

WURSTFEST®



‘Oktoberfest: Texas Style’

Oct. 31 – Nov. 9, 2008 • New Braunfels, Texas

Wurstfest Association, P.O. Box 310309, New Braunfels, TX 78131-0309

October 2008

Contact: Herb Skoog, Director of “Wurst” Relations, 830/606-2300

HINTNERS WHIRL NIGHTS AWAY AT WURSTFEST

NEW BRAUNFELS, TX – Helga and Evan Hintner didn’t exactly plan to build a house within walking distance of Wurstfest. But it sure didn’t hurt when Evan, an architect, built the couple’s concrete house on the hill above Landa Park – off of the main road that leads into the park, and ultimately Wursthalle.

After all, they have been coming to the annual festival since 1986 – when Helga put on her dancing shoes and called Evan and asked him to join her at Wurstfest. The couple got married in 1991, and Evan began building the house in 1995, completing it in 1998. Now, you will find them tearing up the dance floor all 10 days of Wurstfest Oct. 31 – Nov. 9. And most of the time, they just walk out their front door for the short stroll to the festival.

They are not hard to miss. Both tall and svelte, the couple dances fast, enjoying the many different polkas – whether it be a Slovenian, Czech or German-style polka.

“But we dance slow, too,” says Helga, a retired professor who taught German, Russian and English as a second language at San Antonio College for 29 years.

“We have a good time,” Evan adds. “We dance crazy. We dance to open spaces – not in a circle. We don’t pattern dance.”

Helga comes from Germany and explains that at age 15, dancing is a required class in school.

“But I came to the United States when I was 15, so I missed that,” she says. “I learned how to dance from my uncle.”

Evan, who initially danced to country and western tunes, quickly took to polka dancing. Participating in the polka contest at Wurstfest each year, the couple has garnered some first-, second- and third-place honors. But they stress that they are in it for the fun.

When Wurstfest time comes around, they have a strategy carefully planned out that allows them to enjoy *gemütlichkeit* to its fullest degree.

“You get such a concentration of talent,” Evan says. “We take the program and cut out the sections for each night, and I carry that around in my pocket.”

“Then we take a bag with our seat cushions,” adds Helga. “And we go from tent to tent. We never sit at one place.”

They also have their favorite foods.

“I like the good German beer,” Helga says. “And I like Naegelin’s gingerbread men.”

Evan enjoys the bread pudding. Both enjoy the ham hocks with sauerkraut and the white sausage, or Weisswurst, served up in pita bread with sauerkraut.

When they are not busy dancing at Wurstfest, the Hintners can be found singing with the New Braunfels Gemischter Chor Harmonie, the German singing group. Evan also designed and worked on the new version of the German American Society of New Braunfels booth for Wurstfest.

The Hintners also dance with the Good Time Polka Club and the Starlight Ballroom Dancing Club. Evan is worried that the polka is slowly dying out. It used to be the Hintners could find a polka dance here and in surrounding areas every weekend. But that doesn’t hold true anymore.

“And it’s easy to learn,” he says. “If you can skip or jump, you can polka.”

And when you watch the Hintners dance, you can’t help but want to get up and try.

The Wurstfest Association of New Braunfels is a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to promote the local economy through tourism and promote and preserve the community’s rich German heritage. Proceeds from the event benefit a wide variety of projects.

Admission to the Wurstfest grounds will be free from 4 to 7 p.m. on opening night, Oct. 31. After that, admission to the festival is \$8 at the gate; and children ages 12 and younger will be admitted free at all times. Group rates, advance discounts and special weekday promotions are available. For information about Wurstfest, call 830/625-9167 or 1-800-221-4369, or visit the Web site at www.wurstfest.com.