



‘Oktoberfest: Texas Style’

**Nov. 4 – Nov. 13, 2011
New Braunfels, Texas**

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

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OHLENBUSCH FAMILY GOES TO JAIL EVERY YEAR AS WURSTFEST TRADITION

There’s tradition. And then, there’s *tradition*.

For Melanie Ohlenbusch and her family – her husband Brian, and kids Austin (21), Courtney (19), and Cassidy (14) – Wurstfest has been a yearly event for the past 21 years. But for this family, the 10-day festival means much more than a trip to the Wurstfest grounds for good food, good music and good fellowship. It means a trip to jail.

“We’ve had our photo taken at the jail booth every year at Wurstfest for the past 21 years, since Austin was born,” Melanie said. “I think Austin was 8 or 9 months old when we made the first Wurstfest as a family.”

Now, come rain or shine, the family always meets up at the photo booth at Wurstfest.

“Now, they’re older, and I tell them, ‘You can go do what you want after this, but we’ve gotta take our picture. This is a must,’” Melanie said.

The booth, operated by Korri Stevens and now in its 49th year, is located at the north end of the Wursthalle and features photo-taking opportunities for Wurstfest patrons who want to have their photos taken in a Wurstfest Jail Haus or in front of the Oma and Opa cutouts.

Brian and Melanie went to their first Wurstfest together in 1986. Melanie was from Pekin, Illinois and had never been to Wurstfest. Brian was from Bulverde and graduated from Smithson Valley High School. But like Melanie, he had never been to Wurstfest.

“I tell people he had to marry an Illinois girl to make it to Wurstfest,” Melanie jokes.

They got married in 1988.

“We started taking the picture (in the jail booth) just spontaneously in 1990,” Melanie said. “We thought it would be cute with the baby. Then, the next year, we did it and just made it a tradition each year.”

The mom of three admits that getting the family together, especially now that the kids are older, is difficult. Fortunately for Melanie, each year, they’ve landed back in jail.

“They know how their mother is all about taking pictures and making the moment, so they accommodate me and take the picture to make their mother happy!” Melanie exclaimed.

The family also enjoys coming for the Wurstfest food.

“We enjoy the fried pickles, and we like the sausage and the sauerkraut that they serve in a pita pocket,” Melanie added. “And it’s fun to see the people in crazy hats and watch people doing the chicken dance.”

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, Nov. 4. After 7 p.m., admission to the festival is \$8 at the gate; and children ages 12 and younger will be admitted free at all times. Wurstfest continues through Nov. 13. 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.