40th Annual Germans from Russia Musikfest

For 40 years the Die Deutsche Stammhalter Chapter of the Germans from Russia Heritage Society have put on the annual Musikfest to celebrate the music, food and heritage of their ancestors. This year’s event was the final performance. But the enthusiasm of the participants was undiminished and 138 members of the audience joined in the singing of traditional German songs.

The Knife River Care Center Singers join with the Pick City Singers to present a fine set of favorite tunes including “Auf Dem Die Nacht Wird Kommen” and “Du, Du Liegst Mir Im Herzen.”

The Rev. Elden Zuerch, rural Hazen, leads the audience in the first song, Nun Danket Alle Gott.

In a slot celebrating the contributions of the Germans from Russia Heritage Society Board, Gilbert Ost curing Lynn Winkler of a certainly fatal case of overwork from getting ready for the final Musikfest. He uses a collection of traditional cures recorded by the chapter, including a generous application of sauerkraut to the head.

Front, from left, Irene Leifelbein Weisz, Halliday; and Esther Eisenbeis, Beulah; back, Elmer Weisz, Halliday; and Ray Ottus, Bismarck, were among the singers who came on stage to perform traditional German tunes.

The afternoon’s events concluded with a fleischkuchle supper. Since the Beulah Middle School gym had no fryers, Irvin Schielke, vice president of chapter, Beulah, left; Shirley Stern, Golden Valley; and Wilbert Harsch, chapter president, Pick City, set up a production line in a pop-up fish house outside the gymnasium.

Of course it wouldn’t be a true Germans from Russia event without an extravagant show of hospitality. At the mid-season break there was a table groaning under the weight of placinda, kuchen and other traditional favorites.