



‘Oktoberfest: Texas Style’

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

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

October 2011

Contact: Herb Skoog, Director of “Wurst” Relations, 830/625-9167

WURSTFEST BOOK PROVIDES BIG PICTURE

Alton J. Rahe and Darvin Dietert have been there since the beginning. As musicians with the Hi-Toppers, the German dance band they formed while still in high school, they were part of those early Wurstfest festivities back in 1961. It seemed a natural choice to ask the two to write the book: “Wurstfest, New Braunfels, Texas, The First 50 Years . . . Since 1961.”

The Hi-Toppers was one of the longest-performing bands at Wurstfest – second only to the Cloverleaf Orchestra. Rahe has been a member of the Wurstfest Association for 30 years. Dietert has been a member for 40 years. They are both fifth-generation German descendants of New Braunfels settlers.

When the Wurstfest Association asked the pair to write a book about the first 50 years of Wurstfest, it was hard to say no.

“Darvin said he would compile the photos if I would write the book,” Rahe said.

Rahe had already written two books about the local area: “History of Sattler and Mountain Valley School in Comal County, Texas 1846-1964 by Alton J. Rahe” (2000) and “History of the Mission Valley Community” (Historical Publishing Network, April 1, 2010, \$35).

“I think this is a nice book that people should have,” Rahe said. “It is a good coffee table book but it is a good reference book, too.”

After all, it is not every dictionary that will have the words pigwich or rathskeller readily handy.

But the book contains much more than word play. It gives the reader a bigger picture of Wurstfest beyond the sounds of the oompah.

“In order to work on this book, I was given free reign. I was able to see all the nice good things this organization has done over the years,” Rahe said. “Sometimes you don’t get to see the full picture when you are looking at bits and pieces.”

Wurstfest gives back to the community by way of scholarships, donating a portion of tickets sales to United Way partner agencies on United Way night and supporting community projects through donations.

“I think Wurstfest has affected every family in the community when I think about it,” Rahe said. “In my family, I’ve been involved in Wurstfest. My two older kids were involved by playing in high school polka bands and in German day on Wednesday. My youngest daughter went to Germany in the exchange program. And, we used to be involved in the Heritage Exhibit.”

Rahe and Dietert will be signing copies of the books during both Sundays of Wurstfest. They will be at the Information Booth from 1 to 2 p.m. and again from 3 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 6 and also from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 13. The book also will be for sale in the Marktplatz.

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.