

# In Touch with Prairie Living

By Michael M. Miller

Germans from Russia Heritage Collection  
North Dakota State University Libraries, Fargo



GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

**GRHC**

HERITAGE COLLECTION

As I write this March column, I am looking forward to attending Dakota Air: The Radio Show, on Saturday, April 9 at 7 p.m. in the Wishek Civic Center, Wishek, N.D. The new Dakota Air events have been well received at shows in Valley City, Bismarck, Jamestown, Grand Forks, Fargo, Minot and Dickinson. The Wishek show will have a flavor of German-Russian music with local talent and celebrities. The popular Dakota Airheads Acting Troupe will perform. Wishek will be their first show in a smaller North Dakota community heavily settled by German-Russian immigrants.

We look forward to having the GRHC display with the Dakota Air show at the Wishek Civic Center on April 9. For more information, go to [www.dakotaairtheradioshow.com](http://www.dakotaairtheradioshow.com).

The Dakota Air host is Merrill Piepkorn, popular anchor of "Here It Now" on Prairie Public Radio. Dakota Air will have a special performance at the Burning Hills Amphitheater in Medora, N.D. on Saturday, June 7 at 7 p.m. The Dakota Air shows are re-broadcast on Prairie Public Radio ([www.prairiepublic.org/radio](http://www.prairiepublic.org/radio)).

I am often asked in person, at outreach events or with an email message, what books are recommended for introductory German-Russian research. The staff of the GRHC has prepared a webpage of these five recommended books at <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/files/recommended/pdf>.

These books available from the

GRHC are: 1) "Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas" by George Rath; 2) "From Catherine to Khrushchev: The Story of Russia's Germans" by Adam Giesinger; 3) and these three books by Joseph S. Height, "Homesteaders on the Steppe," "Memories of the Black Sea Germans" and "Paradise on the Steppe."

For a visual introduction on the subject of Germans from Russia, I recommend these award-winning DVD documentaries produced by Prairie Public Television. "The Germans from Russia: Children of the Steppe, Children of the Prairie" and "Prairie Crosses, Prairie Roses: Iron Crosses of the Great Plains" (dual DVD).

I also suggest the new 2010 documentary, "It's All Earth and Sky," now appearing on PBS stations throughout the USA. In this documentary, five representative Germans from Russia, who have attained success and stability, share their insights on the process of becoming American. Like many others who have come to America seeking a land of promise and opportunity, Germans from Russia have suffered, and they have prevailed. Since their background and history is as rich in texture as it is in diversity, they serve as a model of assimilation of other ethnic groups into American society.

These persons appearing in "It's All Earth and Sky" are: Arthur E. Flegel, founder of a successful furniture store

in Menlo Park, Calif.; Debra Marqart, author, creative writer and professor at Iowa State University, a native of Napoleon, N.D.; Al Neuharth, Coca Beach, Fla., journalist and founder of "USA Today," a native of Eureka, S.D.; Henry Schmick, Cheyenne, Wyo., cattle raiser and sugar beet farmer; and Brian Schweitzer, rancher, soil scientist and Governor of the State of Montana.

The 18th Journey to the Homeland Tour is May 17-27, 2012, to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany. The 17th Journey to the Homeland Tour group leaves May 18-28 for Frankfurt, Stuttgart, and Odessa.

Space is available for second Dakota Memories Heritage Tour. It will be a three-day bus tour on September 15-18 to south-central North Dakota, in the heart of German-Russian country. For further information, contact Acacia Stuckle at 701-231-6596 or [acacia.stuckle@ndsu.edu](mailto:acacia.stuckle@ndsu.edu) -- <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/dakotamemories/heritage/index.html>.

For further information about the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, the Friends of the GRHC, Dakota Memories Heritage Tour, 18th Journey to the Homeland Tour, and donations to the GRHC (such as family histories), contact Michael M. Miller, The Libraries, NDSU Dept. #2080, PO Box 6050, Fargo, ND 58108-6050 (Telephone: 701-231-8416; Email: [Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu](mailto:Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu); the GRHC website: [www.ndsu.edu/grhc](http://www.ndsu.edu/grhc)).

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