousine to the campus.

Meanwhile, said Das, the commencement ceremony in Wessman Arena got under way, no Schwarzenegger in attendance, and UWS officials nervously watching the door. Midway through the ceremony, the door flung open, a woman's voice shrieked "he's here," and there appeared Schwarzenegger, hastily slipping into an academic robe.

Graceful walk to degree

"He walked into the hall very gracefully, seeming to glide along in his robe," Das described. She attributed his graceful movement to the study of ballet early in his career.

When he left the building, it was as Dr. Schwarzenegger, body builder, fabulously successful movie star, author, inspirational speaker, politician and UWS alumnus.

Oh yes, and one-time ballet student. But don't tell the Terminator's archenemies.

[Jim Heffernan's columns run each Sunday in the Duluth News Tribune. This column is printed with permission.

Gary A. Warner of the Orange County Register and the About Network web site contributed to the PERSPEKTIVEN story.]

The advantage to learn German

A role in U.S. space program

By Jason Scheibler

The personal history of Milwaukee native Edward Henry Koenig possesses all the elements of a grand storybook adventure: Danger, intrigue, honor, true love and, most important, German.

Encouraged by his father as well as his maternal grandmother, who insisted upon "home school" German instruction virtually from birth, Koenig learned to speak German as a child. In those days public instruction allowed him to continue his language development at the 38th Street School.

Formal German language instruction came very easy to him. Describing his experience, Koenig said, "I had a head start on all the rest of the kids. I could understand (German) like you're speaking English. In fact, if I could not express myself in English I would go to German, translate it and translate back into English and say the word."

At Washington High School, Koenig took a full course in German, polishing his skills in reading and writing.

Following his graduation from high school, Koenig joined the U.S. Army "because that was the thing to do."

His German-speaking father, Edward Frederic Koenig, had joined the U.S. Navy at the beginning of World War I and served as a chief electrician on the battleship USS Arizona.

Trained as a rifleman, young Koenig first engaged in World War II combat at Omaha Beach July 10, 1944, a month and four days after the D-Day invasion of France began. In all he fought in five major campaigns, including the Normandy invasion, The Hedgerows and the Battle of the Bulge (where all but three of his platoon died).

The benefit of Koenig's linguistic skills on the battle field were quickly realized and strategically deployed. In one instance his division was moving

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Milwaukee soldier has role in U.S. space program

[German, from Page 9]

through the treacherous hedgerow battlegrounds of Western France when "We walked (out of the hedgerows) into a field with our backs to the Germans," Koenig recounts. "Rather than shooting us, they (the Germans) called out, 'Don't shoot. We give up.'" Surprised that a native Midwesterner could not only communicate but also think so quickly and clearly in German, his unit asked Koenig to interpret instructions and interrogate the newly surrendered prisoners. Through Koenig the prisoners provided valuable intelligence on German troop movements.

From there, the Army put Koenig to work as a battlefield negotiator. By February 1945, Koenig had gained the recognition of his superiors for his exceptional command of German and English. He was recommended to the Headquarters of the 35th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment. He wound up assigned to Lauterbach in Hessen as part of a U.S. military government group, translating for civil trials.

Confidence in Koenig

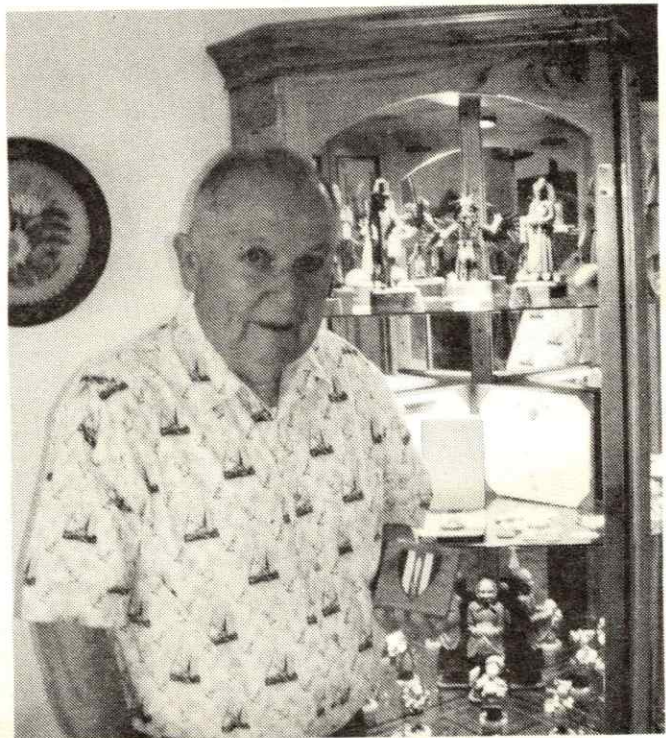
The Army's confidence in Koenig was proven beyond a shadow of a doubt when he was entrusted with a critical role in "Operation Paperclip" that brought to the U.S. the team of German scientists who perfected the Redstone missile which launched America's "Explorer" satellite.

Koenig was given the task of removing from their homes an entire block of Lauterbach residents and preparing homes for temporary occupancy. Under cover of darkness an entourage of distinguished looking Germans arrived at Koenig's hastily prepared haven. They were led by an obviously injured man - Wernher von Braun - who had been injured in an automobile accident.

Fleeing capture by the Soviets, von Braun and his fellow rocket scientists were to be secured in Lauterbach as preparations were made to fly them to the U. S. from the American Army Air Corps base in Frankfurt.

Von Braun a "pleasant person"

Koenig found von Braun to be a "pleasant person" but admits to mixed feeling about the rocket scientist and his colleagues because of the destructive application of their research and technology in the last days of World War II. He is proud, however, of the small part he indirectly played in advancing America's space program. To him it was amazing that a young German-American soldier from Milwaukee could provide a vital



Edward H. Koenig

link in the incredible story of von Braun's rescue from the Soviets and removal to America.

Koenig returned to Milwaukee not long after his adventure with von Braun and the other smuggled scientists. He spent several years building personal water craft and later began a long career of service as an employee for Milwaukee County. In 1970 he married his wife, Coreen, and they raised their three sons in his hometown.

Koenig a quiet hero

Like so many of his generation, Koenig is a quiet hero. To him it was obvious that his early training in German at home and school provided him with an outstanding foundation for serving his country. His experience demonstrates the tremendous value of hard work, devotion to service, faith in God, a sound education and diligent preservation of one's linguistic and cultural heritage.

When von Braun and his NASA team launched the first American satellite into orbit in 1958, a German-American in Milwaukee watched with silent, personal satisfaction.

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